Four year old Leyton enjoyed the ball pool at our annual Christmas party at Kids Kingdom - see page 3 for more pics
Happy New Year and welcome to the winter 2017 issue of Insight magazine.

I do hope that you have enjoyed all the fun that the festive season had to offer!

This issue is, as usual, filled to the brim with a varied mix of articles so hopefully there is something for everyone to enjoy, starting with a lovely selection of photos on the opposite page of our youngest residents enjoying our Christmas party back in December – it was so wonderful seeing their delighted little faces!

Our team members have always been brilliant at helping tenants however they can and, in this issue, we highlight the support they may be able to offer YOU should you need it, especially since a number of our officers completed a Citizens Advice Bureau course to become qualified advisers. See page 5 to find out more.

I make no secret of the fact that my favourite part of my job is getting out and meeting tenants and hearing their stories. Last month, I had the pleasure of meeting Maurice Dolphin at his flat in Bishop House, where he told me about his life and showed me his jaw-dropping artwork. I for one can’t wait to visit the exhibition of his artwork that is being held in the summer – you can read all about Maurice on page 4.

Happy reading! We’ll be back with the spring issue of Insight in April.

Julia

In the last edition of Insight magazine, we advised you how to look out for fraud on the internet and by email. Sadly, fraud is a fact of life, and in 2015 more than £700,000,000 was lost to financial fraud.

Financial fraud can take place in a number of ways, with the most common being debit or credit cards, remote banking and cheque fraud. Over the last 5 years, more than 3.6 million individuals became victims of phone fraud and this, together with the increasingly sophisticated online attacks show just how important it is to protect your personal data.

Therefore, many of the UK banks, card issuers, and card payment partners have joined together to tell people about the way they can protect themselves. This campaign is known as “Take 5” and encourages people to Take Five minutes to stop and think. You may have already heard of this campaign, as many banks are advertising this in branch or online, or are writing to their customers to let them know about some of the more common scams and how to avoid them.

The main message is to take five minutes to stop and think before handing over your card, bank details, personal information, or anything else that might help a fraudster gain access to your money. The key points are:

- Never disclose security details, such as your PIN or your full banking password
- Don’t just assume that an email, text or phone call is authentic
- Don’t be rushed – a genuine organisation won’t mind waiting
- Listen to your instincts – you know if something doesn’t feel right
- Stay in control – don’t panic and make a decision you’ll regret.

One of the more common scams involves fraudsters telephoning and pretending to be your bank. They might tell you that your bank account has been compromised and that you should transfer the money to another account. Or they may say that they will send a courier to collect your bank card from you. Some fraudsters will even tell you to call your bank to check they are genuine, but somehow manage to ensure you speak to another of the fraudsters.

A bank will never ring you and ask you to transfer money, nor will they ever send a courier to collect your bank card, or ask you for your PIN.

You can find out more information from your bank, or if you would like to know more about the campaign, please visit the Take Five website on www.takefive-stopfraud.org.uk and read how you can protect yourself and your money!
Many thanks to the 89 children and their families who attended our free annual Christmas party at Kids Kingdom on 13th December. The event went very smoothly and all the children seemed to have a lovely fun time, complete with a picnic tea and a present from Father Christmas. We’ll be back with a party this December so look out for promotion nearer the time and be sure to book early!
Maurice Dolphin, 74, is a resident of a one bedroom flat managed by South Essex Homes in Bishop House, Western Approaches, Southend.

Maurice grew up at his family home in Trinity Road, Southend, and attended Hamstel Road School. Between the ages of 15 and 17, after school he studied Life Drawing at Southend School of Art, which was based in a large corrugated iron building just off Victoria Circus.

For eighteen years spanning the 1970s & 1980s, Maurice worked for I.P. C. Magazines, which produced comic magazines including Tiger, Roy of the Rovers, Eagle and 2000 AD. Based in an office block near Blackfriars Bridge in London, he worked on design and layouts which involved ordering prints and photos before constructing them together to form the pages of the magazines.

His work provided numerous opportunities for Maurice to meet the famous stars of the time including Emlyn Hughes, Sebastian Coe, Big Daddy, Paul Daniels and Robert Wagner.

