

Dear members of SLCC,

The election for the directorship of the IIMC for Region XI starts this week. There are 2 Dutch candidates for this position and I am one of them. I am hoping for your vote and therefore make this contribution to your newsletter about what I have been doing and see for the future partnership working of our organisations.

My name is Hans Rijs, 51 years old and since 2011 I have been the municipal clerk in the city of Bodegraven-Reeuwijk. I have been working in the clerk's profession since 2003. As an active member of VvG, the Dutch Clerks' Association for many years, since 2017 I have the honor to do so as a board member for conferences, ICT, sponsoring and communication. I'm a member of the IIMC Foundation Development Committee, which raises money to help members financially with education, it is one of my main goals to change this to allow clerks from Region 11, which includes England, Wales and the Netherlands to benefit from the Foundation because at the moment this does not happen.

Over the last 2 years I have taken the initiative to strengthen the ties with SLCC and with other organizations within Region XI. Last year, I visited the SLCC conference and IIMC study abroad tour in Stratford upon Avon and I was really looking forward to attending your conference this year as well. Opportunities for networking at these events are so important.

Last year I also brought some Dutch sponsors (and introduced some interesting Dutch solutions to issues) to that conference and more sponsors wanted to attend this year. But that is also the case the other way round, and I was really hoping to introduce some UK firms to our conference in the Netherlands but due to Covid we will have to postpone that to next year.

In September last year my own city council visited the council of Waltham Abbey. Kathryn Richmond and I were responsible for this exchange and we are working on a reciprocal visit from Waltham Abbey Town Council to the Netherlands. We are also thinking about trading places for a short period so we can experience what it is like to be a clerk in another county. If that plan goes on there will definitely be an article about that!

Together with Dominic Stapleton and Elisabeth Skinner I'm responsible for organizing the Community Governance student field trip which hopefully will take place in October in the Netherlands this year starting in my hometown Heemskerk. It was planned for June but unfortunately it couldn't take place. Last year, Dominic attended the VvG conference and I hope that some of you will be able to join in the future as well! The program will be in Dutch but we have professional translation available, as Dominic will testify.

As a Region XI director I would like to create more interaction between Region XI and the other Regions throughout North America, because there is so much more we can learn from each other. I am also very keen to develop the relationship between SLCC and my own association and open up new opportunities for us all to experience and learn from local government in Holland.

Therefore, I hope that the SLCC members will vote for me so I can expand my activities and provide you with different opportunities and experiences:

“Give me a chance, vote Hans!”