

Summer 2024 issue!

insight

The South Essex Homes
Resident Newsletter



Chaucer House gets cooking!

HELPFUL HINTS & TIPS!



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INSIDE THIS ISSUE...

MEET OUR NEW CONTRACTOR



SETTING THE STANDARDS



AND LOTS MORE...

- Board Report – meet Peter Potter
- Tenant Satisfaction Measures – how we are performing
- Estate Inspection Schedule



Dear South Essex Homes Residents



We are delighted to be appointed as your new Repairs and Maintenance Contractor and look forward to meeting you.

We want to let you know that your home is in good hands: Axis specialises in repairs and maintenance. We have been doing so for over four decades. We are a family-owned, family-run company. We put you, our residents, at the heart of our work.

Axis' tradespeople are trained, experienced and qualified to ensure you receive a good service. You will be seeing us in and around your homes as we do our work. You can recognise us from our bright yellow high vis jackets and our ID badges.

Our Core Values ensure we never forget that we are working in your home: we prioritise treating you with respect, listening to your questions and cleaning up after ourselves as well as keeping you informed about our work. We work alongside Tpas, the tenant management organisation, dedicated to improving tenant engagement standards.

We look forward to meeting you and to taking care of your home!

With best wishes from
your Axis team

axis

ESTATE INSPECTIONS

We hold regular estate inspections to check the condition of all the buildings and estates we manage on behalf of Southend-on-Sea City Council. These inspections are held on a rolling schedule and each area is visited at least twice a year.

The inspections involve a walk around each block or area by the Tenancy Services Officer (TSO - who look after tenants and their needs), and they are usually joined by a surveyor from our Property Services Team (who deal with repairs and maintenance) and a member of our Estate Services team (who deal with cleaning and general upkeep).

Residents are always welcome to join in with these inspections. They provide the perfect opportunity for you to meet your TSO, raise any issues you're aware of and ask any questions relating to your home, building or neighbourhood. We also share the schedule with local Councillors so they too can come along to inspections if they wish to and raise any issues on behalf of residents who live in their ward.

Before Covid, we used to print the schedule here in Insight and we are now bringing this feature back due to popular demand! The schedule is also available on our website, www.southessexhomes.co.uk, along with the most recent inspection reports.

Please be aware that there may occasionally be the need for us to postpone inspections, for example due to staff sickness or especially bad weather, but we do endeavour to arrange cover when we can. In order to ensure you are kept updated, please email the TSO listed on the schedule to advise you'll be attending the inspection and they'll be sure you are contacted if anything changes. Their email address will be their full name with no dots or spaces followed by '@seh.southend.gov.uk' (for example lisagillies@seh.southend.gov.uk).

Alternatively, feel free to take your chances and simply turn up at the meeting start point and time on the day! The vast majority of estate inspections do go ahead as planned.

See back page for the full schedule of inspections up to the production of the next issue of Insight.

WELCOME

Welcome to the summer issue of Insight!

It's been an up and down season, but I hope you've managed to enjoy the summer so far! I took the photo on the front cover during a recent sunny seafront walk, where I was delighted to see wildflowers growing near the sea wall, making for a beautifully colourful view across the Estuary.

I had the pleasure of meeting with our newest tenant Board Member, Peter Potter, for this issue's Board Report feature...what an interesting life he has led! With so many stories and side-stories to include, I have extended this article over 3 pages and I hope you enjoy reading it as much as I enjoyed writing it!

You'll see that the Estate Inspection Schedule is back by popular demand and you can find it on the back cover. Please do join in with your inspection if you are free and able to – they provide a great opportunity for you to talk to your Tenancy Officer and point out any issues you are aware of in and around your block or estate.

We will be back with the next issue of Insight in November 2024, so take care until then.

All the best, Julia
Julia Pack Editor



CONTENTS

Your Lives

- 4 Join the Resident Advisory Panel
- 4 Digital Inclusion
- 5 Mystery Shopping

Your Home

- 2 Estate Inspections
- 5 Queensway & Balmoral Drop Ins
- 6 Updating service standards
- 12 Aaron's Prize Draw
- 14-15 Tenant Satisfaction Measures
- 16 Estate Inspection Schedule

Your Southend

- 6 Choir Update
- 6 Crouchmans Mural
- 7 Chaucer gets cooking!
- 8-10 Board Report – Peter Potter
- 11 Shelly: Multicultural Southend
- 12 Sustainability of Insight
- 13 The Knife Angel



Message from Mike

For residents and South Essex Homes alike, perhaps one of the most important partnership relationships we have is with our repairs and maintenance contractor - and we are very pleased to welcome Axis Europe who joined us to take over that contract at the beginning of July. I am happy to report that the early stages of the new arrangement are looking positive. If you haven't already seen the Axis vans and operatives around the city, then I'm sure you will do so before too long and that, at some stage, you will have a visit from one of our Axis colleagues.

We were very pleased that residents were part of the process leading to the appointment of Axis, and moving forwards we would really like as much input as we can get from you, our residents, about how the new contractor is performing. Your feedback is vital, and it will enable us to know whether you are receiving a good service and whether the contract is working as it should, so please do not hesitate to let us know of your experience as and when you have any dealings or contact with colleagues from Axis.

