

*Dear Councillor Fitzhenry*

*At the age of 101, Bert Warne has walked from his home in Bitterne to a memorial 1 mile away, every day since 2003. The memorial he visits and looks after, represents the many lives lost during the World War Two battle against Japan. These lives belonged to many of Bert's comrades but most importantly, they were his friends. He is known as custodian of the stone which he has looked after singlehandedly for the last 18 years. Of the 20 prisoners of war who attended the installation, only he remains alive today.*

*This dedication Bert shows, mirrors the dedication he showed during his time with the British army. From escaping the sinking SS Asia to becoming a World War Two prisoner of war, Bert faced the worst of times under the strict rules of the Japanese army – digging the railway embankments by hand. Weighing at just six and a half stone, it was here he fell ill and was taken to hospital for a total of nine months.*

*Shortly after he was released, Bert was given a job cleaning huts in the camp. It was here he suffered a bomb attack, but once again, luck was on his side and he survived another near miss.*

*There is much more to Bert's story and I encourage you to find out more about this amazing man for yourselves.*

*To be given freedom of his city would be a privilege for Bert and show him that we are thankful for to him, not just for the extraordinary things he did for our country and for the privileges we have today but for the fact that he continues to look after his friends and those who did not come home for such a long time. He is a true example to all who live in the City, we are lucky and very proud to have this man associated to our school and strongly feel that the City has a duty to recognise this special Southampton resident with urgency.*

*Thank you*

*F J (Year 6)*