

## **BERA – E-NEWSLETTER 31<sup>ST</sup> JANUARY, 2017**

1. We are holding our first **BERA sponsored coffee morning** from **10:00am to midday on Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> February, 2017** at the **Methodist Church** (on the corner of Johnstone and The Broadway). We would love to see as many members there as possible and if the turnout is good we will make this a regular event. If you have neighbours/friends who may be interested in joining BERA please bring them along. It is a good opportunity to meet new and existing members and to discuss what is happening in and around the area over a hot drink and a biscuit.

2. Are members aware that the Essex County Fire and Rescue Service offer **free supply and fit of smoke alarms**? If you are interested in this, please call 0300 303 0088. You can usually speak to a person but if they are particularly busy, leave your contact details on their answer machine and someone will call you back.

3. On the subject of alarms, BERA still supply **personal and panic alarms** to members. Please contact Mike Stafford 01702 870895 or Ron Woodley 01702 588662 if you would like to receive one of these.

4. We noticed this article from the Echo online today:

**Basildon Hospital A&E warns people to go elsewhere due to high demand**  
– As was reported in the news yesterday, the A127 was shut for most of the afternoon due to a crane toppling over after hitting the footbridge at the Bell junction. What with the extensive roadworks soon to be carried out at the Fairglens Interchange, anyone needing emergency medical care at Basildon Hospital in such circumstances would have had an extremely stressful journey – HOPEFULLY OUR MPs ARE MONITORING THIS SITUATION FOR FUTURE REFERENCE CONCERNING A&E SERVICES!

5. Churchill Retirement Living have again been in contact with BERA members offering to purchase the freehold to their property with a view to building retirement homes. BERA's advice is that you do not respond to their enquiries. We have contacted Churchill and advised them that any application to support the change of a

single private dwelling house to a retirement home will be subject to legal action by BERA to protect the integrity of the estate.

## **6. Information taken from an e-mail from Essex County Council regarding Fairglen Interchange**

You will be aware that the A127/A130 Fairglen Interchange is operating very near to its capacity, with road users experiencing significant delays during peak periods. To address this, Essex County Council, with Essex Highways, has investigated the causes of congestion and safety issues, considered a range of solutions, and identified funding for improvements.

ECC is now sharing two layout options for improvements to the A127/A130 Fairglen Interchange. They have identified an improved road layout that is proposed to be operational by 2022, which will make use of secured funding and will improve traffic congestion for approximately 10 years after opening.

However, if the region continues to grow, their technical assessments have shown a much larger scheme may be needed around 2031. To make the best long-term use of the current funding, they have also developed a long-term option that builds on the short-term and to make sure that the short-term scheme is future-proofed.

They would like to inform you of their forthcoming Public Information Events to be held in the mid-February 2017 half-term week:

- 15<sup>th</sup> February 2017, 13:00 – 20:00, at the Holiday Inn Basildon (Lakeside Suite - Waterfront Walk, Festival Leisure Park, Basildon, Essex, SS14 3DG); and
- 16<sup>th</sup> February 2017, 13:00 – 20:00, at The King John School (Main Theatre – Shipwrights Drive, Thundersley, Benfleet, Essex, SS7 1RQ).

They are releasing plans of the layout options for both scheme options so that local communities and road users can start to understand the future traffic volumes at the Interchange and see the current proposals for resolving these issues. The plans will be available on the [website](#) from 15<sup>th</sup> February 2017 to coincide with the public information events. Further engagement events are then being planned to provide more detail on the proposals as they are developed.

If you have any questions about the scheme you can also contact Essex County Council at: [Fairglen.Interchange@jacobs.com](mailto:Fairglen.Interchange@jacobs.com)

## 7. A brief summary of articles from news headlines today

### **Social care in collapse fear**

The UK's social care system is in "grave danger of falling apart" because of underfunding, councils warn today. There are a growing number of people in need of social care that are being left stranded in hospitals. The Government's Care Act is facing failure unless more money is provided for social care. In its submission to the Treasury ahead of the Budget, the LGA said if new money was not announced for social care then ministers needed to be "honest and upfront" with the public about the level of care that could be provided. "The intentions and the spirit of the Care Act that aims to help people to live well and independently, are in grave danger of falling apart and failing, unless new funding is announced by government for adult social care. It is not good enough just to be trying to help someone get washed and dressed. Adult social care is about much more than this."

### **Homeowners rushing to convert gardens into driveways**

Homeowners are rushing to pave over their front gardens to make driveways to avoid paying for on-street parking permits, a Freedom of Information request has revealed. Across the UK successful applications for the installation of dropped kerbs, which let cars easily drive over them, increased by 49 per cent between 2013 and 2015.

### **Landowners benefited from planning changes, study shows**

Changes to the planning system have brought profits to landowners at the expense of local communities, according to new research. A new planning framework published in 2012, which aimed to encourage development, caused land prices in London to rise, while the number of affordable homes has dropped.