I mentioned in a previous article that we expected the Regulator for Social Housing (the organisation who monitor the performance of social housing landlords) to begin a programme of inspections of all local council and housing association social landlords, starting in April this year. That programme of inspections has now begun and,

although at the time of writing we have not been told when the inspectors will be coming to Southend, that could happen at any point and we are working hard to ensure we are ready for the inspectors' visit so that we can highlight all the work we have done with residents over the past few years and are doing currently. Watch this space for further updates on this important new aspect of how your services will be reviewed by the national Regulator.

Both in this article, as well as previous ones, I have encouraged your feedback on all aspects of the work we carry out on your behalf and there are a number of ways in which you can do this. In this edition of Insight we have some articles explaining how you can join the Residents Advisory Panel or how you could become a Mystery Shopper. If you have even a little spare time, I would encourage you to read the articles on pages 4 and 5 and see if you can help us to continue to ensure our services are in line with your expectations. We can never have too much feedback on how we are doing and, in particular, where we can improve further.

At the time of writing this article the weather is bright, sunny and warm and I hope as this edition of Insight lands on your doormat we are all still enjoying some nice late summer weather.

Best wishes,

Mike

Mike Gatrell, Chief Executive
of South Essex Homes



GET IN TOUCH!

For all telephone enquiries freephone **0800 833 160**

For general correspondence write to us at: Insight Magazine, South Essex Homes, Civic Centre, Victoria Avenue, Southend-on-Sea, SS2 6FY

Email: juliapack@seh.southend.gov.uk

Contact us via Facebook during office hours – simply search for 'South Essex Homes' to find and like our page!

For general information about our services, please visit our website at www.southessexhomes.co.uk

JOIN THE RESIDENT ADVISORY PANEL (RAP)

The Resident Advisory Panel (RAP) is a valuable option for residents who prefer to participate in a less formal way. The RAP is a database of residents who are willing to share their opinions on various issues. As a member, you might be contacted to:

- Complete short surveys via email or post.
- Provide feedback on draft policies/documents.

Anyone can become a member of the RAP and help shape the housing services they receive.

If you are interested in joining, please scan the QR code using the camera on your digital device and complete the form. Alternatively, if you would like a paper copy of the form, please contact Sue Rickard by phone to 0800 833 160.

By joining the RAP, you will have the opportunity to shape the housing services and contribute to improving our community. Thank you for your interest!



DIGITAL INCLUSION PROJECT:

Empowering Residents with Technology

The South Essex Homes Digital Inclusion Project launched in 2020 and aims to support residents in Sheltered Housing in becoming comfortable and proficient with modern technology.

Project Goals:

- **Education:** Helping residents understand the benefits of technology.
- **Empowerment:** Enabling residents to embrace the changes technology can bring to their daily lives.
- **Confidence Building:** Digital Ambassadors assisting residents in gaining the confidence to use modern technology effectively.

Get Involved:

If you have a digital device or would like to learn on a Chromebook loaned from South Essex Homes, please contact Sue Rickard in the Resident Engagement Team on 0800 833 160 or via email to residentengagement@seh.southend.gov.uk



This project is an excellent opportunity for residents to enhance their digital skills, stay connected with loved ones and enjoy the numerous benefits that technology offers. Whether you are a complete beginner or looking to improve your skills, the Digital Project is here to help!

Become a

MYSTERY SHOPPER

Would you like to receive an Amazon voucher simply for inspecting and providing feedback on the standard of service provided by South Essex Homes?

If so, you may want to become one of our new mystery shoppers.

To be a mystery shopper you will need to be confident talking to people over the phone, via email or in person. You will also need to be professional, discreet, and able to meet deadlines.

South Essex Homes will explain the area of service that requires Mystery Shopping, you will then be asked to make contact with that department by telephone/ letter or email or by visiting the office. All you have to do then is complete a feedback form and we will do the rest. Once you have returned the form, we will send you a £5.00 Amazon voucher for every shop completed!

As a mystery shopper you are checking that we offer services to the standard that has been agreed and suggesting how, in your opinion, the service can be improved.

Full training will be given at the start. If you are interested in this opportunity, please contact the resident engagement team on residentengagement@seh.southend.gov.uk to express an interest and give your reasons for wanting to be a mystery shopper.



DROP-IN SESSIONS

If you live on the Queensway or Balmoral estates and have any questions about your tenancy you can speak to your Tenancy Services Officer at one of the drop-in sessions below.

Queensway

Where? The Storehouse

When? 10am – 12pm

- 3rd September
- 1st October
- 29th October
- 26th November



Balmoral

Hosted by Southend Communities Outreach Group (SCOG)

Where? Balmoral Community Centre downstairs room

When? 10am – 12pm

- 23rd September
- 28th October
- 25th November



SAVS in Shoebury

SAVS also host drop-ins, these sessions are not affiliated with South Essex Homes so a Tenancy Officer will not be present, they are an opportunity to promote any projects you are working on, to network, and generally just to find out what is happening in Shoebury and across Southend-on-Sea.

