

Lincolnshire County Council LCC
North Kesteven District Council NKDC

News from your local, Independent Councillors,
MARIANNE OVERTON MBE and
CATHERINE MILLS

VISIT OF BREXIT MP's TO LINCOLNSHIRE

Lincolnshire hosted the Parliamentary Committee of "Exiting the European Union", chaired by Hilary Benn MP. I was tasked with giving evidence on behalf of the whole County Council and made the case for better funding to cope. Whilst public services are reducing, Lincolnshire is under heavy pressure and one of the fastest growing populations in the country (128% compared to a national 52% since 2005), leading to services unable to cope. This did win traction and funding was the very point the Hilary Benn MP made to the press following our meeting.

The County Council has just appointed 12 social workers from Europe and other countries, a process we will need in future. Experts calculate a shortfall of about 8,000 workers a year, but this does depend on the economic growth and the rate of mechanisation in the food industry. We also call for Improving trade opportunities and social cohesion, also critical in the new world.

COUNCILS MAKING MONEY FOR YOU

This Government is keeping more of our income tax, and returning less to us for local services. Councils must become financially independent. Our Lincolnshire Independent group has called for Councils to set about making money to help run our services. I am pleased to announce we finally have a company called Lafford Homes, wholly owned by the District Council. We are finding and developing sites for residents, making a little profit at the same time to help run our services

SAVING PARISH COUNCIL BUDGETS

District Councillor Catherine Mills and I were questioning the Council fees and charges last month. New member, Cllr Mills established there is no justification for the huge charge made against Parish Councils for emptying the Dog Waste Bins as they are now treated together with other general waste. The cost has now been swept aside. Well done Lincolnshire Independent Catherine!

UNITARY MEGACOUNCIL?

Local Government reorganisation is distracting, costly and time-consuming process that risks District Council services to help fill the £57m shortfall at LCC. More on the website

Published by Marianne Overton MBE, Lincolnshire Independents, Hilltop, Welbourn, Lincs LN5 0QH

cllrm.overton@lincolnshire.gov.uk 01400 273323 www.lincolnshireindependents.org www.lgaindependent.local.gov.uk



Welcome Guest

Meet my new constituent, a very rare arctic visitor called a White-billed Diver, fishing the Witham at Dunston Fen.

INNOVATION AWARD

The Lincolnshire Independents are calling for an Innovation Fund of capital and revenue to assist in launching new business ideas that can help fill the gaps or assist as Councils retreat. Examples could include running a local recycling site, setting up a school transport or a business network.

CALL FOR RURAL BROADBAND

Cllr Catherine Mills and I were called to a significant meeting at Four Winds, Wellingore, thanks to resident Simon Mountjoy. Residents explained just how much they needed fast broadband, from downloading HGV tachographs, to the local school children learning on line and a QC needing to prepare for court. The BT Regional Director promised to investigate the appalling phone reception locally. I brought Steve Brookes, the officer from LCC tasked with spending £40m on improving rural broadband. He agreed to start by investigating what is the best technical option for broadband improvement in this location. Residents agreed to apply for the BT Grants available for support and to keep in touch.

POST BREXIT BUILD?

Views are being sought on the finishing touches of the Local Plan for Central Lincolnshire with replies due by March 6th. This is the set of rules against which every planning application will be compared to pass or fail from now until 2036.

The Conservative Party Councillors are still pushing for large tracts of greenfield agricultural land to be given over to concrete to house a proposed 68,000 more people in Central Lincolnshire. That is Lincoln, North Kesteven and West Lindsey; land is also allocated for possible industry, more traveller sites and some green space.

The number of dwellings is still way too high, based in part on the pre-brexite hope by some wanting to revisit the boom years before the economic crisis. Does it matter? It matters if we get many more dwellings without matching infrastructure, facilities or services. Local Councils have increasing demands and less resources. Hence we see

worsening roads, council grass not cut, lights off at night, fewer bus services and less access to ambulances, A and E or hospital beds when we need them.

Everyone needs a decent home they can afford. We need to build communities not housing estates. Places where jobs, facilities and services match what people need. That means focussing first on doing what we can to assist a range of local businesses to thrive, providing the engine of finance for everything else.

Having got a plan designed for substantial development, we may now find our councils held responsible for developing it. The Conservative Ministers Gavin Barlow and Sajid Javid have released their plan which includes holding Councils responsible to get these sites built faster, not waiting for the market to improve. That could mean using public money to build houses in places where we do not have the matching jobs, services nor facilities for the new residents. The white paper is out for consultation now. We have allocated vast tracts of land, so it is not councils holding it up!

I attended several the hearings of the Local Plan and helped shape some of the amendments now out for consultation until March 6th. You may be interested in my comments and response on the website, www.lincolnshireindependents.org

We are using the Local Plan in planning now, giving good protection to small and medium villages. Control for the larger villages and towns, however, is still to be tested.

SOMERTON CASTLE

Planning applications and work continues to restore the privately-owned heritage asset, Somerton Castle include outbuildings, windows and landscaping. Set in the lowfields along a single track, it is remote but fascinating. It was built in 1281, given to King Edward II and sold back to private ownership in 1628. After the battle of Poitiers, the King John II of France was captured and imprisoned in London, then in 1360, in Somerton Castle!



