

Magazine Article for January 2016

We wish all our members a very happy new year.

This month we report on a number of issues.

### Community Health

Health East Chief Executive Andy Evans has confirmed that Southwold Hospital is unlikely to re-open. He told our committee on Dec 4 that the hospital had hardly been used by local people for some time. Patients were currently being cared for by voluntary organisations and staff from the Sole Bay Health Centre but two "beds with care" have also been block-booked at Oaklands Residential Care Home. Staff are currently being recruited to the Out of Hospital Team which would work from the Health Centre and he expected them to be in place by February. Land next to the Health Centre has now been passed to NHS Property to seek developers for a new care home. The fate of Southwold Hospital is, however, still undecided. Plans for it to become a hospice have been rejected because the building was too small.

We will monitor the situation and would welcome feedback from members on the new services.

### Southwold "Gateway"

Following Southwold Town Council's recent consultation on the Entrance to Southwold, we are glad that they have taken up the challenge of developing an overall approach to the sites in Station Road that are now up for redevelopment or may become so in the future. Their ideas include a mix of housing but also retain some commercial uses which we welcome as part of a strategy for a sustainable community. Representatives of the Society's Executive Committee have been invited by the Mayor to meet informally with members of the Town Council in early January to discuss the entrance to the town and we will keep members informed of progress.

In the meantime, Equity Estates who now own the former garage sites adjoining North Road are about to submit an application for high quality housing. We have invited the developer to the January EC meeting to explain their scheme and will let members know more following that.

### Oil Transfers

The government Department of Transport is undertaking a new consultation about the Ship to Ship Oil Transfers which are licensed to take place off Southwold – the only such area in the UK. We are glad that the numbers of transfers is much reduced (from 368 in 2010 to 39 in 2014) but still believe they should not take place offshore but in oil terminals where spillages would be less likely and be addressed much better if they do occur. We have responded to the consultation on these lines, pointing out that the low numbers should be easily accommodated in oil terminals.

### SRS Website

In recent months, we have continued to improve our website, which now includes a Latest News feature which is regularly updated. This can be found at: [southwoldandreydonsociety.org.uk](http://southwoldandreydonsociety.org.uk)

And finally a gentle reminder that membership subscriptions are now due and it greatly helps administration if you can supply an email address.

Philip O'Hear, Secretary.