Where? Youth Community Centre / Shoebury Library

When? 1st Monday of every month, excluding bank holidays, from 10am to 12pm

Any changes to date or time of event are posted in advance on Shoebury Residents Association Facebook page.

UPDATING OUR SERVICE STANDARDS

The Resident Engagement Team at South Essex Homes have been working with residents to review and update our Service Standards for each of our services, such as dealing with anti-social behaviour, looking after your estate, and more.

Service Standards refer to the set of guidelines and expectations that govern the quality, management, and delivery of the housing services provided by South Essex Homes. These standards are designed to ensure that you receive fair, equitable, and high-quality housing services. They will be made available to you as residents to read and use to hold us to account as your landlord.

In recent months, the team have worked with the resident-led Income Focus Group to look at 'Paying your rent' and how we can provide support to residents in need. We have also held meetings with Tenant and Residents Involvement Groups (TRIG) to improve our Service Standards for 'Dealing with anti-social behaviour', 'Getting involved' and 'Customer care'.



The feedback from residents has been excellent:

"Good communication, covered all aspects of the paperwork and made amendments."

"Informative, well presented and friendly people to discuss issues within our place of residency."

"Very good and informative, would love to come again."

"More workshops on a more regular basis."

"Great to have input from residents."

We are committed to engaging with residents throughout the development and monitoring of our performance against these service standards. If you think you would like to get involved in any of the work taking place around Service Standards, please email the team on: residentengagement@seh.southend.gov.uk.

CHOIR *update*

We have covered the Choir at Adams Elm House in past issues of Insight, but it continues to be a great success, with members really enjoying the sessions. The residents are having so much fun and are happy to be socialising with their neighbours. In June this year, over two years on from their formation, the choir performed a summer concert which the Mayor attended and really enjoyed!



CROUCHMANS MURAL



The team at Project 49 have recently completed this beautiful mural at our Sheltered Housing Scheme, Crouchmans. It really brightens up the communal lounge for the residents!





CHAUCER HOUSE GETS COOKING!

Residents at Chaucer House recently took part in a five-week slow-cooking course. For two hours every Monday morning, the residents got together and cooked delicious dishes which they shared with friends and family. The course enabled participants to learn new skills and cooking techniques, develop independent living skills, and gain a better understanding of healthy eating.

Over the course, residents cooked several slow-cooked dishes including honey and mustard chicken thighs, black bean chilli, South Indian curry, apple crumble, and chicken and vegetable tagine. Using a slow cooker is a more energy-efficient way to cook food and can help reduce energy costs, the residents also learned about batch cooking (making meals in bigger batches and freezing them to save more time and money).

The sessions looked at healthier eating, reducing the use of fast and processed foods, meal-planning, and budgeting. One of the most important aspects of the course was the opportunity for residents to get together, increase self-confidence, reduce social isolation, and have some fun!

It really showed in their feedback that the residents enjoyed the course, here's just few words of what they said...

"Thanks for giving us your time. I've thoroughly enjoyed our Monday cooking sessions. We've gained not only knowledge of cooking but have gained friendship with each other and it's given us something to do on a Monday morning. Really enjoyed it."

"My favourite was the Honey and Mustard chicken thighs. Lovely, the kids loved it. Very simple and cheap to make."

"It's been good fun and I've looked forward to coming to the sessions. I've also learnt a lot too and it's good to get out of my flat."

BOARD REPORT

Back in July, I met up with Peter Potter who, having joined the Board earlier this year, is one of our newest Board Members. Peter's life story is an absolutely fascinating one, which we've spread over three pages in order to try and do it justice! So without further ado, let's start at the very beginning...



"I was brought up as a foster child in care in the Bristol area, by what is now the Children's Society. That label came with a certain stigma at school, but I always stood up for injustices so soon got a reputation someone who stood up for others as well as himself!

Living out of a car

Back in those days, being a foster child was very different to how it is now and I saw a social worker just once a year. When I turned 18, I got in my Mini and drove towards Birmingham, where I parked up in a service station on the M5 and ended up mostly sleeping curled round the gearstick in that car, at that service station, for the next 5 or 6 months. During that time I had a job working with the electricity board in South Gloucestershire. I would wash and brush myself up in the motorway services each morning before starting work and the ladies in the service station took pity on me and would give me the food that would otherwise have been thrown away - they really looked after me.

After that, I moved into a room in a house which I rented for £2.50 a week and I feel that's where my survival learning curve really started. I wouldn't dare put anything out on the washing line - if stuff wasn't nailed down it would be stolen!

Once I was out of work, I remember finding out what 'signing on' was, as I didn't know that was a thing. I took dole money before taking a job at the-then Department of Health & Social Security (DHSS) in Birmingham. Immediately I noticed issues with the internal system and was shocked by the injustices I was seeing, so moved on to work for an iron and steel company.

Single dad

During that period of my life I became a father, but the mother of my son wasn't ready for family life so she left and I got full custody, but I was struggling to get by as a single dad and advertised for help with childcare. Fortunately for me, Shirley (the lady who answered the

advert) soon became my friend and the rest is history, as 10 months later we got married and we are still together to this day, 42 years later!



