

BERA AGM
St Augustine's Church
MINUTES OF MEETING
15th March 2018

Start 8:01 pm

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Mr and Mrs Pitcher
Kenneth Pitcher
Avis France
Debbie Fuller
Theo Steel
Peter Lovett

2. Minutes of last meeting

Proposed by Lucette Smith and seconded by Ken Swain.

3. Matters arising - NONE

4. The Tram Stop Shelter

Mike Stafford. The Tram stop shelter will be for meetings and a community centre – it has disabled access and there will be access to the beach for people in wheelchairs. £9,000 was given by the National Lottery to facilitate the detailed tender process. Cost is higher than anticipated requiring further fund-raising.

5. Church Restoration

Reverend Collis. The church has been damaged by the passage of time - in particular the seaward side. Currently £40,000 has been spent on restoration. A further project of £250,000 is planned to extend the church to include toilets, refreshment facilities and a multi-use room for church and community use which will be on the northern side of the church, not the side damaged by weathering where much of the restoration work has already been carried out.

6. Treasurer's report

Mike Stafford. Accounts have not yet been signed off by the accountant. Verified accounts will be published on website.

Proposed by Freddie Dawkins and seconded by Mike Carter.

7. Chairman's report

Planning remains a core focus and BERA takes special interest in all planning in Thorpe Bay, including north of the railway and West Shoebury. We have been instrumental in pointing out restrictive covenants and challenging unsuitable planning applications including in Fermoy Road and Thorpe Hall Avenue.

Planting trees and shrubs is a source of great pride and improves the area for all residents.

Christmas lights have been upgraded and there is an ongoing plan.

Police Updates – provided by Berry. Thorpe Bay is very safe compared to the rest of Southend.

BERA provide panic and personal alarms.

Regular E-Newsletters are appreciated by members. Paper copies are delivered quarterly.

At a personal cost of £6,000 Ron stood for MP against James Dudderidge. This was to fight the proposed closing of the A&E at Southend Hospital, and Ron will continue to fight for services like the stroke unit to remain in Southend, as there is an aging and growing population. Ron has served 21 years as Chairman and on the Committee of BERA, and 11 years as a councillor. Ron continues to support the current Southend-on-Sea administration to ensure that the town moves forward. Ron will not support a labour administration and contrary to suggestions in recent delivered leaflets is not a communist, or a supporter of the Labour party or Momentum.

8. Guest Speaker Paul Guyler

Dr Guyler consultant stroke specialist at Southend-on-Sea Hospital gave an informative talk which was warmly welcomed.

There was a brief Q&A followed by applause in appreciation for his time.

9. Membership update

Committee member Alan Meredith has sadly passed.

Current membership is 824 - an approximate 400 increase on same time last year. BERA has 119 new household members.

There are now two ways of joining BERA – via the BERA website and making a bank transfer, or by filling out a form and dropping it with a cheque or cash of £10 to Ron Woodley or Mike Stafford.

There has been a positive reception to the booklet produced by Ken Swain. The first Independent councillor for Thorpe will be the topic for the next one.

Three committee members are up for **re-election** - Avis France, Mike Stafford and Philippa Peters.

Proposed by Ted Hunwick and seconded by Paul.

10. AOB (members only questions). Ron Woodley asked whether anyone can help with deliveries of BERA newsletters. Committee thanks Berry who helps with a lot of deliveries.

The next coffee morning is 12th April, 2018

If anyone is interested in showing their garden, BERA have an Open Garden day during the summer and they should contact Freddie Dawkins.

11. Refreshments

Finish 21:28