

**136 St. Lukes Road
Southend-on-Sea
SS2 4AG
Tel. 01702-616302
18/03/14**

Health and St. Lukes - fao Ian Ross

Dear Ian

Following last night's meeting of the Cluny Residents Association (CRA), I was asked to write, on behalf of our association, to you in your capacity as the NHS England representative dealing with the future provision of St. Lukes Health Centre. Firstly, we would like to thank you for attending, for your clear presentation and your endeavours at answering our questions.

As you know, CRA has long been supportive of moves toward improving the health facilities for our area and it is with some consternation that eight years on since our formation we still do not have a permanent home for our GP practice, and that other areas of Southend, with lesser health needs, are better served. We are of course thankful that we do have a health centre, albeit in temporary accommodation, and that St. Luke's church is hosting some health related activities but, as became evident last night, this is not enough and permanent accommodation is needed.

We regret having been kept in the dark and having our hopes falsely raised for long periods, and a lack of integrity and transparency by the past powers that be when engaging (or not) with us on these matters. The point that one of our members made as to how can you expect to deliver when others more senior to you have failed to do so in the past is a pertinent one, but at least you can try and do so with our support. We appreciate your undertaking to keep us updated with what is going on and to liaise with our elected representatives, i.e. our councilors, on this matter.

Regarding the location of the permanent facility, we understand that you will be looking into this, even though this exercise has been carried out in the past. We realise there will be advantages and disadvantages in whatever option is chosen and these will need to be weighed. Our hope is that the business case for any of these will be clearly stated and made available in the public domain. While the final decision is not with residents, we hope our views will be taken into account. It seems to us that the needs of this deprived area are obvious, and that the savings in terms of socio-economic costs will justify the costs of building a permanent centre. We need to maximize the services to be provided and at the same time be cost effective.

We look forward to work with you on these matters and be kept informed over developments.

Yours sincerely

**John Barber
CRA Chair**