Maurice was a member of SLADE (Society of Lithographic Artists Designers and Engravers) and he saw huge changes in the world of magazine design. He said: “Towards the late eighties, the days of brushes, pencils and set squares were ending as computerisation took over so much of the work we used to do at the magazine and many of the people of my generation suffered from this big change.”

Following his redundancy from I.P.C. Magazines in 1989, Maurice worked at the Daily Express for a short time before taking a complete career change and moving to Wales where he took over the management of a Spar supermarket with his then-wife.

He said: “We lived in Wales for a few years and although I enjoyed my time there and we were well thought of by the team of 18 staff I managed, I soon found out that I am not a hard-headed businessman and we unfortunately lost a lot of money.”

Soon after his return to Essex in the mid-1990s, Maurice’s marriage unfortunately broke down but he was able to re-settle at his new flat in Westcliff thanks to the support of his mother.

Around this time, Maurice started to suffer from severe migraines, although he was never sent for a brain scan. He recalls the day in the year 2000 when fate stepped in to save his life: “I’d just got off the phone to my mum and was writing a shopping list when it happened. I had two enormous explosions go off in my head, like bangers they were. I fell unconscious then came to and managed to stagger to my bedroom and slumped on the bed. There I stayed for two days, unable to move.”

“Then, as fate would have it, a gas leak was discovered at my block of flats but the gas board were unable to find the source of the leak for some time. Eventually they discovered the leak came from an outside pipe directly under my bedroom window and they saw me collapsed inside.”

A policeman broke the window to enter the flat and Maurice was transported to hospital, where he stayed for the next five months. He had suffered a double sub-arachnoid haemorrhage and consequently had surgery to hold together the arteries in his head with clips. He was told he was extremely lucky to be alive and now lives with the brain damage he incurred, which has resulted in him suffering from audio epilepsy.

These days, Maurice’s flat in Bishop House doubles up as an artist’s studio from where he paints his large scale portraits and landscapes. “I was born with a brush and pencil in my hand”, he said, “and although I don’t have a particular favourite artist, the type of academic painting I favour is in a similar style to Franz Winterhalter, Frederico de Madrazo and William Bougereau.”

In his bedroom, several canvases stand stacked together, some unfinished and some completed and presented in ornate frames. His subjects include notable people from history including members of royal families and he has painted a number of portraits of Florence Nightingale, a favourite subject of his. A recently-finished portrait of Mahatma Gandhi sits on an easel in his lounge.

Maurice has an interest in astrology and also attends St Laurence Church on a regular basis. He moved to Bishop House in March this year and is settling in very well. “People here are very nice but usually everyone keeps themselves to themselves, which suits me perfectly.”

Born with a brush in his hand...

Maurice’s work recently came to the attention of Maria Medina, who works in the Community Development Team here at South Essex Homes, through the Portrait project that was launched earlier this year. Maria visited Maurice’s flat along with the curator of the Beecroft Art Gallery and they were both extremely impressed with the scale, quantity and quality of Maurice’s work and the Beecroft have agreed to hold an exhibition of his artwork this summer.

The exhibition will run from July 1st until August 12th at the Beecroft Art Gallery, which is in the old Southend Central Library building on Victoria Avenue. Entry is free and all are welcome to visit the exhibition.
Do you need a helping hand?

Here at South Essex Homes we like to support residents and, when we become aware of any problems they are having, we like to help as much as we can.

Recently, one of our Tenancy Services Officers was carrying out a routine rent visit at a sheltered housing flat in Southend when she realised that the lady was not coping very well looking after herself or her property.

The flat was very dirty and the lady occupant was sitting in a room with cigarette ends all over the floor and sofa. The Tenancy Services Officer was concerned that the resident was posing a high risk to both herself and the rest of the residents at the sheltered scheme.

By working together - the Sheltered Housing Officers, Tenancy Services, Social Services and Lynn Kettley from Essex Fire & Rescue have been able to successfully turn this situation around.

Additional safety measures have been put in place by adding an extra smoke alarm in the bedroom, heightening the sensitivity of the alarm in the living room and making adjustments to the front door closer, to reduce the risk.

