

CHAIRMAN'S CORNER – 9

We had a good turn-out for our annual Forum and AGM and we would like to thank all those residents who supported the event, and hope you found it useful and interesting. We try to have a varied selection of presenters who have something to say about the locality and this year the emphasis was on the way Chellaston is shaping up and how it will look in the future. So, we had Jonathan Guest, Director of Regeneration and Community for Derby City Council, to tell us about planning aspects and what they can and can't do to help shape the community. Then David Ward from Wilson Bowden Developments gave us an insight in to the new Chellaston Business Park and the somewhat controversial new road leading to it. Finally, Annette Jennison, the Practice Manager from the High Trees doctors' practice told us about their need for expansion and their search for an alternative site or premises. All three speakers raised important issues which could affect Chellaston in the future. It would appear that the City Council has few powers which it can use to influence the redevelopment of neighbourhoods, certainly not as far as we in Chellaston are concerned. The planners can only react to development proposals and if, as we have seen, these are all for residential accommodation for our senior citizens, that is what we have to accept. The new Business Park to be built to the West of Chellaston looks to be an interesting development, as it will not be all warehouses but should have other facilities to make it like a second Pride Park. The access route to the new area will be from the present end of Homeleigh Way, and whilst the CRA welcomes the business park, the fact that Homeleigh Way will become a major through route is rather less welcome. The CRA considers that the proposed route is inadequate for the amount of traffic that will use it and it runs too close to the properties on the West Chellaston estate. As ever, it is a case of new housing and business developments being given planning consent without sufficient thought being given to infrastructure. What is actually needed is for an alternative road to be built well away from the West Chellaston development to leave Homeleigh Way as a residential access road. We intend to start a campaign to get this built and we would welcome your comments on this action. Finally, as far as the provision of GP services is concerned, Chellaston is again impoverished. We think that West Chellaston does need its own GP surgery, and the Derby City PCT/ High Trees idea of a Super Medical Centre looks to be a good one. But we don't think that this should mean that Central Chellaston should be deprived of a GP practice, and we believe that the High Trees practice should be looking for larger accommodation as close as possible to its present location, where it is convenient to get to. We were told that this is, in fact, what the practice is trying to do, and we will do everything we can to assist the practice to achieve this.

At the AGM, the present committee was re-elected to continue to work on your behalf for a further year. We are gratified to have this vote of confidence and we will continue to uphold the needs of the people of Chellaston and strive to make it a better place to live. Now that Chellaston covers such a large area, we have noted the formation of other groups who are representing certain interests in East and West Chellaston and other local areas. The aims of these groups are not necessarily the same as ours and there is no reason why they should not co-exist with the CRA. We have or intend to make contact with these groups and maintain a dialogue with them so that any effort is not duplicated. The CRA intends that it should represent the interests of all Chellaston, including the new estates, and to this end, we would like to have more representatives from East and West Chellaston. We have made a start with some new members from West Chellaston but we would like to hear from community-minded people in other parts. Please contact us through this web-site if you would like to know more about what you can do to help.

Finally, as this piece was being written, we suffered yet another power cut in Chellaston. This is becoming a regular occurrence and is unacceptable in this day and age. The frequency of "outages" as they are known must be far higher than the national average for an urban area and more like a remote rural village might experience. This time, however, the supply to Chellaston School was cut off which meant that a GCSE exam had to be abandoned. The school took appropriate action under the circumstances, but it is appalling that over 250 children were unable to take a very important English exam. We are going to ask the transmission company to explain themselves - why breaks in supply occur so often in this area, and what they are doing to make the system more robust and adequate for the demand in Chellaston. Watch this space...