There have been lots of things for Shirley and me to deal with throughout our relationship - there was the stigma of me being a single dad, there is an age gap and also we are a mixed race couple, so we have been subjected to racist abuse over the years.

In the early days of my friendship with Shirley she had invited me to her church and the warm welcome I received was absolutely fantastic and I became a Christian not long afterwards.

Community work

Unfortunately I was made redundant soon after we got married, so I went to college and did a teaching degree. However, teaching big classes wasn't for me so from there I went to work for a Christian social project, for which I became Deputy Director. We ran a hostel for homeless youths and a voluntary law centre giving advice for free, and had strong links to local prisons working with families of inmates. We set up a 'moving on' hostel for prison leavers and I learnt how to fundraise over the next 6-7 years, which basically involved me being an 'official beggar' - writing posh letters to get money for our causes! Part of that work involved taking urban children and youths away for two weeks. These were youngsters who had never been away, never been to the countryside or seen real farm animals, and they were amazed that they could shout as loud as they wanted to let out their frustrations and they wouldn't be told off.

Move down South

Now with two daughters added to the family, we moved to south London for 9 years for Shirley's work. I met up with a church colleague and because of my experience of Christian community work, we set up a charity, which was set up to utilise church halls that were not being fully used. We had ten different centres across four South London boroughs catering for the elderly, youth and everyone in between. For example, we ran day centres for old people – providing games and physical activities all alongside a free meal. We organised funding from charities, trusts and local authorities to employ people to put on the activities and we also ran youth holidays over the summer. It was a very rewarding time and I could barely walk anywhere without people recognising me!

Around 26 years ago, we made the move to the Southend area. Before that we used to come out from London for the airshow and seaside trips – so living in Southend feels like being on holiday all the time! Prior to making the decision to move, we would come down for weekends with the kids and drive around to get a feel for the place and one of our favourite things to do was to share a knickerbocker glory at the Kursaal. We decided to move to Westcliff, which was perfect, as Westcliff to me is very diverse, which fits in with our family. I really like the people and the buzz of activity – you can be on Hamlet Court Road and see and hear people, and buy things, from every continent! It's such a nice place, we really enjoyed our time living there. We joined the local Baptist church, where I am now a Deacon and worship leader – I also run the church's Facebook and Instagram pages.

Coming full circle

To start with I was commuting to my job in south London but the travelling became too much, so I looked for work in Southend. I worked as a supervisor at a warehouse in Shoebury then moved on to work for a property maintenance company in Progress Road. After a short stint working in call centres, my last job was working for HARP – the homeless charity here in Southend. Leading up to that, I ran the winter night shelter at my church for 6-7 years and really enjoyed it. We would give people an evening meal, bed down for the night, then breakfast in the morning – it was so rewarding and I struggle to think of any negatives really. I acted like a doorkeeper, welcoming people in – I would take the time to chat to people and get to know them as I know from experience how treating homeless people as individuals and making them feel heard makes a real difference. That work with the night shelter led me to the position at HARP, where I worked until the contract ended in March 2020 and I retired 3 months later.

I hate being retired! I really enjoy being around people, the routine of work, and keeping busy. I'm therefore just



finishing an online course in counselling skills where I have learnt very quickly how to respond to questions so am getting better with each module!

I am very family orientated. My son now lives just over the bridge in Kent, and our two daughters and grandchildren remain here in Southend.

Life at Furzefield

We have lived in Furzefield for two years now, which is a sheltered housing scheme managed by South Essex Homes in Priorywood Drive, Leigh, housing a good mix of 28

residents. Although our flat is smaller than we are used to, I've converted a walk-through double cupboard in the hallway into a desk where I spend most of my days and we are comfortable there.

My wife runs an art class where residents can come and express themselves. The community lounge went from having the feel of a doctor's surgery to being very lively and homely. There are pictures all over the wall, a third of which have been created by residents. A wide variety of activities are on offer from drawing and painting through to crochet and colouring in, or just relaxing in a meeting of like minds. The lounge at Furzefield is now what it should be; a place for people to get together that is especially good for new people where they can meet neighbours and feel welcome. Every resident is invited to activities and meetings which take place every single day, not all want to join in but that is entirely their choice in independent living. Events we hold include a Friday pub night, singalongs and communal jigsaws which everyone joins in with – they are a real team effort! Also with the garden, all residents get involved and we are able to do whatever we want to the outdoor space. Residents really take pride in the place and genuinely care about looking after our neighbours, it really is a great place to live.

Joining the Board

I joined the SEH Board in January this year and am now coming up to my 70th birthday in August. Sarah Gallagher, SEH Resident Engagement Officer, approached me after the advert was shared and the more I read into it, the more it felt ideal for me. I want to get more involved with residents, because social injustice is my thing and I want to help people. So far, just by meeting tenants, I've been able to help people with issues that hadn't been concluded. I'm pleased to see the recent changes to complaints procedures, and I feel that will make a real difference.

I think I can help by seeing things through a fresh set of eyes and speaking out when I need to – I have no problem in doing that!

If any residents wish to speak to me then you are welcome to contact me by email to peterpotter@aol.com.

