

**From Jackie Williams, resident of Little Eversden, to the Environmental Services Portfolio Holder:**

*"As the owner of an organic food business in Church Road, Hauxton who has had to go to A&E twice in May and be seen by paramedics on a third occasion with breathing problems confirmed by A&E Doctors as being due to chemical inhalation, I would like S.C.D.C. to tell me if they consider the cocktail of chemicals being released from the Bayer Site to be safe for a pregnant woman to breath in approximately 48 hours per week? I am particularly concerned about research that shows that in some instances two toxic chemicals mixed together can be one thousand times more toxic than one of the original chemicals. Please bear this in mind before commenting on the safety of an unborn child."*

The Health Protection Agency has advised us that they do not expect an appreciable increase in the risk of cancers or birth defects to be caused by emissions from the remediation activities at this site. Their assessment is based on the results of air monitoring data at the site boundary. The current scientific view is that the probability of any health risk from exposure to mixtures of chemicals present at low levels is likely to be small. Furthermore, when there is exposure to multiple chemicals that cause toxicity in the same way, the combined effects are likely to be no greater than the additive effect. Only two chemicals, toluene and tetrachloroethylene have consistently been detected by the monthly monitoring at the site boundary. Even if these two chemicals were to cause toxicity in the same way, there would be no reason to expect adverse health effects, since the levels detected are many times below the levels required to cause ill health.

I have been advised that the multi agency group working on the management of Hauxton issues remain open to receiving any relevant evidence to the contrary of this opinion.

**Supplementary question, asked at the Council meeting:**

*"We keep getting told that the chemicals are safe and there are no side effects. I have twice been to A&E and 1 time seen by paramedics: I do not consider this safe. Would you take such risks?"*

The Environmental Services Portfolio Holder replied that she was not qualified to answer personally, but that the Health Protection Agency (HPA) advice was that there was no risk that they were able to identify.