

Member Champion - Seaton

Name: Stephanie Jones

Key activities involved with since 2009 annual council/appointment

Last year I reported that with the help and support of the Countryside Team I was trying to organise an event at the Axe Wetlands as part of Seaton Carnival week. This event took place on Saturday 29th August and an article concerning the discovery of a rare pink grasshopper by 11 year old Daniel Tate, was published in the Telegraph newspaper and went worldwide. Just 'Google' pink grasshopper and find out more!!

Attended the Special Meeting of the Development Management Committee held at Seaton on 15th September and spoke both as Member Champion and Ward Member on all the applications on the agenda. Since Tesco have been chosen as the regeneration partner I have attended a meeting with representatives of the company and also along with Cllr Knight, Cllr Meakin (Seaton Town Council) and Neil Parish, PPC for Tiverton/Honiton, attended a meeting at Westminster with Hugo Swire and two representatives from Tesco to discuss in further detail what progress is being made in relation to their development at Seaton.

Wrote a letter which was published in the local newspapers refuting the negative comments and letters which had been published in the local press. This still continues and I am looking into the possibility of meeting with the local press along with an Officer from the Communications Department to discuss this ongoing concern.

Also looking into the possibility of having a link from EDDC website home page to a Seaton Regeneration update page where residents could post their concerns and comments and as Member Champion could, with the help and advice of the Communications Department, answer their questions and help to dispel any negative comments.

I attended a half-day workshop held at Seaton Town Hall in March 2010 at which the requirements for future development in the town, for the next sixteen years, were discussed. The aim was to ask not-for-profit groups how they would see the town in the year 2026, what large scale issues there are within Seaton and how we can help solve these through guidelines for planning and development. This also gave me the chance to network with Officers and community groups in the town and for them to raise any concerns they had.

Conferences/Workshops - if attended and their benefits

Member Champions Networking event at Bridgewater, Somerset. This event provided a useful opportunity to hear about the work and involvement of Member Champions at other District Councils and Unitary Councils across the South West region.

Partnership Working:

(This could include working with officer teams, other authorities, outside bodies).

Working with the Communications Office to help portray a more positive and upbeat image for Seaton and discussing the best ways that this can be achieved.

Attended meetings of the Seaton Regeneration Board meetings and also spoken at Executive Board meetings on matters concerning Seaton particularly concerning the regeneration programme. Attended presentation from 'Seatons Voice' concerning their proposals for running Seaton Town Hall.

Future plans – what are your aims/work programme for the year to come:

I would like to be able to work with Officers and developers to secure the best possible outcome for Seaton and ensure that the Seaton Visitor and Interpretation Centre is delivered on time and is hopefully fully operational in time for the Olympics in 2012.

Seaton's Voice, a local community group, made a presentation to the Overview and Scrutiny Co-ordinating Committee about their proposals for running Seaton Town Hall. Any group which shows an interest in revitalising the usage of this facility needs help and encouragement and I hope to do both during the next year.

Seaton needs to promote a positive image and attitude to encourage outside investment into the town to revitalise its flagging economy. I would like to work with Officers and local groups alike to ensure that we can secure the best possible development opportunities for the town. Particularly during the coming year, with the prospect of the regeneration area being a construction site, I will make sure that tourists are made aware that the town is very much 'open for business' as we still have attractions which will not be affected by the building works.

I am also organising with the help of Kate Tobin, Axe Wetlands Project Co-ordinator, another event at the Axe Wetlands as part of Seaton Carnival week.