

1. We have had a lot of requests from members asking us to politely request that people stop feeding the seagulls in their back gardens due to the mess they cause on cars, windows, roofs and the general street scene. Also a reminder about making sure people pick up the mess their dogs make and not to discard the bag on their way home. If there is not a dog poo bin nearby, you can always use a normal rubbish bin to put your bag in.
2. At a meeting yesterday afternoon Churchill was refused planning, by a vast majority of councillors, for retirement apartments at 193 Thorpe Hall Avenue. BERA feel this was the correct decision and would like to thank all of you who wrote in with your concerns. Thanks also go to our planning expert for looking at the plans and giving us the reasons why it should be refused.
3. Please see below some information received which may be of interest if you rent, buy or own a property that you rent to others. Ron has been pushing the Government for a while about these issues.

Government response to consultation: Houses of Multiple Occupancy (HMO) and residential property licensing forms

The Government has provided its response to a consultation concerning HMOs and residential property licensing forms. The government plans to extend the scope of HMO licensing, meaning it will apply where certain HMOs are occupied by five persons or more. Plans are also in place to introduce minimum bedroom sizes in such properties, specifying which spaces are appropriate for both adults and children to sleep in.

Consultation Outcome: Proposed Banning Order Offences under the Housing and Planning Act (2016)

The Government has responded to a consultation on what should constitute 'banning order offences', on rogue/criminal landlords or property agents, as defined in the Housing and Planning Act 2016. The proposed measures include the introduction of a national database of rogue landlords/agents, the introduction of civil penalties up to £30,000 and extending Rent Repayment Orders to cover illegal eviction, breach of a banning order to failure to comply with certain statutory notices. Following favourable feedback, the Government plans to pursue introduction of the measures, with guidance for local authorities to be published later in 2018.

Proposed crackdown on unfair leasehold practices

Housing, Communities and Local Government Secretary, Sajid Javid, has announced new measures designed to cut out unfair practices from the leasehold system. These include: leaseholds to be banned for most new-build properties, and ground rents on new long leases – for both houses and flats – to be set to zero. The Government will also make it

cheaper and easier for existing leaseholders to buy-out their freehold and there will be better information available about redress for those consumers who face the most onerous terms. Measures follow a recent consultation where an overwhelming number of respondents suggested action should be taken to tackle abusive practices within the leasehold system.

4. Crime details for Thorpe

Ward	Reference	Offence Type	Reported Date	Committed From	Street	Town	MO - filtered
Thorpe	42/13679/18	Theft from a motor vehicle	29/01/2018 13:53	29/01/2018 10:30	Dungannon Drive	Southend-on-Sea	SUSPECT UNKNOWN HAS REMOVED A TURFCO ROAD EDGING MACHINE FROM A CITROEN FLATBED LORRY C BY MEANS OF UNSTRAPPING IT
Thorpe	42/15331/18	Other criminal damage to a vehicle (Under £5,000)	01/02/2018 20:01	27/01/2018 17:45	Eastern Esplanade	Southend-on-Sea	SUSPECTS HAS DAMAGED THE VICTIMS SILVER LAND-ROVER DISCOVERY USING AN UNKNOWN SHARP IMPLEMENT SCRATCHING THE ENTIRE PASSENGER SIDE OF THE VEHICLE FROM FRONT TO BACK CAUSING DAMAGE TO THE AMOUNT OF 2000 GBPS

We have also been advised that on Saturday 3rd February at approximately 4.50am, two people were seen on the driveway of a member's house, but were disturbed and ran off towards Johnstone Road. At 5.15am they returned, walking down Tyrone Road towards Burges Road, looking in all cars on the road and in driveways as they went. It was reported to the police. Please ensure nothing of value is on show in your car and always lock it carefully.

5. QUEENSWAY CONSULTATION DOCUMENT

Below is the link to the Queensway consultation document:

<http://democracy.southend.gov.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=130&MId=3056&Ver=4>

Our Highways expert has reviewed the **Queensway Development plans** and we have included his report below and we will now be sending this off as BERA's response to the consultation document. We expect it to be ignored.

Nobody will shed a tear for the loss of the tower blocks at Queensway. The redevelopment of the area is overdue and the public consultation is about, in fairly general terms, the shape and nature of what will replace the existing uses. In the main housing will predominate, some commercial and retail space will be provided but how much and where

are not mentioned. One assumes that this use will be along the existing shop frontage in Southchurch Road and Chichester Road.

Obviously the major benefits of redevelopment will be the new housing, although there is sparse information available. Naturally existing tenants have been given priority in terms assured tenancies and other rights. A minimum number of affordable homes are mentioned but the term "affordable" is not defined. Neither is the type of housing beyond size. How many may be shared ownership, for sale or for rent is not dealt with or even mentioned.

What is mentioned as a key feature of the housing is a car parking space for every property. Now it is quite difficult to think of any that is as convenient as Queensway in terms of proximity to the Town centre shopping and other facilities, easy access of public transport - rail and bus - and new pedestrian and cycle routes through the development. Sustainable travel to die for! So why does every home need space for a car when that is not demanded on other developments far removed from the idyllic location of Queensway. Moreover, the space required for that level of car parking provision is being provided by eliminating road space for moving cars.

