

Who are We?

The Lions Club of Billericay celebrates its 30th birthday this year, 2009. Over the years it has become well established in the town, with a familiar Bookstall outside Somerfields every Saturday morning, Quiz nights held regularly through the year and, of course, the Christmas Sleigh. Many residents of the town remember the sleigh as a child and now bring their own children out to see Santa on the sleigh. The comment is often made that Christmas wouldn't be the same without it.

So who are the Billericay Lions? What do they stand for? Is it an exclusive Club for old men trying to make their mark on the local Community? Hardly.

Lions Clubs are all over the world

Billericay Lions Club is just one of 44,000 Clubs totalling 1,300,000 members in 200 countries around the world. In virtually every major town in the Western world, a Lions Club is not far away. Started in 1917, the International Association of Lions Clubs is the largest Volunteer Service Club organisation in the World.

We exist to give support to needy local groups within our Communities, as well as National and International crises for help. In recent times Lions sent help to flooded areas in England, the Tsunami in Thailand and Earthquake in Pakistan. Because we are a World Wide organisation, we ensure that all help is delivered, quickly, right to the people who need it, rather than wasting precious resources on middle men and officialdom.

What do we actually do?

So how does Billericay Lions play its part?

Well, over the last 30 years this Club has raised over £300,000 from our Fund Raising activities. Funds raised have been distributed to St Lukes' Hospice, Little Havens, Hamlyn House, Scouts, Guides, School, elderly and disabled groups and hundreds of local needy organisations that are calling out for help. Government cannot or will not support all of these groups but together we can make some people's lives a little easier.

And it's not just money that is given. The members of Billericay Lions help, elderly, disabled and youth groups in many different ways. We operate a rota system taking Arthritic sufferers to their Club meetings. Every year we organise a Concert Party attended by 200 local Senior Citizens and drive them home afterwards. We organise an International Swimming Gala with our sister clubs in Germany and Belgium for people with disabilities. This is held every 2 years in rotation in Voreifel, Brussels or Basildon. We also have a scheme and bursaries to encourage youth community service projects.

Friendship

But it's not just about Charity work. The members of Billericay Lions have made close friendships within the Club as a result of working closely together on Social Projects. Men who believed they had nothing in common with their neighbours have been surprised and delighted to make long lasting friendships with fellow Lions. The club comprises men from various walks of life, including IT, Insurance, Banking,

Sales, business owners and others who have taken early retirement etc.

Young or old, we all need friends, and in Billericay Lions Club that camaraderie shines through in all we do. Whether it's on the Bookstall or selling Raffle Tickets, there is always light hearted banter between members. We enjoy many various social activities, from Country Walks, attending Beer Festivals, Theatre Trips and informal Dinners with our partners.

Wives and partners, though not encouraged as members (why double subscriptions for the same benefits?), organise their own activities for those who want to join in, and play a full part in the social scene of the Club.

There is no affiliation to any political party.

The commitment required is entirely down to each individual. We ask that you take your turn on the Bookstall, help out on the Christmas Sleigh and whatever else you feel you can input for the benefit of the Club.

Meetings

Club meetings are on the 2nd and 4th Mondays of a month and are held at 8pm at The Burstead Golf Club on the edge of Town.

Give us a call if you require a lift. The first meeting deals with the Business of the Club – the debates are always loud and lively! At the second meeting there is usually a speaker on some topic of general interest to all Club members.

Why not join us for a couple of meetings without obligation? You have nothing to lose.

Some of our most recent members give their reasons for joining The Lions –

'I have recently moved to Billerica with my job and thought it would be a good way to make new friends quickly.

I had to take early retirement, and wanted something to get my teeth into. I needed something to help me escape the rat race I was in, working long hours in London.

I joined because I wanted to meet like minded people in the Community.

I had been visiting the Bookstall in the High Street and realised I enjoyed the banter I was getting involved with.

I met these guys at the Senior Citizens Concert Party which my Mother attended, and was impressed with their setup.

A friend of mine was a member and he talked me into joining. I'm glad he did.'

Contacting the Lions –

- Come and talk to us at our Bookstall outside Somerfield every Saturday Morning from 9.30 to 12.30

- Visit our Website at – www.billericalions.com

- Email us at ilions@billericalions.com

- Leave a message on our answerphone on 0845 8339849

- Write to us at Lions Club of Billerica PO Box 4359 Billerica CM11 1HB



So you want to know about the Lions?