The resident now has a carer coming in to help her keep on top of her cleaning and personal care, as well as helping her to manage the disposal of her cigarette ends in a safe manner. She now has regular support and lives in a safe, clean and tidy home. Her personal care has improved and she now seems to have a much more positive outlook.

When our members of staff are out and about they are looking for signs of anyone needing some help, but unfortunately they don’t get to see everyone face to face.

Perhaps you are struggling to look after yourself or your home, or you know someone else who is? Can we help you get your life back on track? We are always happy to help and advise, or point you in the direction of another community agency who can help.

Please speak to your Tenancy Services Officer or one of our Community Development Team if you need our assistance. Call us on 0800 833160.

Our Officers are C.A.B. advisers!

Six members of staff from our Specialist Income Management & Community Development Teams have recently completed a course run by the Citizens Advice Bureau, which means they are now qualified to offer personal financial advice to tenants on matters such as benefits, bank accounts and budgeting.

The officers were recently handed their certificates by the Council’s Executive Councillor for Housing, Planning & Public Protection Services, Mark Flewitt, at The Hub in The Victoria shopping centre, Southend.

If you feel you would benefit from receiving free advice on your personal finances then we are here to help! Please give us a call on 01702 212750 to book an appointment at your nearest Hub.
Could you be a Resident Void Inspector?

For the last seven years, we have involved residents in the process of inspecting empty (otherwise known as ‘void’) properties to ensure that they meet our agreed ‘Lettable’ standard and are ready to be occupied by a new tenant.

This valuable assistance from the viewpoint of a resident has enabled us to develop and maintain our lettable standard.

Unfortunately in recent years we have lost a number of the residents who were acting in this role and we are therefore now looking to recruit new Resident Void Inspectors to our team.

Being a Resident Void Inspector is a voluntary task but full training will be given.

It is important that you are fit & healthy, as you will need to be able to climb stairs. It would be helpful if you are able to drive so that you can make your own way to appointments. However please note that you can claim back your mileage expenses.

The role involves covering pre-arranged dates on a rota at properties across the borough of Southend-on-Sea. Previous experience of construction would assist but is not essential.

If you would like to express an interest in this role or if you have any further questions, please contact our Property Services Team on 0800 833160.

Are you looking to move?

Feeling overcrowded and need more space?

Rattling around and need less space?

Mutual Exchange could be for you!

If you want to swap your council house or flat with someone else’s house or flat, we call this a mutual exchange.

You can swap locally with another Southend-on-Sea Borough Council tenant or nationally with other Housing Association or local council tenants.

You can advertise your home in the following ways;

- At your local shop
- In your local newspaper or in the local newspaper of the area you wish to move to
- Using the mutual exchange website: www.homeswapper.co.uk

Please note we no longer use www.swapandmove.co.uk or www.houseexchange.co.uk

If you have any queries please feel free to contact Steve Turner at South Essex Homes on 0800 833160 or email steveturner@seh.southend.gov.uk.
We have a number of garages available to rent across the borough.

Notably, we have a large number of vacancies at garage sites serving the Brecon, Grampian and Blackdown tower blocks in central Southend. The weekly charge for these is £12.56 per week for a resident of the blocks or £15.07 for a non-tenant.

There are also several vacancies at the Mansell Close garage site, next to Beaver Tower in Eastwood. The cost of garages here is £11.02 for residents and £13.22 for non-tenants.

In order to qualify to rent a garage:
• You must live within a mile of the garage site
• You must own a car
• You must not have any rent arrears against your home address

If you are interested in finding out more about these and other available garages, please contact our Tenancy Services Team on 0800 833160.

To flush or not to flush?!

One of our residents, who lives in a tower block, has told us about the persistent problems they are having with a blocked toilet. This, as it turns out, is due to a blockage in the pipes caused by someone else in the block flushing baby wipes down their loo.

Unlike toilet paper which breaks up (biodegrades) in water, baby wipes stay fully intact and can easily build up in narrow sewage pipes. This leads to water backing up causing blocked and Overflowing toilets for you as well as your neighbours, which is hugely unpleasant for residents and plumbers alike.

Please be considerate of your neighbours and do not flush anything other than human waste and toilet paper down your loo. Thank you.

Are you getting all the money that you are entitled to?

Have you checked if you’re eligible for pension credit?

