

Councillor Paul Diviani for the Yarty Ward (EDDC)

Otter View, London Road, Yacombe, Honiton, Devon EX14 9ND

Tel: 01404 861 616 Email: paul@diviani.net On the road: 0797 1433 175

Leader of the Council

Chairman Blackdown Hills Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty

Chairman "Making it Local" Rural Development Programme Local Action Group

Vice Chairman LGA Rural Commission Conservative Group

Director DR (Devon Renaissance)

27th April 2013

Annual Report

2012/2013 has been a busy year in East Devon. Our Local Plan has spent an interminable amount of time moving towards the final examination in public later this year. Much has been said of the dangers of not having a plan in place but 50 % of Planning Authorities don't and the other half only have a core strategy which is equally not an up to date plan and not necessarily in conformity with the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). Whilst there is a degree of uncertainty, the key issue will be that that all development must be sustainable. Our aim will be as always to conserve and enhance the environment through the social and economic wellbeing of those who live and work here for current and future generations. The West End developments have ensured we have a fighting chance of maintaining the character and style of our villages and towns.

Cranbrook is a national success story – the only one of the much trumpeted eco towns to move forward. People have now moved in and there is a real sense of community coming together. Starts have been made on 396 homes in total and 153 of these are now complete. The trigger point has been reached for the contributions towards a new bus service and this will start in May. Work is also due to get underway on the railway station infrastructure works imminently. The Younghayes Community Centre is complete and the building will be transferred to the District Council in the near future. A planning application for a further 600 homes is also due to be submitted shortly. The Cranbrook Minister (Mark Gilborson) is now living on site in the parsonage. Developments are in the pipeline for the Science Park and Sky Park and the new Sainsbury's SW Distribution Centre will shortly arise at the Inter Modal Freight Park, thus creating many employment opportunities near to where people live. The primary school is already occupied, the secondary school has planning permission and we are starting on the High Street.

At EDDC our gross expenditure, excluding housing benefit payments, is £26.43m. Our income to match this for this year comes from 57% Fees, Charges and specific grants (£14.99m), 24% Council Tax, (£6.45m), 18% Government Grants (£4.74m) and 1% Net Interest. We have frozen Council Tax for the 4th year running, and we are the lowest in Devon and the 16th lowest in the country. We are constantly looking at new ways of working to improve services whilst reducing costs. One way we will achieve that will be to establish new offices to replace our grossly inefficient ones at the Knowle.

And finally, if you didn't know it already, the people who live in Yarty Ward live the longest of all the people in East Devon!

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