Hobbies & Interests

Shirley and I love reggae, ska, R&B and soul music, especially the Jamaican house music genre and we enjoy participating in the East Beach festival, which celebrates the Windrush generation. We get out and about to see live artists whenever we get the opportunity and have been fortunate enough to see Mary J Blige and Lauryn Hill, amongst others, in concert. My wife is a drummer and qualified teacher, and runs the Junior Worship Band at church, bringing music to children who wouldn't necessarily be able to afford private lessons.

I love to play games on the computer, including Farmville 2, solitaire and Scrabble. I write poetry and attend local 'open mic' nights where I perform my poems.

I am well-versed public speaker, with a biggest audience of around 10,000 at a full Brighton Conference Centre. I've even been fortunate enough to meet several famous people, perhaps the most impressive of which being Archbishop Desmond Tutu who I showed round the city of Birmingham in around 1990 as part of church event – the photo was taken at a gospel night in a nightclub where he insisted on being part of the crowd boogying on the dancefloor!



Hair-raising fundraiser!

Our eldest daughter is a cancer survivor and on the night before her first chemotherapy, I surprised her with the news that while she would be losing her hair through the chemo, I pledged to grow mine and not get a haircut or shave my face until she got the 'all clear' from her cancer. Having shaved my head for several years before that, the sight of me with hair was quite the novelty and I kept to my word, at one stage I even dyed my hair bright blue to amuse the kids! After a full year she was thankfully clear of cancer, so I did a big 'shave off' outside Peggy Sue's (a music venue in London Road, Leigh). In total I raised £750 for the grow out, then £300 for the shave off – all in aid of Macmillan Cancer Support.



Long Lost Family

At the age of 35, while working at Walsall community centre, I contacted Bristol social services to see if they had any record of my birth family. I gave the man on the phone the details I knew. That same afternoon, that man was telling my story in the staff canteen, and a colleague happened to overhear him and recognised the story, as I'd been the youngest of 8 children and she had been my social worker as a baby all those years ago! Even more incredibly, she was still in touch with 3 of my sisters so was able to pass on a contact number.

The next day I phoned the number I'd been given, which was for the workplace of one of my sisters. It turns out that everyone in the office knew my sister had been trying to find me for years, so when the receptionist shouted out that her brother was on the line, the whole office cheered! When I drove to Bristol to meet four of my sisters, I was greeted with banners and balloons. Together we arranged a further meeting with our only other brother, John, and we had a big get together with local papers documenting the meet up and the full story.

Although I never met my birth parents, to this day I'm still in touch with most of my sisters and my brother – all of whom still live in the Bristol area.

Poet's Corner

Peter brought a folder full of poems on various topics to our meeting – here are just two chosen at random!

I saw a man

I saw a man leaning against a tree
I saw a man looking at me
I saw a man waving at me
I saw a man smiling at me
I saw a man who looked like me
I saw a man who dressed like me
I saw a man and realised that it was me
I wish they'd stop putting mirrors in bus stops.

So What!!

What's it to you,
If I've only got one shoe,
And the coat that I wear,
Is one that I share
With my mate who has no hat.
So what about that,
You've got so many more,
Hanging on your door,
Shoes and clothes galore,
In cupboards and all over your floor.
But when it's all said and done,
Right now, you can only wear one!

EMPOWERING SOUTHEND'S MULTICULTURAL WOMEN



By Amber Rodgers

Shelly is a South Essex Homes resident who has been volunteering within her community for a few years now. Starting out as a founder and trustee of Multicultural Southend, her volunteering efforts snowballed from there and she is now an integral part of many areas of her community. I joined Shelly for a spot of mini golf with the Multicultural Women's group at Garon Park Adventure Golf. Whilst most of the women were off navigating floating bridges and aiming for a hole in one, she told me about her journey of getting here and how it has positively impacted her life.

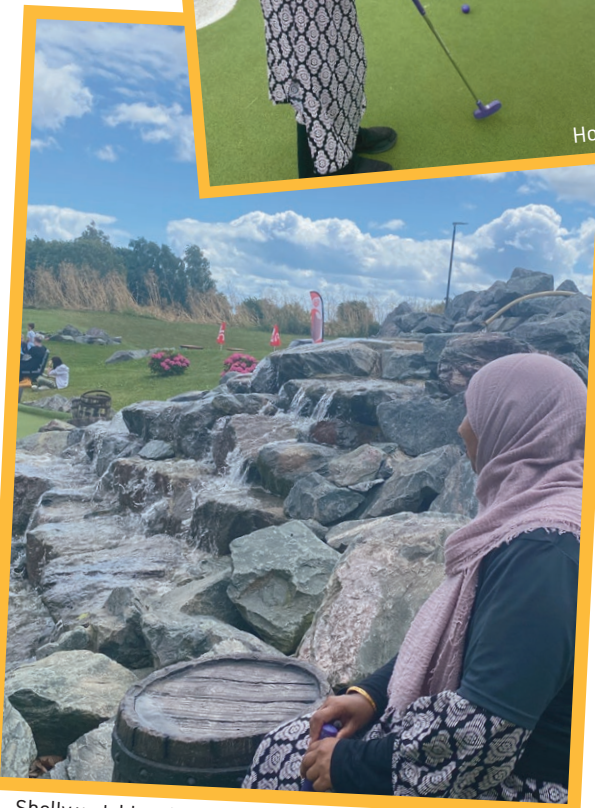
Shelly describes the position she finds herself in, as a bridge between her community and other local organisations and groups, she told me that she believes without a bridge in place, whether it is her or someone else, many women in her community would be isolated from the opportunities that are out there for them. She has garnered a position of trust with the women and their families, saying that they are almost like an extended family for each other, there through the good times and the bad. The women that attend her events have faced many different experiences, some do not speak any English, and others are going through their own personal issues every day. Coming to the group allows an escape for a couple of hours each week, the formation of new friendships and encouragement to try new things together. Many of the women in this group had not played mini golf before, but on this day, we watched as they laughed and worked together for a fun filled afternoon.

