

Old Hastings & Tressell County Councillor Report Jeremy Birch
January 2012

Happy new year to all readers

- Isobel Blackman Centre – The independent evaluation report has borne out a number of points that I and others have made: the day car centre space which is concentrated upstairs is too restricted, day car users need to be able to make greater use of the whole building, greater reassurance is needed to users about fire evacuation procedures, the upstairs toilet opens straight out into the day centre area, the cafe is not being used well enough by the local older community. All these matters are being addressed -we will need to check that they have made sufficient improvement.
- Old Town traffic review - A commitment was obtained from the county's director of transport and environment to a full review of traffic movements in the Old Town once the impact of the Jerwood gallery can be assessed. I will be pressing for this review to be held in Autumn 2012. Meanwhile following a successful public meeting to look at possible pedestrian changes in High Street and elsewhere a local group has been set up to look at possible improvements and to feed these to county highway officers.
- Hastings -Bexhill Link Road - This is a county council sponsored scheme with the aim of relieving traffic on Bexhill Road and opening up new land which has no (environmental designations for employment and residential space to the north of Bexhill. The scheme was one of 45 put in a development pool for review by the government when it was first elected. Only four of those schemes await the green light including the Link Road. A pre-Xmas government statement recognised the importance of transport improvements to the regeneration of Hastings but announced a delay of three months on a Link Road decision while further information was sought. We await the outcome of this further review.
- Learning Disability review - The county council has commenced a review of its learning disability day centres, especially in the light of personal budgets where users and their families can choose to buy day opportunities themselves not necessarily from the traditional day care facilities. The adult social care department say they want to increase the options people can choose from, such as: personal budgets, jobs and training, community opportunities. To do this they will review all learning disability day services over three years. First of all they are looking at the Eastbourne Downs and Weald area and then they will review the Hastings and Rother including the Conquest Centre off Battle Road.
- Hastings Library - The county council has now decided that it won't build a new library for our town but will try to improve and refurbish the existing one. To this end they have purchased the building next door - 12 Claremont. This will give additional space and perhaps help with accessibility. The intention is to incorporate the children's library into the one facility.

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