

Chairman's Corner – 15

Turning Up the Heat

Britain has just experienced its hottest temperatures of the year and I think it could be a long, hot Summer at least for the CRA.

First of all we have the continuing saga of High Trees Surgery. Regular readers of this section will be aware that the surgery wants to develop a state-of-the-art medical centre near the new shopping centre in west Chellaston, and, indeed, judging by its own publicity, appears to be ploughing ahead with its plans despite being told that 85% of the surgery's patients who responded to our survey did not want the surgery to move from the centre of Chellaston. Reasons cited by the patients were that the new proposed location was too difficult to reach, particularly without a car and virtually impossible even to walk, now that the footpath at the bottom of Station Road has been closed. The CRA feels strongly that, whilst Chellaston desperately needs better GP facilities, it is not fair on existing patients to site them where they will be less easy to access. We have once again met with the PCT, who will finance the new surgery, the practice and the developer with a view to considering alternative sites which may now be available. The plans are well advanced and therefore we need to act rapidly. The problem with alternative sites may be ones of cost but we believe that with some constructive thinking, such objections could be overcome. We have also asked the PCT to carry out a full consultation of the patients, something they are legally obliged to do, but I have to report that at the moment the PCT do not feel that there is any need to reconsider their position. Clearly, in view of our survey results, this needs to be challenged. We may need to get in touch with people quickly so if you have an interest in this issue, please send us your e-mail address, so we can keep you informed. We hope to be able to report further in the near future.

The other thing that will keep us busy this Summer will be finishing the Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). After working on this for nearly 12 months, we are at a position where we are ready to draw all the information together and produce the document which we hope will define what Chellaston is for years to come. We have had some offers of help from people with specialist skills but we need more. If you think you can contribute to this project, please get in touch with us through the web-site. We will welcome whatever help you can offer and, if you're not sure what you can offer, get in touch anyway – we'll be able to find something for you. This is a document that should come from the residents of Chellaston – let's make sure it's from as many of them as possible.