If you were born in May 1953 or earlier then you may be entitled to pension credit to top up your state pension.

Here are 6 perks of claiming Pension Credit:
1. It’s unlikely you’ll have to pay Council Tax (unless other people live with you).
2. You’ll get free NHS dental treatment, and you can claim help towards the cost of glasses and travel to hospital.
3. You’ll get a Cold Weather Payment of £25 when the temperature is 0°C or below for 7 days in a row.
4. If you rent your home, you may get your rent paid in full by Housing Benefit.
5. If you own your home, you may be eligible for help with mortgage interest, ground rent and service charges.
6. If you’re a carer, you may get an extra amount known as Carer Premium, or Carer Addition if it’s paid with Pension Credit. This is worth up to £34.60 a week.

You have nothing to lose by applying, but potentially a lot to gain.

How to claim Pension Credit

Call the Pension Credit claim line on 0800 99 1234 (textphone: 0800 169 0133). It’ll be quicker if you have the following details to hand:
• National Insurance number
• Bank account details
• Information about your income, savings and investments
• Information about your pension (if you have one)
• Details of any housing costs (such as mortgage, interest payments, service charges)
• Partner’s details (if you have a partner)

Speak to your local Age UK for help with claiming Pension Credit. You can phone Age UK Advice for free on 0800 169 65 65.

You could also call our Community Development Officers here at South Essex Homes where someone would be happy to guide you through the process of applying for pension credits.
Hello and a Happy New Year to you all! Welcome to the latest Fed Mag pages right here in Insight magazine.

Please make a note in your diaries of the date of this year’s Southend Community Event – it will be held on Wednesday 2nd August in Priory Park and we’ll look forward to seeing lots of you there! If you have any questions about the event or would like to be involved in organising it, please get in touch!

Best wishes

Shirley O’Reilly
Chair of the STRF
Email: Shirley.oreilly@strf.org.uk
Call: 07876 116552

You will find it at strf.webeden.co.uk where it has been given a new look and has been improved in line with your feedback.

Please take a look for the latest news and event information from us.

David Preston
Ever since the Hub has been up and running, David has been an integral part of the team. He has helped endless people to achieve their goals. He is always helpful & responsive to everyone that he meets and is deserving of an award.

Sue Rickard
In this past year, Sue has gone over and above helping with the Southend Community Event by getting contact information for stall holders at the last minute. She has been the ‘queen’ of last minute printing of the hundreds of pages of the community event documents that had to be given to the Council and items for the event itself, as well as the individual documents that have needed printing.

This year’s community event put a lot of extra pressure on everyone involved but Sue has excelled herself and definitely gone the extra mile to help in any way possible. I understand that it’s her job but nothing seemed too much to ask when Sue was there to help.

Contact us on www.strf.org.uk
Congratulations to you all from the Gold Award Committee. If you have an unsung hero amongst you please let us know so maybe we could surprise them too! Please use the form to the right of this page.

Roselyn Heney from Nicholson House
A few residents nominated Roselyn, who looks after all the money on behalf of Nicholson House for all our entertainment, does the bookwork and banking. This is a job unseen by many residents, but if she did not do this we would not be able to have any of the entertainment. She does a wonderful job and does so many things for us all.

Gold Award
Have you had contact with an Officer of South Essex Homes, or maybe a contractor who has gone that extra mile to provide you with excellent service? This would involve the officer or contractor dealing with something that is not normally part of their every day job. Or perhaps you have a good neighbour who helps you or others around you who are less able then themselves?

If so, then why not nominate them for a Gold Award?
We’ll need information on what the person does that’s beyond the call of duty. If possible, please also get other people to sign their support of your nomination. Please complete the slip below and attach it to a letter detailing your nomination. Once received, we will put your nomination forward to the panel made up of Southend Tenants and Residents Federation and the Tenants Voice Association for consideration, the winners will be awarded a certificate and £25 shopping vouchers.

We look forward to hearing from you. Please forward this slip to:
The Chair of the STRF
75 Southchurch Avenue,
Southend on Sea, Essex SS1 2RS
Or e-mail to: shirley.oreilly@strf.org.uk
Mobile: 07876 116552

Another helpful resident
We also had another resident who preferred not to be in Insight but he did receive vouchers and a certificate for the following reason: Being very helpful to everyone, doing people’s shopping, takes people to the doctors, doing anyone’s washing or ironing... nothing is too much trouble.

