



# BERA

## The Residents' Association

October 2016

Dear Member

I hope you have all had a lovely summer and made use of the numerous facilities we are lucky enough to have in our area. The weather has been good this year, which means the beach and our parks have been busy with both residents and visitors, giving a boost to our local businesses. Hopefully this winter won't be too harsh, as we still suffer from localised flooding when there is heavy rainfall. The sea wall situation is presently being fully reviewed, in line with what additional use can be made of Shoebury Common in terms of leisure facilities, so that the correct solution and leisure facilities can be put in place to ensure better use of the common and beach.

It seems strange that council officers are now considering doing excavations of the current sea-wall foundations, when we were all told, when fighting the previous proposals, that the foundations were not good enough to take the slight increase in the wall height that BERA were recommending (porky pies come to mind). Anyway these excavations will be taking place this autumn. Once these have taken place there will be a wide consultation on any proposals, with BERA being part of that. In actual fact the Chairmanship of the committee is our own member, Councillor Martin Terry, and I am confident that the final solution will be more acceptable to the majority of residents in our community.

The Government have announced that they would develop a national litter strategy focusing on three key themes: education and awareness, punishing offenders and better cleansing and litter infrastructure (amen to all that). Of course as local residents, there is much we can do to ensure we are proud of the area we live in. For instance we could try and pick up litter, especially outside our own properties that people have discarded. Also any ideas where more dog fouling bins can be placed would be welcomed and we will pass the information on to the council.

The Association is currently supporting Greenways members regarding parking and the safety of children going to school. The council has failed in its obligations to fulfil its planning conditions on the expansion of the school. If the council cannot fulfil conditions on its own planning applications, what hope is there to control developers?

As many of you will be aware, there are a number of households that do not have a sufficiently wide crossover, or no crossover at all, to enable them to get to their property from the highway. This not only causes damage to the pavements, with resulting trip hazards, but also affects underground services such as gas, water and electrics. Having read the Highways Act, it is clear that it is the council's responsibility to ensure that residents have the appropriate crossover to enable them to get onto their property without causing damage to our pavements. This is a gentle reminder that the council are now looking seriously at taking enforcement action against households that have not complied to the Highways Act.

Don't forget to check the new and improved BERA website for updates on local issues. We have a page regarding the Tram Stop Project, with regular newsletters posted, and events that support and raise money for this project. There are also details of local events taking place. If there is anything you would like us to add then please let us know. The Association is hoping to provide a notice board in The Broadway to enable residents to publicise local events.

Also there is a link for Essex Police (probably the only place in Southend that you might see the word police) giving details of local police news, upcoming meetings, and contacts. Unfortunately, we can no longer rely on the police; my understanding is that at a recent roll call there were so few uniformed Officers available that CID Officers had to don uniforms and go out on patrol. We have now also lost our dedicated PCSO's from the area. This is due to having to make savings of £65 million since 2010 and further cuts to spending expected by 2020. What I would like to know is where our local police council tax precept goes as it is certainly not on policing our streets, which is why we have purchased a quantity of home panic alarms for anyone that feels vulnerable.

We are still investigating the possibility of a 20mph speed limit, especially in Burges and Barnstaple Roads. We achieved the funding through a charity organisation but it seems the council are dragging their heels.

As last year's Christmas tree lights were so disappointing, we are investigating a new approach/idea that will hopefully brighten up the tree for this year.

Additionally, members who need planning or legal specialists to help with local problems or would like a tree or shrub planted outside their house, funded by BERA, should contact a member of the committee. Also if you require additional pink, white or food sacks, our Independent councillors will deliver these to you.

Finally, do you have new neighbours or know someone who is not a member of the Association? If so, why not introduce them to BERA. The stronger we are the more we can achieve and improve the area we live in.

#### **BERA Committee Members 2016**

Ron Woodley – Chair  
Philippa Peters – Secretary  
Catherine Marks  
Avis France

Mike Stafford – Treasurer  
Debbie Fuller  
David & Margaret Harper

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