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MRS SMITH'S COTTAGE, NAVENBY

Run by local residents and owned by NKDC, Mrs Smith's Cottage is at last set for restoration. Thanks to local support, we gained lottery funding, permissions and have selected the architect and consultants. Scaffolding around the cottage will be erected from 20th February before removing the roof tiles and inspecting the roof structure. We are now gathering volunteers for new marketing and visitor display projects. Meet March 15th 10-12 in Navenby village office. Contact me, Malcolm Smith or Dina on 01522 811469. See www.mrssmithscottage.co.uk

NAVENBY ARCHAEOLOGY GROUP WINS

The Flora Murray Award of excellence was won by the group for their work on the excavation of the Roman Site along the Highdyke, managed by Ian Cox and the group.

OUT AND ABOUT

Lincolnshire Councillors join nationally acclaimed training

This month I was pleased to support a new national team of top Independent Group councillors through intensive training over three weekends, including two from Lincolnshire. Well done all.



Influencing new regulations on waste

New EU Waste regulations will be adopted into our laws before the two years are up. Last month I represented Britain and all European Local Government in Brussels, seeking improvements in the new European legislation.

Shaping our post Brexit world

Representing the Independent Group of 2,500 councillors, I spoke at the District Councils Network on our priorities in the Brexit negotiations. Together in the Local Government Association, we represent almost all councils and councillors. Together, we are seeking money and powers not to stop in parliament, but to be spent in our communities where it is needed. We asked to largely keep legislation that protects the environment and employment, to lose that which prevents more local purchasing, and to seek social cohesion. My weekly national bulletin is at www.lgaindependent.local.gov.uk

ROAD SAFETY

Mobile phones not at the wheel

From 1st March 2017, drivers will receive six points on their driving licence and a £200 fine. The option of a driver awareness course. Young drivers risk having their driving licence revoked following a first offence and being required to retake their test.

Driving road conditions

You will have noticed the Lincolnshire serious injuries in road accidents increased significantly in 2016, especially for bikes. I have argued it may partly due to the broken road edges and potholes leaving bikes nowhere to go when two vehicles are passing at once. Please keep reporting potholes for urgent repair. 01522 782070 customer_services@lincolnshire.gov.uk or mark the location on a map at www.fixmystreet.com.

USEFUL REFERENCES

Access to Wellbeing Services and care

The Carers service 01522 782224

carers_team@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Support for Adult care is available 01522 782155

Roadworks www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/transport-and-roads/overnight-roadworks

roadworks@lincolnshire.gov.uk

To receive info' on twitter #lincsccl_roads

Help save lives and keep countryside clean

Report Potholes 01522 782070

<http://www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/potholes>

Or use "Fix my street" on line – works well.

<http://www.FixMyStreet.com>

Report Litter 01529 414155

customer_services@n-kesteven.gov.uk

Report illegal parking 01522 511142 or

ParkingServices@lincolnshire.gov.uk

Adult Concern 01522 782151

The Wellbeing service will help set up and people in a vulnerable position with finance, transport, support groups etc. 01522 782140

Lincs 2 Advice are on 0300 303 8789

Non urgent health 111, Police 101, fraud 0300 123 2040

Grants community_lincs@n-kesteven.gov.uk

Transport and Travel

Call Connect 8.30am - 7pm Weekdays and to 5pm

Saturdays 0345 234 33 44 or 01522 553143

www.lincolnshire.gov.uk/callconnect/35955.article

Dial a ride 01522 544983 Disabled door to door

Car-sharing www.lincshare.co.uk

Trains www.thetrainline.com

Local Plan www.central-lincs.org.uk 01529 308084

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Village websites

<https://nocton-church.blogspot.co.uk>

<https://nocton.blogspot.co.uk>

www.facebook.com/Nocton-Social-Club

www.facebook.com/groups/WhatOnInNocton

<https://dunstondossier.org.uk>

Branston <http://www.tucann.co.uk/the-sheepwash-times.html> Branston Library 01522 880426

branstonlibrary@gmail.com

www.parishes.lincolnshire.gov.uk/Potterhanworth

www.facebook.com/groups/455116074527966/ Navenby and Wellingore business

www.Navenby.net, www.harmston.info

Welbourn, Leadenham and Coleby have sites on LCC.

SOME FEBRUARY EVENTS

19th Sunday Brunch Leadenham Village Hall 10.30am-1pm

21st Navenby Archaeology Group hearing from Peter

Welbourne on a traditional baker like the Roman one

found in Navenby! 7.30pm Navenby Methodist Church

25th Book Sale Welbourn Village Hall 2-4pm

25th "Signal failiure at Nocton and Dunston junction" a

Who dunnit?" presented by Mister Murderie Players

Light supper incl. bar available or BYO, in aid of All

Saints, Nocton. Tickets £10 01526 322739 or from

Nocton Post Office. The play is set in the 1940's, dress optional. Nocton Village hall 7.30pm

MARCH EVENTS

1st Lent Lunch at Leadenham House 12.30-2pm £3.50

3rd Rural Touring King Lear, Leadenham Vill. Ha. 7.30pm

8th Lent lunch, Rose Cottage The Nookin, Welbourn 12.30

15th Mrs Smith's Cottage Volunteers Navenby Venue 10am

27th Spring Fashion Show with great prices

Branston Village Hall Tickets £5 from Sarah on

853269, Pauline 07951 218572 or Karen 791488.

And from Catherine and I...

Thank you all for so much support and for all you do for our village communities. Let us know if we can help more.



Clrs Marianne Overton MBE and Catherine Mills