

Democratically Yours

Political Newsletter of Norman Cutting

Issue A

Winter 2005/06

You missed it!

I'm afraid that due to lack of time and money, residents between Sugar Lane in Bourne End to Woodlands Avenue missed out of my Summer issue - however if keen, it's available on my web site (www.normanCutting.com) along with most other bits amongst the archive section.

I confess!

You may not be aware, but there will be an election in May 2007 for both the Town and Borough Councils and I thought I might as well stand, as I cannot be worse than the lot you all elected last time, so if you think it's a good idea, then please offer support - see piece overleaf!

Meanwhile in the real world!!

As I write this issue in late November, the main local matters are the Police reorganisation, having Hemel Hospital with an A & E service which will not admit critical or unplanned events, Bridgewater Boats development, Luton airport and the Inquiry being held in Ely over the proposal to build a few more houses.

Police reorganisation

It was just September that the police report 'Closing the Gap' recommended that any force with less than 4000 officers could not operate efficiently.

In October, the government asked the forces what they proposed to do about it.

In November, the forces were told to choose from 3 options as no East of England force meets the numbers.

In December, the decision will be made.

I must confess that as we appear to have a shortage of officers at the 'sharp end' with reports of officers being sent to other parts of the county on a regular basis, I'm sure word will get round that Berkhamsted, as well as being fairly affluent, the chances of 'being caught in the act' are next to nil.

It nothing to do with reducing criminal activities of course, more to ensure the police are efficient and balance the books - after full consultation!

Hospital - wot hospital?

First they build a new maternity wing, then they close it.

Then they build a new accident and emergency unit, then they think about reorganising it.

This reorganisation will not result in the closure of the A & E department (they say), just the operation. It seems the intention is to have a private company run the department ('we are not privatising the NHS') and all normal facilities will be available - unless unplanned or critical (Q&A session printed on front page of PCT newsletter summer 2005 issue).

Now they think about closing the elderly persons ward (? - ward - have you been there?).

It used to be the young and elderly who were considered the most vulnerable, now they are the easiest to get rid off!!

The Berkhamsted Citizens Association has taken residents concerns on board and actively supporting the Dacorum Hospital Action Group. More information on 'www.bca.normcall.com'.

Last barge repair facilities going

We all know how passionate Lindy Foster Weinreb is about the Canal, but I do share her concerns that this heritage site may disappear under yet another housing development.

Time is short as a planning application has been submitted to develop the site. The application was made in early November and I would expect it to come in front of the Development Control Committee at Borough early in 2006.

To be honest, apart from parking, there are few reasons to refuse this application, so other ways will have to be found if we want to save another part of the towns history.

More information on '<http://saveourwharf.org.uk>'

I have suggested to the Borough Council that a way should be found to save this part of the towns heritage located in the conservation area, perhaps the Dacorum Museum could be located alongside.

Even the Town Council could use some of its odd £250,000 'set aside for a worthy project' as they they seem fond of partnership projects!

Meanwhile, in the rest of the world!

We have a government committed to devolving power to local people.

The first thing they do is appoint regional assemblies to organise our area - from Cambridge and unelected. This has gone on since 1997 and the current 'devolving of power' is allowing just three months from the 'theory' to 'practice' and do away with County Police forces and make them more 'efficient'. I expect several of you have experienced the efficiency provided by centralising the control room. Similar ideas are being proposed for the Fire and Ambulance services.

In order to continue to devolve services to local people, the current 'what can I do today?' proposal, is to lose the Parish Council, lose the Borough Council and lose the County Council and set up another organisation which will be required to 'consult at local level'. Not to take any notice, but consult!

If the Regional assemblies are anything to go by, it's members will be appointed, not elected, and if they don't do the government bidding, then appointees will be threatened with replacement! WOULD THEY?

In fact, there is currently an examination in public taking place in Ely, as - horror of horrors - our very own East of England Regional Assembly actually dug their heels in over the governments proposal to allocate nearly 500,000 homes in that Region.

For some reason, they didn't agree with the idea that you build houses and then the government will pay for all the infrastructure required like roads, schools, hospitals and the like.

Which reminds me, I heard recently that the new proposed 'centre of excellence' hospital 'planned' for Hatfield may not happen, as the Health Authority has run out of money and will not be able to afford it.

You'll never guess who actually funds the NHS and says they will fund the infrastructure for the imposed new housing. Is it any wonder that suspicions are raised?

I could go on about ID cards, council tax, parking, the state of the 'new' town centre pavements and all the other annoying items, but I will end this issue with two quick thoughts.

1 Why not spend the millions proposed to be spent on windmills to provide only 10/15% of our power requirements, on finding a way to dispose of the reactive waste from nuclear power?

2 Emissions from aircraft are not treated the same as everything else - why not?

That's it for this issue. Any queries, questions, criticisms, you know where I am.

www.normanCutting.com - www.berko.org.uk



Just in case you have absolutely no idea who I am, then at great expense and effort, I wandered out and got my wife to take a photo of me. Of course, in real life, I look much better, have more colour and the sun doesn't make my glasses quiet so dark, but hey, what do you expect for nothing!

This newsletter is sponsored by your local electrician - *me*, so for your electrical work, give me a call!

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Do you find this newsletter interesting?

You have been receiving my newsletters fairly regularly since 1996 (yes, it's that long!), and I could do with some help to get elected in 2007.

I could do with some funding, as well as help in delivering my 'missives'.

Each newsletter costs about £125 and between 2000 and 2500 copies circulated (depending on how I feel and time available). It takes about 1 hour to deliver 100, so any help would be appreciated.

Please get in touch if you support my efforts, the address is at the bottom, together with my telephone number. My e-mail is norm@berko.org.uk