

**BERA AGM - THURSDAY 15TH MARCH 2018 AT ST AUGUSTINES CHURCH
FROM 8-10PM**

1. Some more sad news this month. A member of our Committee has sadly passed away following a fall. Alan Meredith was a keen participant on the Committee and always full of enthusiasm. We will miss him.
2. Please don't forget to **renew your membership to BERA** for January to December 2018 if you haven't already done so. We have finished delivering the BERA booklets with the renewal forms in, but if you prefer you can pay online by bank transfer, or print off a renewal form and drop a cheque/cash in to Ron Woodley or Mike Stafford. All information is available on the home page of www.bera.co.uk.
3. Regarding **Southend Hospital**, it now seems that there are due to be more transfers of patients between hospitals than is mentioned in the consultation process. In the case of our elderly patients with various medical problems such as a stroke, high blood pressure and fractures, how will they decide which hospital to send the patient to? Therefore, our Chairman has put forward the following as opposition business to the Council meeting on 22nd February as he is extremely concerned that the consultation is flawed because of the continual changes they are making to the hospital during the consultation period.

" In light of the recent decision to merge Southend, Basildon and Broomfield Hospitals, in the midst of the STP consultation, thereby undermining fundamental democratic principles of the consultation, the overwhelming impression by observers and the media is that the STP is now viewed as a forgone conclusion. The residents and users of Southend Hospital will see the reduction and removal of many critical clinical services, leaving Southend's residents much worse off should the STP proceed.

Accordingly the Council should send a message to the three Hospital Trusts expressing concern and dissatisfaction with their decision to implement a merger of the Hospitals while the STP consultation is in progress since it completely undermines that consultation process."

4. As an interesting point, we have been advised that the 650ft chimney at the defunct Kingsnorth Power Station in Hoo will disappear from Medway's skyline in March as it is being blown up and demolished on Thursday March 8th at 10am.
5. There were no reported **crimes in Thorpe Ward** during 22-28 January which is very good to hear, but we cannot be complacent as we have been notified that a bogus caller was knocking at local houses recently, collecting sponsorship money for a marathon he is running this year. He had a sponsorship form and had quite a few signatures on it. He wasn't aggressive but was quite over familiar. Apparently, according to Facebook, he has been convicted for charity fraud (back in 2015) and has been approaching lots of people recently in Thorpe Bay and Shoeburyness. Please be very careful of giving money or buying goods at your doorstep, unless the person is personally known to you.

6. We had a message from a local resident that the grass cutting in St James's Avenue was poorly executed, with the grass completely disappearing, leaving patches of dirt, and the area was left in an extremely untidy state. Our BERA Chairman invited the council officer involved in the street scene to a meeting to highlight the damage caused to our verges. The problem was that the grass was cut too low and scalped the verges, loose grass edgings were left in the gutter or on the footpath and loose soil on the footpath had not been blown away. Therefore, the contractors have been asked to use smaller machines at a higher cut, especially in the winter, spend an extra 10 minutes tidying up after themselves, and if it is too wet to blow away, use a broom to leave a good finish. This is not only for St James's but throughout the area, so hopefully we will see an improvement in the future.

7. Due to the proposed change in town centre car parking charges, BERA are examining, through C2C, the possibility of a **weekend shuttle train** between Shoeburyness and Leigh-on-Sea, encouraging more public transport use with a hop on hop off facility. We will keep you updated as to the progress.

8. We will be ordering more **personal and panic alarms** shortly. Personal alarms have a small torch on one end and are to put in your pocket or on a keyring when you are out and about. Panic alarms are to hang by your front door and activate if you feel you are in danger. These are free to BERA members who would like some extra security and are available from Ron Woodley – 01702 588662, or Mike Stafford - 01702 870895.

9. Don't forget to let us know about any **potholes and trip hazards** on the pavements in our area and around where you live, including around tree roots, as we have negotiated with the council to put into the budget for the next 2 years, substantial sums to cover this type of footway repair throughout the town.

Reminders

6. The next **BERA sponsored coffee morning** will take place on Thursday 15th February at The Methodist Church (on the corner of Johnstone Road and The Broadway) from 10am to 12 midday. Hope to see you there.

7. The Tram Stop Shelter Charity are planning a **musical evening** (Dvorac, Shostakovitch, Behr, Haydn, Delius, Piazzolla and other light classical) on Saturday 17th February 2018 from 7pm at St Augustine's Church, Thorpe Bay. Tickets will be £7.50 each and are available at the door or in advance from Mike or Wendy Stafford on 01702 870895.