Not only has Shelly transitioned from volunteering to being officially employed by Multicultural Southend in the three years since she started her journey with the organisation, but she is involved in several other projects too. She is a trustee for Community Matters, a South Essex Homes initiative, and a Trustee for Garon Park where a lot of her community work is based. Alongside this she also teaches Arabic at the local mosque and provides educational tours of the mosque for school children. If all of that wasn't enough, Shelly described some of the events she has helped to organise and volunteer at. From a Sari event which allowed women to show off their Saris and share them with their friends within the group, to an Eid event at Garon park which she was on the committee for... as long as people want to attend these events it seems that Shelly is more than happy to get stuck in and make them happen.

Shelly told me that although sometimes she finds herself swamped with multiple events at once, other community work, and juggling family life on top of that, she finds her work extremely rewarding and wouldn't change a thing. She said that herself and the people she works with somehow always make miracles happen, even when things get hectic! The appreciation for Shelly from the community is evident in a recent award that she won with ATF for being an 'Unsung Hero' in Southend, and just from speaking to her for a short time I could see why she truly deserves it.

If Shelly's story has inspired you and you would like to get involved with volunteering in your community, please get in touch with SAVS who will be able to point you in the right direction of where you will be able to make a real difference.

Email: info@savs-southend.co.uk Call: 01702 356000



Shelly watching the group enjoy themselves

Did you know

YOU COULD WIN

£100

from

AaronServices

Part of the Sureserve Group



Aaron Services Ltd in conjunction with SEH currently operate a scheme that could mean you are in with a chance of winning £100

To qualify for your chance to win, all you have to do is agree an appointment with Aaron Services and then allow them into your property on their FIRST VISIT, to carry out your annual gas service.

You will then be entered into a prize draw for your chance to win the cash prize.

THIS IS NOT JUST YOUR CHANCE TO WIN, BUT ALSO TO MAKE YOUR HOME A SAFE PLACE TO LIVE!

A full list of past winners can be found at this link strf.uk/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/Aaron-Monthly-Award.pdf



AN INSIGHT INTO SUSTAINABILITY

Have you ever wondered what goes on behind the scenes of Insight? We send a copy of our quarterly magazine to every South Essex Homes tenant and leaseholder, so we know how important it is to prioritise sustainability throughout the production process.

Everything printed at the printers we use, including our magazine Insight, uses FSC certified paper. The FSC (Forest Stewardship Council) ensures that paper products use wood fibre that is sourced from responsibly managed forests meeting the highest environmental, social and economic standards. Only then will it carry the FSC logo, including a certified chain of custody that tracks the timber through every stage in the supply chain, from the forest to the end user. It is the greenest paper you can get!

In addition to this, our printers are also World Land Trust accredited. World Land Trust offsets emissions through the protection and preservation of tropical forest under threat of deforestation and degradation.

Instead of utilising ink from crude oil (a harmful, finite and non-renewable resource) our printers use vegetable-based inks that can provide high quality and vibrant colour. Paper printed on with vegetable-based inks is also far easier to 'de-ink' before recycling it, further adding to the sustainability perks.

Alongside updates about how much CO2 we offset when printing Insight, our printers also maintain the thread of sustainability throughout their wider work, by constantly decreasing their carbon emissions. This is via the installation of solar panels, investment in lower-carbon equipment, and much more!



THE KNIFE ANGEL

By Julia Pack

I had the pleasure of working with colleagues Nadine and Ella at the start of July as part of a team of community volunteers for the Southend Community Safety Partnership, speaking to members of the public about The Knife Angel sculpture, which stood in a prominent position at the top of the High Street by WH Smith from 1st until 28th July.

Created as an illustrative symbol against violence - particularly serious violence, including knife and weapon crime against children and young people or committed by them - The Knife Angel is made from 100,000 confiscated or surrendered weapons, including blunted flick knives, kitchen knives and even machetes, received from 43 Police Forces across the UK.

Hundreds of people stopped to take photos of The Knife Angel; some stood in quiet thought, many were visibly moved by the experience of seeing the imposing sculpture up close. Visitors were given the opportunity to tie a white ribbon to the metal railings surrounding the structure - either as a thought or prayer for someone they know who's been affected by knife and weapon crime, or as a simple message of peace.

