

# SOCIETY MEETINGS

**November**

## **"THE FUTURE OF KENT"**

**A talk by Cllr Richard King, KCC - Reported by Jack Woolford**

Until recently Cabinet Member for Structure Plan and Transport, now Chairman of Planning, Richard King, said that the world was screwed up by climate change; witness the virtual disappearance of birds, etc. In comparison, the deposition of Saddam Hussein and the recent earthquakes and floods, etc, were trivial whereas the melting of the polar ice-caps and world-wide pollution were our fault. Our grandchildren would ask why, knowing about it, we did nothing.

The London Barrage, designed for rare emergencies, had had to be used sixteen times in the last year. Romney Marsh would soon be under water. Yet the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister's (John Prescott) main concern was how many thousands more houses should be built in Kent whilst thousands of new houses were being

demolished in the North. In the Kent countryside, orchards as well as footpaths and hedges had disappeared because supermarkets demanded standard apples but only paid farmers 8% of the shop price. It was nonsensical to import fruit from abroad we could grow ourselves.

What Kent's 600 councillors and parish councillors wanted was low growth for Kent's own population, not incomers from elsewhere. The Kent Structure Plan sought this, but the Deputy Prime Minister's South East Region's (nominated) Assembly's Spatial Strategy with its East (including Ashford) and West Kent Sub-Regions, insisted on houses by the thousand every year for the next twenty years. It was madness all round and he (Richard King) was glad he would be dead by the time it all happened.

## **"BRAINSTORMING SESSION"**

There was general support for seeking to open up the Bleriot Memorial. The centenary is in 2009 and stresses the need for any scheme. Alan Lee has found that the memorial is owned by English Heritage but the maintenance, cutting the grass adjacent to the memorial, has been carried out free of charge by DDC. However DDC is reconsidering its commitment and may discontinue next year.

Adeline proposed that the Pencester bandstand was in the wrong place and a more appropriate situation was Granville Gardens, the site of the pre-war bandstand. She had found that there was no possibility of moving the existing Bandstand so that it would be necessary to build a new bandstand. Bill Fawcus told us that because next year would be the 4th centenary of DHB the board may be open to funding a commemorative structure such as a bandstand. John Turnpenny was against the move to Granville Gardens because of the potential parking problems.

Jack read the invitation sent by Nadeem Aziz to the "Dover Masterplan - options workshop" with its reference to consultants and plethora of development plans and frameworks. We have had endless plans to create a prosperous Dover. What will have a real effect is (a) bringing in jobs and (b) creating better transport links. Then we will be able to deal with expansion.