Nomination Form

- Nominated Person
- Their address or department
- Their telephone number (if known)
- Your name
- Your telephone number
- Please include details of the nomination on a separate sheet of paper
Former Tenant Arrears

‘Former tenant arrears’ are rent arrears outstanding from a previous Southend-on-Sea Borough Council tenancy or licence.

If you move out of council accommodation, or move to a different property still owned by the council and you have outstanding rent arrears for your previous property, you will have to pay the outstanding amount.

This also applies if you rent a garage from Southend-on-Sea Borough Council and have terminated the garage licence with any rent outstanding.

In this article, we provide answers to questions we get asked about former tenant arrears, which we hope you find useful and informative. If you wish to discuss anything in the article further with us, please give our Specialist Income Management Team a call on 0800 0234 057

How can you make sure you have no arrears when you move out?

A Tenancy Services Officer will visit to carry out a property inspection before you move out. If you have rent arrears at this time, you can make an agreement to clear your account in full or pay by instalments. You may continue to pay by instalments once your tenancy has ended as long as you maintain the agreement. You can also ask for the balance of your rent account when you hand in your keys.

Why do you have arrears for a period after you moved out of the property?

When you terminate your tenancy, you are required to give four weeks’ notice. If you fail to give the full four weeks’ notice or abandon your property you will be charged for the full four weeks’ notice period and any additional time it takes us to gain possession of the property (for example if we have to serve Notice to Quit or issue court proceedings).

If you do not hand in your keys by the required date and time, you will also be liable for additional rent until the keys are returned. It is important that you check when and where to return keys to avoid this.

If you are claiming housing benefit you may be able to claim for benefit to be paid on two properties to cover the notice period. Speak to your Tenancy Services Officer when terminating your tenancy about how to apply for this.

What happens if you ignore your former tenant arrears?

If you ignore your arrears and do not respond to letters, your debt will be passed to a Debt Collection Agency employed by South Essex Homes for recovery.

If you continue to ignore your arrears, or fail to maintain payments in line with a repayment arrangement, the matter will be referred to the Small Claims Court where we will ask that the Court make a judgement ordering you to pay the debt and any court costs incurred.
Why do you have arrears for a period after you moved out of the property?

When you terminate your tenancy, you are required to give four weeks' notice. If you fail to give the full four weeks' notice or abandon your property you will be charged for the full four weeks' notice period and any additional time it takes us to gain possession of the property (for example if we have to serve Notice to Quit or issue court proceedings).

If you do not hand in your keys by the required date and time, you will also be liable for additional rent until the keys are returned. It is important that you check when and where to return keys to avoid this.

If you are claiming housing benefit you may be able to claim for benefit to be paid on two properties to cover the notice period. Speak to your Tenancy Services Officer when terminating your tenancy about how to apply for this.

How can you pay your former tenant arrears?

• You can continue to use your current payment card. If you have lost or destroyed this please contact us on 0800 833 160 to order another card.

• You can pay by debit or credit card online at www.southessexhomes.co.uk. You can pay by debit or credit card over the phone by calling us on 0800 833 160.

• You can pay by Direct Debit or Standing Order.

Please contact our Specialist Income Management team on 0800 0234 057 or download a Direct Debit mandate or Standing Order form from our website.

What is the impact of a County Court Judgement (CCJ)?

If the court makes a judgement ordering that you pay the outstanding debt and it is not settled within 14 days your name and address will be entered onto the CCJ list which is in the public domain and used by banks, building societies and credit referencing agencies. Your name will remain on the list for six years (unless you can prove the debt has been satisfied) and you would find it increasingly difficult to obtain any form of credit, bank loan or goods on hire purchase during this time.

How can a money judgement be enforced?

Once a money judgement has been obtained from the court it may be enforced in the following ways:

• Attachment of Earnings order – your employee would be ordered to deduct a sum from your earnings to be paid towards the debt.

• Warrant of Execution – this is an order allowing a bailiff to seize and sell your goods to recover the money due under the judgement.

• Garnishee – this is an order directed at anyone that owes you money and requires them to pay the money to the court rather than to you.