I had several interesting and poignant conversations with strangers. Whilst there were a few inevitable negative comments, the vast majority of people appreciated the benefits of raising awareness of what



has become such a key national issue, especially for younger people and their families.

At a later SEH volunteering session - Amber De'Ath, who joined SEH for a fortnight's work experience, added:

"The volunteering was better than what I thought - at first, I thought that not many people would want a leaflet and a white ribbon. Plus, I'm really shy but when I started it was completely different and properly got involved. Personally it was a great experience for me, I would do it again"

NEW GROUNDS MAINTENANCE CONTRACTOR

The contract to carry out grounds maintenance work at all blocks and estates managed by South Essex Homes has recently been awarded to our commercial subsidiary, South Essex Property Services (SEPS).

The SEPS team officially started the new contract on 22nd July and are busy working their way across the city carrying out grounds maintenance works, including grass cutting and shrub management, so they will be visiting all South Essex Homes sites as soon as they are able to.

If your block or estate hasn't had a visit from them yet, please be assured that they are on their way...keep an eye on our website and social media pages for future updates!

KEEP CONDENSATION AT BAY!

Sadly the colder months will be with us before we know it, so there is no better time than NOW to take steps to prevent issues with damp and mould this autumn and winter.

Condensation is perfectly natural in every home - but there are simple things you can do to keep it to a minimum.

OPEN IT - open your windows or use an air vent. Do not block these vents as they provide necessary air flow.

WIPE IT - wipe your windows and windowsills every morning to remove condensation, especially in the bathroom, kitchen and bedroom.

CLEAR CLUTTER - keep windowsills free of clutter so air can flow freely.

CURTAINS - use thermal or lined curtains and keep them open in the day and closed at night to capture natural heat from the sun and help raise the temperature in your room.

Check out our website www.southessexhomes.co.uk/condensation for more top tips!

Tenant

SATISFACTION MEASURES

It is important for us to be open and honest with you about the work we carry out on your homes and how this fits in with our responsibilities under the Charter for Social Housing, which was published by the government in April 2022.

Below you can view our performance information based on Tenant Satisfaction Surveys we carried out, where we asked YOU for your opinions on all things repairs to anti-social behaviour.

If you took part in this survey, we would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your time as your feedback will help us to make informed changes to the service that we provide to you on behalf of Southend-on-Sea City Council.

You can find out more about how we conducted this survey in our summary approach, which can be found on our website www.southessexhomes.co.uk/tsm

OVERALL SATISFACTION



A total of **68.5%** of respondents reported that they are satisfied with the overall service from South Essex Homes.

57.8% of respondents reported that they are satisfied that South Essex Homes listens to tenant views and acts upon them.

73.6% of respondents reported that they are satisfied that South Essex Homes keeps them informed about things that matter to them.

81.4% of respondents reported that they agree South Essex Homes treats them fairly and with respect.

59.5% of respondents with communal areas reported that they are satisfied that South Essex Homes keeps communal areas clean and well maintained.

69.1% of respondents reported that they are satisfied that South Essex Homes makes a positive contribution to the neighbourhood.

ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR



Anti-social Behaviour Cases
61.26 anti-social behaviour cases were opened per 1,000 homes.

Hate Incidents
1.65 anti-social behaviour cases that involve hate incidents were opened per 1,000 homes.

Satisfaction with ASB Handling

62.2% of respondents reported that they are satisfied with South Essex Homes' approach to handling anti-social behaviour.

REPAIRS

Decent Homes Standard

1.5% of homes do not meet the Decent Homes Standard.

Non-emergency Repairs

91.3% of non-emergency responsive repairs were completed within our target timescale.

Emergency Repairs

99.7% of emergency responsive repairs were completed within our target timescale.

Satisfaction with Repairs

65.7% of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months reported that they are satisfied with the overall repairs service.

67.4% of respondents who have received a repair in the last 12 months reported that they are satisfied with the time taken to complete their most recent repair.

69.6% of respondents reported that they are satisfied that their home is well maintained.



BUILDING SAFETY

Gas Safety Checks

100% of homes have had all required gas safety checks carried out.



Fire Risk Assessments

100% of homes have had all required fire risk assessments carried out.



Lift Safety Checks

100% of homes have had all required communal passenger lift safety checks carried out.



Legionella Risk Assessments

100% of homes have had all required legionella risk assessments carried out.

Asbestos Management Surveys

100% of homes had had all required asbestos management surveys or re-inspections carried out.

Satisfaction with Safety

75.4% of respondents report that they are satisfied that their home is safe.

Note from the Editor:

As regular readers will know, we usually include a feature focussing on one of the Regulator of Social Housing's Consumer Standards in each issue of Insight. As we are sharing all our TSMs in this issue for last year as above, this has replaced that regular feature so you're not inundated with Performance information this time! Rest assured, we will resume our focus on one of those Consumer Standards when we return with the next issue of Insight in the autumn.



