

At South Norfolk Council I am currently deputy leader & Cabinet member for Localism and Communities. I am involved with *The Link* magazine and a judge for the Pub of The Year competition, among various other duties.

This last year has been the sixth time in seven years that SNC has frozen council tax. It represents a 25% cut in real terms over the seven year period and we have achieved the freeze in such a way that the economies we've had to make have not resulted in cuts that the public would notice.

SNC are taking a leading rôle in enhancing our market towns and villages that surround them. We're investing £1m over the next 12 months in our market towns to improve street-scene, run events that drive footfall, and attract visitors. Part of this plan is to upgrade the toilets, clean loos are an essential part of a modern shopping centre, and we are treating our larger towns as the shopping centres they are.

It's not just about the towns, we have given many grants across South Norfolk, of up to £2,000 from our neighbourhood fund. This will continue in the future alongside a £25,000 allocation for each Neighbourhood Area, which can be used for Social Action projects. Also for the coming year, each SN councillor will have a £1,000 fund available to them for use within their wards, so please let me know of any ideas I can help with.

SNC has played a leading rôle in driving recycling forward. From October it will be possible to place envelopes, yogurt pots, glass, and food trays in the green bin. This is expected to put our recycling rate up to 50%.

Our Pub of The Year competition is regarded as the leading such contest in the country by the independent charity, The Pub is The Hub. It was good to see Radio Norfolk at Brockdish King's Head recently with their morning show talking to local people including the children from Brockdish school that came down to the pub; let's hope that the pub can be re-opened soon!

In the year ahead there are many events being organised and South Norfolk Council has just published its Events and Festivals brochure and one popular event to look out for is the South Norfolk On Show, which is being held on Sunday 13 July.

*Martin Wilby, May 2014.*