No doubt the presence of the Queensway road and slip roads is a major factor in causing severance between the two parts of the estate but the elimination of the slip roads is unlikely to stitch the two sides together again. But even if it did, we need to look at the wider implications to see whether the environmental benefits accruing to Queensway are achieved without having a disproportionate impact on other areas. As yet, no environmental assessment has been undertaken of the changes in travel pattern resulting from the revised road layout.

The proposed road layout through Queensway is predicted to carry less traffic than now. That has to be a good thing for residents and others in the immediate vicinity, less noise, less pollution. No figures are available of the volume of traffic that has left the area but we do know that it is predicted to travel from Cuckoo Corner along Priory Crescent and then down Sutton Road instead of Victoria Ave and along Queensway. There is a strong argument for saying that Victoria Ave and the Queensway are better equipped physically as traffic routes, even before you take into account the current levels of traffic that Priory Crescent and Sutton Road have to handle. So the reduction of traffic in the Queensway is at the expense of Priory Crescent and Sutton Road.

Whether that produces an overall environmental gain for the residents as a whole i.e. Queensway and St Lukes is a matter which should be addressed.

Now let's look at the local road network changes. First, the removal of the roundabout and the slip roads; this is to create more development space and coupled with some covering over of the underpass, enable a better connection of the two parts of the estate with improved public space. The removal of the north facing off slip road and the removal of the

south facing on slip road are of no consequence to the Queensway estate. They are removed because the roundabout is being removed. But even the roundabout is of no or little consequence to the Queensway estate. There is nothing to prevent the two slip roads through the Queensway estate being eliminated, with the consequential environmental gains whilst retaining the other slip roads and the roundabout as it is. This would produce a massive financial saving. Think of it as stage one. If redevelopment on the south side of Southchurch Road were to come about then the roundabout and slip roads could be revisited at that time.

Because the roundabout is shown to be demolished in the consultation document, it has led to consideration of the link to Sutton Road. At present Sutton Road connects into the roundabout on the west side of the Church, it is two way. On the east side of the church is a short section of one way, also Sutton Road. The church is therefore an island surrounded by roads on three sides. The proposal is to widen the one way part of Sutton Road to make it two way (this is to be done by widening on the east side taking it closer to Barrington's, a seven storey block of flats) thus inflicting residents with twice the volume of traffic nearer their homes and a set of signals. Meanwhile the two way length of Sutton Road is to be made one way north. The church remains an island surrounded by two lengths of two way street, Southchurch Road and Sutton Road east and one length of one way street exactly as previously, but with hundreds of thousands of pounds spent and residents worse off in terms of noise and pollution. There is no justification for it.

This polemic is written without the benefit of detailed traffic figures. Attempts to obtain such information as to existing and projected traffic flows have been thwarted. Resorting to freedom of information legislation has seen the officers at their worst in terms of holding back information as if covered by the Official Secrets Act. Pathetic..

P.S. It has just come to our attention that it has been reported the area around Victoria Circus is the worst area in the Borough for vehicular pollution. Consequently, the officers may now try to use this to justify reducing traffic in the Queensway.

6. Essex County Council has launched the public consultation on a multi-million-pound scheme to improve the A127 / A130 Fairglen Interchange.

The Fairglen Interchange is operating very near to its traffic capacity, with motorists experiencing significant delays during peak periods. The scheme includes building new roads and widening existing ones to help reduce journey times, increase capacity and address safety issues for the tens of thousands of motorists who drive through the Interchange every day.

In addition to the improvements for motorists, a new walking and cycling bridge would provide significant benefits for sustainable transport users, linking existing walking and cycling routes along the A127.

For more details of the proposals and to have your say, please visit

www.essex.gov.uk/fairglen.

The public consultation gives individuals, businesses and organisations an opportunity to comment on the proposals. They have published a comprehensive package of information about the Fairglen Improvement Scheme, such as economic rationale and environmental impacts, and providing a number of easily accessible channels through which people can give us their feedback.

How to find out more:

- Visit www.essex.gov.uk/fairglen
- Watch the launch video and 3D fly-through video
- Pick up a consultation brochure from your local library or council office
- Follow our regular updates on Facebook and Twitter

How to have your say:

- Fill in the online questionnaire
- Email fairglen.interchange@jacobs.com
- Download a paper questionnaire from their website and post it to us

Everyone has until Tuesday 20 March 2018 to give their views. They read all consultation responses and will use the information to help deliver the best possible scheme for the people of Essex.

6. Reminders

Please don't forget to renew your membership to BERA for January to December 2018 if you haven't already done so. You can pay online by bank transfer, or print off a renewal form (one should have been delivered to you in the BERA brochure) 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.

The next **Bera sponsored Coffee morning** will be on Thursday 15th February from 10.00am to 12 midday at the Methodist Church on the corner of Johnstone and The Broadway. We are hoping to see a lot of new members there as well as our regulars. Come along for a hot drink and a biscuit, all paid for by BERA.

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.

The **BERA AGM** will be taking place on Thursday 15th March at St Augustine's Church from 8pm. There will be an update on local issues and talks by Mike Stafford about The Tram Stop Shelter and another by Reverend Jonathan Collis about the restoration of the tower and clock at St Augustine's Church. Your local Independent Councillors will be available to discuss any problems regarding local issues.

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.

Work is being carried out along Thorpe Hall Avenue to remove dangerous shrubs that overhang the road. The preparation of the beds and planting of new plants will be completed next winter.