

1. Note for your diary - **BERA sponsored coffee morning** – next one will be on 15<sup>th</sup> June 2017, and the one following that on Thursday 20<sup>th</sup> July. Both will be held at the Methodist Church on the corner of Johnstone Road and The Broadway from 10:00am to midday. We look forward to seeing you there.
2. **BERA'S Thorpe Bay Open Garden Event** is on Saturday 17<sup>th</sup> June from 1:30-4:30pm. We have five gardens open for you to visit and the total cost to visit all of them is £2 per adult with children under 12 admitted free. For further information please look on [www.bera.co.uk](http://www.bera.co.uk) at the bottom of the "Events" page for the link.
3. Don't forget we can supply **personal and panic alarms**. Please contact Ron Woodley ([ronwoodley@hotmail.co.uk](mailto:ronwoodley@hotmail.co.uk)) or Mike Stafford ([cllrstafford@southend.gov.uk](mailto:cllrstafford@southend.gov.uk)) for more information.
4. We would like to advise you of some of the **forthcoming events and activities** organised as part of the 125<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the incorporation of Southend on Sea Borough Council:

**Saturday 10<sup>th</sup> June, 4pm & 6pm – Belfairs Woodland Centre**

**"Per Mare per Ecclesiam"** – a free, live performance with storytelling, theatre and music celebrating moments in time throughout Southend's 125 years as an incorporated borough. This newly commissioned work explores how Southend has developed since 1892, presenting the stories of some of the people who visited or settled in the town over the years. The production, by local theatrical company Pinpoint Create incorporates work from some primary schools.

**Poppies: Wave – Closing Day Events**

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> June, 3pm, 4pm, 5pm – Poppies: Wave – Barge Pier, Gunners Park**

**"Merry It Was To Laugh There"** – Jubilant Productions will present poems and diary readings from their critically acclaimed 2014 production *"Merry It Was To Laugh There."* The production includes poetry from the Front and the Home Front and extracts from the diary of Captain K C Buchanan. These poignant and thought-provoking short performances will be an evocative complement to Poppies: *Wave*.

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> June, 7pm – Poppies: Wave – Barge Pier, Gunners Park**

**"Never Forget"** – A work composed by local musician Roger Humphrey in 2016 with funding from Heritage Lottery Fund. Sections of this work will be performed by adult choirs and the Southend Boys' and Girls' Choirs accompanied by Rayleigh Brass.

**Sunday 25<sup>th</sup> June, c8pm – Poppies: Wave – Barge Pier, Gunners Park**

**The Last Post** – Local community musicians of all ages have been playing The Last Post as soloists or occasionally duets every night at 7pm. On the final day as many of these musicians as possible will come together to perform The Last Post and Sunset en masse.

**Flower Festival – Priory Park – 25<sup>th</sup> August – 1<sup>st</sup> September, Prittlewell Priory, Priory Park**

To celebrate the centenary of Priory Park a free week long flower show will be held in the grounds of Prittlewell Priory. The week will see the announcement of the winners from both the allotment and the Make Southend Sparkle competitions announced. There will also be the unveiling of the newly refurbished Priory Park gates.

## **Sunday 24<sup>th</sup> September, 3-6pm - Royal Pavilion, Southend Pier**

**Silk River** - As part of a year-long programme marking the 70th anniversary of Indian independence and the cultural relationship with the UK, Silk River is an ambitious project which explores the unique relationship between London and Kolkata through artistic exchange between communities along the Thames Estuary and India's Hooghly River. The culmination of this ambitious project takes place in the Royal Pavilion, where the Silk scrolls from the project will be exhibited, alongside dancing and community arts events.

Southend will be the final destination of the UK part of this stunning project – the day will start at 10:00am at Leigh train station with the scrolls being walked through the borough before arriving at the Royal Pavilion around 3pm for music, dance and food. For catering purposes, if you would like to attend the Silk River event on 24<sup>th</sup> September, please confirm your attendance using the Poppies inbox: [poppies@southend.gov.uk](mailto:poppies@southend.gov.uk)

5. Below is a letter we received which may be of interest if you travel on the trains.

### **Closure or reduced hours working at station ticket offices by Abellio Greater Anglia**

You will have seen in the news our concerns over proposals put forward by Dutch/Japanese privateer Abellio to close ticket offices and cut staff in a bid to further boost its profits. In the latest accounts to the end of 2015 Abellio Greater Anglia's retained profit was over £26 million.