• Charging Orders – this would prevent you from selling any land or securities you own before paying the debt that you owe.

How do former tenant arrears affect your future housing?

Former tenant arrears or any other debts you have after ending your tenancy (such as rechargeable works) can stop you from being allocated a Council property in the future.

A CCJ (as explained above) can also affect your ability to gain alternative accommodation, such as private rented, as landlords will often carry out a credit reference check which will show any CCJs.

Ignoring former tenant arrears now can impact you in years to come.

If you have an outstanding debt give our Specialist Income Management team a call today: 0800 0234 057.

How do former tenant arrears affect my current tenancy?

If you have arrears outstanding on a previous Southend on Sea Borough Council tenancy and fail to maintain a repayment arrangement, legal action could be taken against your current tenancy as outlined in your conditions of tenancy.
Welcome back to Leasehold Matters, the page in Insight devoted to Leaseholders. On behalf of everyone at South Essex Homes, we hope you enjoyed Christmas and wish you the very best in the New Year. The Leasehold Focus Group last met at the start of December. We discussed the prospect of a specific event to be held for all South Essex Homes Leaseholders. It is likely such an event will be held at our offices in the Civic Centre between Monday to Friday and we would be grateful if you could fill in the form below if you would be interested in attending. In this issue, I hope you find the information on Estate Walkabouts useful.

Jan

What are Estate Inspections?
Estate Inspections offer residents a chance to inspect their local area along with staff from South Essex Homes. Staff members that attend these events include the Estate Services Team Leaders, members of the maintenance team and the local Tenancy Services Officer. The inspections ensure our services are maintained at a high standard.

As a Leaseholder, can I attend these Inspections?
Of course you can! In fact South Essex Homes would like to see more Leaseholders attend inspections in their area.

How is my area assessed?
South Essex Homes staff give a grading on the standard and quality of an area. All elements of inspection are scored 1 – 4 then scores are combined to produce an average figure.

• Level A (scoring of 3.8 - 4.0) - Excellent
• Level B (scoring of 2.8 - 3.7) – Satisfactory
• Level C (scoring of 2.0 - 2.7) – In need of attention
• Level D (scoring of 1.9 - 0) – Service Failure

What types of elements are inspected?
A vast variety of elements are inspected whilst grading a block or estate and compared against a photo book of examples. The inspections include looking at the cleanliness and maintenance of:

• Paths
• Roadways
• Communal grass and gardens
• Communal Stairways and landings
• Lifts
• Bin Chutes and refuse areas
• Communal windows and doors

A full breakdown of the Estates Services photo book is available on our website.

When will my block/estate be inspected?
All estates are inspected once a year and the inspections take place from March through until the autumn. In each issue of Insight we promote the inspections taking place during that quarter, between distribution of the magazine up until the next issue of Insight is published. You will find the dates until mid-April on the opposite page or the full list for 2017 is available on the South Essex Homes Website.

Where can I find Inspection results?
The latest inspection results for some areas can be found on our website. The process of including them on the website began in mid-2016 so the inspections carried out at the start of 2016 may not be available online but can still be provided to you upon request.

There is a communal repair I need to report and someone has dumped a large item on the stairwell. Do I need to wait until an Estate Inspection to report this?
No - please give South Essex Homes a call on 0800 833 160 and report these to our Customer Contact Centre so any repairs or issues can be raised straightaway.

Please complete the sections below, cut out this slip and return it in an envelope to Freepost South Essex Homes – no need to attach a stamp!

Would you be interested in attending a leaseholder event? □ Yes □ No
What time would be most suitable for you during the week (Monday-Friday)? □ Morning □ Afternoon □ Evening
What information would you like to see at an event? Please tick all that apply
□ Extending your Lease □ Major works □ Estate Services □ Service Charges □ Making Alterations □ Buildings Insurance □ Gas & Fire Safety □ Reporting Anti-Social Behaviour □ Better Queensway □ Other(s) please state:
Estate Inspections

Estate Inspections are now held throughout the year and involve officers from South Essex Homes surveying each area of the town which include properties managed by us, in order to look for any issues that require our attention. Residents are welcome to come along on these inspections to see this process in action and point out problems that they are aware of.

