

Message from the Chairman of Kent County Council



Kent County Council
County Hall, Maidstone
Kent ME14 1XQ
Tel: 03000 416238
Chairman: DAVID BRAZIER

August Update 2

I've been in post for three months. Most mayors seem to have civic services (Kent doesn't) and consequently I have spent more time in church in those months than during the last fifty years. Born into an Irish Catholic family and force fed religion, I rebelled in adolescence and for many years would have described myself as aggressively secular, but I am beginning to see the difference between faith and spirituality. And I love our great cathedrals; especially Rochester where the organ is part of the screen and in expert hands takes you to another, finer place.

Anyway, that's enough of that. The Civic Team and I have been making arrangements for the Area Reception at Squerryes Court in Westerham. By arrangement with the owner, Henry Warde, we are going to use the new tasting room at the nearby winery, overlooking the newly planted vines. If you would like to come, let me know.

For the period of my year in office I am a Kent Ambassador. The Ambassadors are outstandingly successful people who live in Kent and come together to brainstorm the issues that confront the county. We met a couple of weeks ago at the Marriott and talked about economic growth, transport and planning for infrastructure. This was right up my street as it was what I used to do when I was in Cabinet and it was a quality day, perhaps without any startling outcomes, but certainly worthwhile. Lord Heseltine spoke lucidly and inspiringly (if you're a Tory) and seemingly without notes.

The Minerals & Waste Local Plan Informal Members Group has re-formed. The Core Strategy was adopted last year after I for one had given seven years of my life to it and now we are helping select sites for winning sand, chalk and gravel and considering the disposal of circa 700,000 tonnes of waste every year. It's fascinating stuff, and if you would like me to come and give you a talk on the subject, perhaps to celebrate a birthday or wedding anniversary, do let me know.

I had a week in Wales, in Pembrokeshire. Castles, cliffs, walks and rain. Loved it.