These proposed cuts to the Greater Anglia service fly in the face of the fact that there is still a clear need for staffed ticket offices at stations. Indeed, all the research shows that many passengers prefer to buy from the ticket office rather than from a ticket machine. Replacing staffed ticket offices with machines will undoubtedly limit the quality, safety and range of services available to passengers.

Transport Focus (the independent passenger watchdog) confirmed this view when it objected to Abellio's proposals on six grounds covering the quality of data supplied, the adequacy of ticket machines, personal security, information provision by staff to passengers, accessibility and loss of existing facilities due to de-staffing. Full details of their objections can be found here:

<https://www.transportfocus.org.uk/research-publications/publications/greater-anglia-application-change-ticket-office-hours-transport-focus-response/>

We have asked Abellio for a meaningful response to our concerns and full copies of all their plans on this situation, but thus far they have not been forthcoming.

Although they have since denied it they have previously told RMT's Regional Organiser that by the end of the franchise in 2025/6 there will only be seven ticket offices left in total. The regulations governing such closures known as Schedule 17 are absolutely clear that an operator can make major changes to ticket office opening hours if: "the change would represent an improvement on current arrangements in terms of quality of service and/or cost effectiveness and members of the public would continue to enjoy wide spread and easy access to the purchase of rail products, notwithstanding the change". How anyone can believe that getting rid of staff at nearly all stations will achieve such an aim, is beyond anyone's comprehension.

We are also seeking urgent clarification and assurances from Abellio that Conductor's will remain working on trains as at present. We believe it is essential that the safety critical role they perform is retained along with their responsibilities for train dispatch.

I hope you will therefore join with me in agreeing any proposals to close ticket offices or cut on train staff are simply unacceptable at a time of rising fares and rail passenger numbers and there is no genuine economic case to be made. This is really about cutting costs and sweating the assets to make even bigger profits for shareholders.

Please let Abellio know how you feel by contacting Andrew Goodman, Customer Services Director, Greater Anglia, 11 Floor, One Stratford Place, Montfitchet Road, London, E20 1EJ.

6. **Kent Elms Junction Works** - Please see below the latest update and progress so far that the council put on their website, which can be found [here](#).

In consideration for the impact of lane closures during School holidays, this week Eurovia have provided two lanes Southend bound during the day and will endeavour to keep outbound off peak (9.30-15.30) lane closures to a minimum.

Next week Eurovia will continue to carry out kerbing works to the central island on the A127 east of the junction which will affect the right-hand turn movements during off peak (9.30-15.30) into Rayleigh Road. Work will also continue on the drainage and safety barrier works in the central island to the west of the junction and the right-hand turn movements during off peak (9.30-15.30) into Bridgwater Drive will be effected.

BT are continuing with the reconstruction works to their access shaft in the southern verge, near New and Used, and will endeavour to keep outbound lane closures to a minimum.

Over the weekend of **9<sup>th</sup> June** the second weekend closure of Rayleigh Road will be carried out and incorporates the closure of Rayleigh Road in the southbound direction. This means that vehicles will not be able to enter the A127 from Rayleigh Road. The road will be **closed from 8am Friday 9th June until 5pm Sunday 11th June**. A signed diversion route will be in place. These closures do not affect the access to Kent Elms Health Centre car park and the shops on Rayleigh Road.

We apologise for any inconvenience these necessary works may cause.

Some off-peak lane closures may still be necessary on the Southend-bound carriageway at times but a minimum of two lanes on the Southend-bound carriageway will be kept open throughout the day. All lanes will be completed on the Southend-bound carriageway before the summer holidays.

On the London-bound carriageway, there will be no peak lane closures and Eurovia will also endeavour to keep off-peak (09.30 – 15.30) lane closures to a minimum.