The table below contains the dates and locations of the inspections that are due to take place over the next three months. If you would like to come along, please meet us at the start point at the stated time. We appreciate your input and look forward to seeing more residents take part in estate inspections throughout 2017. For more information about estate inspections please call us on 0800 833 160.

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<th>LOCATION</th>
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<td>Corner of George Street &amp; Dane Street</td>
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<td>East Street, Sutton Road, East Street Naval, The Mulberrys</td>
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<td>Outside Barringtons Main Entrance</td>
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<td>Outside Thorpedene Library</td>
</tr>
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<td>Outside Blackdown Main Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28/03/2017</td>
<td>09:30</td>
<td>Hamstel Road, Peartree Close, Lewes Road, Lornes Close</td>
<td>Corner of Hamstel Road &amp; Archer Avenue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29/03/2017</td>
<td>09:30</td>
<td>Longbow, Bewley Court</td>
<td>Outside Longbow Main Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/03/2017</td>
<td>09:30</td>
<td>St Mary’s Court</td>
<td>Outside St Mary's Court on the corner of Victoria Avenue/ Roots Hall Football Stadium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30/03/2017</td>
<td>09:30</td>
<td>Townfields</td>
<td>Outside Townfields Main Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04/04/2017</td>
<td>09:30</td>
<td>Shelley Square, Dickens Close, Wordsworth Close</td>
<td>Outside 5-29 Shelley Square Main Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>05/04/2017</td>
<td>09:30</td>
<td>Cecil Court, Hardwick Court, Burr Hill Chase, Stephen McAdden House</td>
<td>Outside Cecil Court Main Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06/04/2017</td>
<td>09:30</td>
<td>Sutton Court, Temple Court, Cluny House, Norwich Close</td>
<td>Outside Sutton Court Main Entrance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07/04/2017</td>
<td>09:30</td>
<td>Fairfax Drive, Cleveland Drive</td>
<td>Corner of Fairfax Drive &amp; Gainsborough Drive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11/04/2017</td>
<td>09:30</td>
<td>Cedar Close, Maple Square, The Jordans</td>
<td>Cedar Close Car Park</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13/04/2017</td>
<td>09:30</td>
<td>Snakes Lane</td>
<td>Corner of Brendan Way &amp; Snakes Lane</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
## What’s on in Southend?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WHAT IS IT?</th>
<th>WHEN CAN I GO?</th>
<th>WHERE IS IT?</th>
<th>TELL ME ABOUT IT!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Southend Community Event 2017</td>
<td>Wednesday 2nd August at Priory Park</td>
<td></td>
<td>Put the date in your diary now and more information will be available in the next issue of Insight!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability Conference</td>
<td>Thursday 22nd June 2017 at Southend Civic Centre, Victoria Avenue</td>
<td></td>
<td>This huge event will celebrate all the fantastic services in Southend that are available to disabled people living in the borough. It will take place across all public areas of the Civic Centre and will involve seminars on a variety of issues which anyone can sign up to attend. More information will be available in the next issue of Insight.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Focus on our Services

South Essex Homes holds ‘Focus Groups’ with residents, to ensure that residents are involved in the work that we do.

The Focus Group meetings, which are held in different frequencies according to the need, give tenants the opportunity to have a say in service delivery and voice their opinion in an environment which ensures that the right people receive feedback from tenants and can adjust plans accordingly.

At present, Focus Groups exist for the following service areas:

- Anti-Social Behaviour
- Communications
- Customer Service
- Disability Focus Group
- Estate Services
- Income Management
- Resident Involvement and Audit
- Sheltered Housing

If you have an interest in any of these service areas and would like to find out more, please contact the Community Development Team on 0800 833160.

### Insight Needs You!

If you are an Insight reader who would like to be involved in the production of our quarterly magazine, then we would love to hear from you!

The Communications Focus Group meets quarterly to discuss Insight and other communication-related issues. If you have an interest in the services South Essex Homes provides and feel you could provide valuable input to how we can effectively communicate messages to our residents, then please get in touch!

### Joining up to Social Media

Joining up to Social Media sites is a great way to keep up to date with all the latest news.

Why not join the growing number of people following South Essex Homes’ Twitter page or ‘Liking’ our Facebook page?