ESTATE INSPECTIONS

DATE	PLACE	TIME	START POINT
03-Sep-24	Peartree Close, Lewes Close, Lornes Close	09:30am	Corner of Peartree Close and Cokefield Avenue
04-Sep-24	Nursery Place	09:30am	Side entrance to block in Residents Car Park
04-Sep-24	Southchurch Rectory Chase		Outside 7-12 Southchurch Rectory Chase
04-Sep-24	Hamstel Road, St Audreys Court		Outside Hamstel Block No. 244-254
04-Sep-24	Bunters Avenue		Bunters to meet outside block 31-77
05-Sep-24	Kingfisher Close, Sandpiper Close	09:30am	Outside Kingpiper Hall
06-Sep-24	Adams Elm House	09:30am	Outside Adams Elm House Main Entrance
10-Sep-24	Fraser Close, Cunningham Close, Eagle Way	09:30am	Outside the block 62 - 84 Fraser Close
11-Sep-24	Blyth Avenue	09:30am	Blyth Avenue meet outside block 30-36
12-Sep-24	Yantlet	09:30am	Outside Main Entrance Yantlet
13-Sep-24	Burr Hill Chase	09:30am	Outside Burr Hill Chase
17-Sep-24	Mendip Road, Mendip Crescent, The Mendips	09:30am	Outside West Office, Mendip Road
18-Sep-24	Rochford Road	09:30am	Entrance to Garage Site, next to 126-148 Rochford Road
19-Sep-24	Beaver Tower	09:30am	Outside Beaver Tower Main Entrance
24-Sep-24	Hunters Lodge, Norfolk Avenue	09:30am	Hunters Lodge Car Park
25-Sep-24	Trafford House	09:30am	Outside Trafford House Main Entrance
26-Sep-24	John Street, George Street, Dane Street	09:30am	Corner of George Street and Dane Street
27-Sep-24	Riverstone	09:30am	Outside Riverstone Main Entrance
27-Sep-24	Mornington House		Outside Mornington House Main Entrance
01-Oct-24	Pennine, Chiltern, Malvern, Quantock	09:30am	Outside Malvern Main Entrance
02-Oct-24	Purley Way, Hornby Avenue	09:30am	Outside 1-12 Purley Way
03-Oct-24	Sutton Court, Temple Court, Cluny House, Norwich Close	09:30am	Outside Sutton Court Main Entrance
04-Oct-24	Bradfordbury, Rothwell Close, Eastwood Old Road	09:30am	Outside Community Hall on Bradfordbury
08-Oct-24	Danbury Close, Treecot Drive	09:30am	Meet at entrance to Danbury Close
09-Oct-24	Shelley Square, Wordsworth Close	09:30am	Outside 5-29 Shelley Square Main Entrance
10-Oct-24	Westwood	09:30am	Outside Westwood Main Entrance
11-Oct-24	Delaware Road	09:30am	Block 6-12 Delaware Road
16-Oct-24	Claremont Court	09:30am	Outside Claremont Court
16-Oct-24	Ness Road, Elm Road	09:30am	Outside Ness Road Flats
17-Oct-24	East Street, St Benets, Sutton Road, East Street Naval	09:30am	Outside St Mellitus Hall, Sutton Road
18-Oct-24	Mussett House	09:30am	Outside Mussett House Main Entrance
22-Oct-24	Eaton Road	09:30am	Corner of Eaton Road and Herschell Road
22-Oct-24	East Street Leigh		Outside 2-8 East Street Leigh
23-Oct-24	Saxon Garden - Odd Numbers	09:30am	Saxon Gardens Odd meet outside front of the block
23-Oct-24	Delaware Crescent		Block 21-31 Delaware Crescent
24-Oct-24	Viking Court	09:30am	Outside Viking Court Main Entrance
25-Oct-24	Burr Hill Chase	09:30am	Outside Burr Hill Chase
29-Oct-24	Saxon Gardens - Even Numbers	09:30am	Saxon Gardens evens meet outside block 2-16 Saxon Gardens
29-Oct-24	Woolpack		Main Entrance to Woolpack
30-Oct-24	Lakenham House, Carolines Close, Alton Gardens	09.30am	Outside Lakenham House
31-Oct-24	Nayland House	09:30am	Outside Nayland House Main Entrance
05-Nov-24	Fairfax Drive	09:30am	Corner of Fairfax Drive and Gainsborough Drive
05-Nov-24	Cleveland Drive		At block
06-Nov-24	Barringtons	09:30am	Outside Barringtons Main Entrance
07-Nov-24	Furzefield	09:30am	Outside Furzefield Main Entrance
08-Nov-24	Blackdown, Brecon, Grampian	09:30am	Outside Blackdown Main Entrance
12-Nov-24	Wood Farm Close, Bellhouse Lane	09.30am	Corner of Wood Farm Close
13-Nov-24	Shannon Close, Little Fretches	09:30am	Shannon Close Car Park
14-Nov-24	Nestuda House	09:30am	Outside Nestuda House Main Entrance
15-Nov-24	Cedar Close, Maple Square, The Jordans	09:30am	Cedar Close Car Park
19-Nov-24	Avon Way, West Road	09:30am	Outside 2-30 Avon Way Main Entrance
20-Nov-24	Leighwood Avenue, Eastwood Road North	09:30am	Junction with Oakwood Avenue
21-Nov-24	Anson Chase, Ashanti Close, Bulwark Road	09:30am	Corner of Anson Chase and Bulwark Road