There are now 1903 Twitter followers and 350 ‘likes’ on Facebook (figures correct as at 9th Jan 2017).

**Next time you’re online, check us out!**
MIKE GATRELL SAYS...

2017 is all set to be yet another busy year for us here at South Essex Homes! By the time you receive this issue of Insight, we will be just about to celebrate the achievements of those neighbours of yours who go the extra mile. We are looking forward to the resident awards ceremony and will give you a full report in the next issue.

Also, we will soon be undergoing an assessment for our Investors in People accreditation and will let you know the outcome in the next edition.

Looking slightly further ahead, we’ll be entering the second year of our three year extended management agreement with Southend Borough Council and would anticipate that later in 2017 we will start to have a conversation with them about their future plans for South Essex Homes.

The whole team is already looking forward to the Southend Community Event 2017, the date of which has been set for Wednesday 2nd August at Priory Park. Please pop the date in your diaries and look out for more information about the event as it gets nearer.

We are still in a period of rapid change in terms of national housing policy but one thing we are now able to say is that the government have removed the requirement for us to have a ‘pay to stay’ scheme in place and it will now be an option for Councils and housing associations to consider instead. At this stage, Southend Borough Council have not given this any formal consideration but we will of course update you should we hear otherwise.

One of the things I am especially pleased to report on is the continuing good charitable work that the team at South Essex Homes undertakes. In particular I was proud to learn that a recent Christmas Quiz Night along with our annual raffle have raised over £1300 for the local branch of the Motor Neurone Disease Association in memory of Linda Jamison, a previous colleague of ours who sadly lost her life to MND last year. We have also been informed that, combined with collections from our Council colleagues, we were in the Top 100 donators to Jeans for Genes Day in 2016 with our grand total of £646 – I’m sure you’ll agree that this is a fantastic achievement!

On that positive note I would like to wish you all a prosperous and healthy 2017.

Best wishes
Mike

Resident Permit Schemes

As many of us who live in the town know, parking can be a real challenge, particularly if you live in certain areas or blocks.

Residents of Quantock and the flats on the corner of East Street and Sutton Road have long been complaining to us about other non-residents, commuters, shoppers and business users parking in what should be resident-only car parks.

We have worked with Southend Borough Council’s Highways department to put a traffic order in place which designates Quantock and East Street car parks a resident-only permit scheme. Residents can apply for a permit and, providing they can prove that the car is registered to them at an address within the scheme and that their car is taxed, insured and has a valid MOT certificate, then a permit will be issued to them.

Starting from the end of January 2017, these areas will be patrolled by the Council’s Enforcement Officers and any cars that fail to display a valid permit will be issued with a penalty notice.

It has taken some time to get the traffic order approved as there has to be a period of public consultation, but we hope that it will be worth it and that in future this will make parking much more convenient for residents.
South Essex Homes residents are invited to pop along to the Hub to take advantage of the multi-lingual drop in sessions held every Thursday or a selection of free English classes for those who have English as a second language.

There is no need to book for the drop in sessions – all you need to do is turn up any Thursday between 10am and 4pm at The Hub, which is situated on the first floor of The Victoria Shopping Centre in Southend. Here you can get help from the Multi-lingual Group on a variety of matters including support with filling out forms, translating documents and using the internet.

Shila Hussain from Quantock has been volunteering with the Group, she said: “I initially came to the Hub to develop my own skills, but when I actually came and spoke to Dave Preston, the Project Manager, I realised I can give something back to the community as well, and I’ve met some new people from the Bengali community and hopefully I can gain more skills and go on to teach English as a second language too.”

English classes every Monday & Thursday at The HUB in The Victoria shopping centre
- Mondays 1:30-4pm – Women only classes. ESOL accredited free spaces with benefits means tested
- Thursdays 10am to 12pm & 1pm to 2pm - Mixed sessions, free for everyone.
* PLUS! New Class now launched on Fridays at Shoebury HUB
ESOL accredited free spaces with benefits means tested
If you are an organisation who needs translating support, or for more information about the classes listed above or the Multi-lingual drop-in group, please contact our Community Development Team by calling 01702 212704 or sending an email to mariamedina@seh.southend.gov.uk