

Disability and Carers Action Group Minutes

Wednesday 12th November 2025 @ 11am Civic Centre

	<p>Those Present:</p> <p>Robert McAllister (RM) Chair, Hedley Brown (HB), Barrie Andrews (BA), Keith Ducker (KD), Angie Burrows (AB) Harry Few (HF) Edna Phillips (EP) Hedley Brown (HB) Sarah Gallagher Resident - Engagement Team Leader (SR) & Angela Lloyd Housing - Support Officer (AL).</p>	
	<p>Previous Minutes can be downloaded and read on the following website strf.uk – click on Focus groups and Board – click Disability & Carers then scroll down to read the minutes you want.</p>	Actions
<p>1.</p> <p>Opening:</p> <p>RM welcomed everyone to the meeting and asked if everyone knew each other? They all new each other so no introductions needed.</p> <p>1.2</p> <p>8 Residents showed an interest in joining the group from the big conversation but none have attended.</p> <p>1.3</p> <p>RM said that the meeting is the AGM of the group and we need to elect the Chair & Minute Taker. He then asked for nominations for Chair and KD nominated RM with HF seconding this all agreed so RM continues for the next year. Then RM asked for nominations for minute taker. Rm nominated and AB second with all agreeing, so KD to have the position for the next year.</p>		
<p>2.</p> <p>Apologies for Absence:</p> <p>Elaine Turner & Terry Swinney.</p>		
<p>3.</p> <p>Declarations of Interest:</p> <p>None</p>		
<p>4.</p> <p>Minutes and Matters Arising from Previous Minutes:</p> <p>The minutes were agreed as a correct record.</p> <p>4.1</p> <p>Matters Arriving from Previous Minutes:</p> <p>Julia Pack will interview and write about a disabled person and a carer for the December issue.</p>		
<p>5.</p> <p>Guest Speaker:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Angela Lloyd a Housing Support Officer explained the role of the housing support team in helping tenants avoid losing their tenancies. • Discussed the challenges of navigating the benefit system and the importance of early intervention. • Provided information on discretionary housing payments and the importance of timely applications. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provided examples of how the benefit system can be confusing and the importance of advocacy. • Discussed the complexity of the benefit system and the need for specialized help. <p>Angela then explained the complexities of the benefit system and the importance of early intervention.</p> <p>The meeting discussed the impact of taxation on benefits related to employment and housing, particularly the cost of wardens in sheltered housing among other things.</p> <p>Angela answered many questions put to her and we found her very knowledgably and she explained everything in easy-to-understand language with no rush.</p> <p>Angela stayed for as long as the group need her to and they thanked her for coming along to the meeting.</p> <p>Angela also mentioned the importance of having clear information about benefits and financial assistance.</p> <p>HB then shares his personal experience with the benefit system and the importance of clear instructions.</p> <p>AL from the housing support team will provide more information to the group about the benefits system and how they can assist residents as new information becomes available.</p>	
<p>6.</p>	<p>Key Outcomes:</p> <p>Getting posters out to Doctors, Chemists, Hospitals, Schools, Notice Boards and any other places that can display them. (see section 7)</p>	
<p>7.</p>	<p>Planning for Future Meetings and Events:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • KD suggests having a party for the December meeting and inviting other members of South Essex Homes. • KD mentioned the need for laminated flyers for better durability. He was asked to get the large poster laminated so that they can go in doctors and other places. • BM to apply to the community fund on behalf of the disability and carers group to get funding for things like business cards, tea/coffee/ juice/biscuits/sugar/milk when visiting other places. 	<p>KD</p> <p>BM</p>
<p>8.</p>	<p>Discussion on Community Engagement and Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sarah Gallager emphasizes the importance of community engagement and support for residents. • Discussed the role of the housing support team in providing support and referrals. • Mentions the need for a clear action plan and the importance of community engagement. • Emphasizes the importance of community engagement and support for residents. 	
<p>9.</p>	<p>Items for Future Meetings:</p> <p>Departments or organisations who have agreed to attend:</p> <p>Adults and Communities Lead - JSCC</p> <p>Community Builders</p> <p>Age Concern</p> <p>Achieve, Thrive & Flourish</p> <p>Breathe Easy</p>	

	<p>Everyone Health SEH Fire Manager (Graham Hart) Send the Right Message (Tricia Cowdrey)</p> <p>If you know of anyone who would be willing to attend and give us a talk on their organisation or department that could help the disabled or carers in Southend, please let us know and we will contact them on your behalf.</p>	
<p>10.</p> <p>10.1</p> <p>10.2</p> <p>10.3</p> <p>10.4</p>	<p>Any other Business:</p> <p>Issues with council responsibilities, such as tree ownership and waste management, were debated. The need for better tenant representation and community engagement, particularly through events like coffee mornings, was emphasized to combat isolation and improve resident involvement.</p> <p>Tenant Representation and Isolation:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HF highlights the lack of tenant representation in Barringtons, leading to long-term issues. • HF organized a coffee morning to address isolation, but it failed due to financial irresponsibility among attendees. • HF also mentioned the importance of coffee mornings in identifying and helping needy residents is emphasized. • HF. The need for direct rule from South Essex Homes to kick-start activities in Barringtons is required. <p>Community Activities and Funding:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AB discuss various community activities like coffee mornings, games afternoons, and quiz nights. • Residents are encouraged to bring cakes and tea for these events to reduce costs. • BM suggests involving more residents in meetings to increase participation and improve community engagement. • BM said that the success of similar activities in other areas is used as a model for Barringtons. <p>Recycling and Waste Management:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HF discussed the council's recycling policies, including the use of bins and bags. • HB. Some residents prefer to keep their recycling bins full until collection day. • The benefits of using bins over bags, such as reduced litter and pest issues, was mentioned. • An issue with the council refusing to collect a contaminated black bin was highlighted <p>Resident Engagement and Ideas also Challenges and Solutions in Barringtons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AB proposes radical ideas like planting trees and improving hedges to enhance the community. • BM agrees to speak with Sarah to organize more resident meetings and activities in Barringtons. • BM. The importance of getting thinking people involved to drive community improvements is emphasized. • HF describes the challenges of organizing activities in Barringtons, including bookkeeping issues. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • HF. The need for fresh ideas and direct rule from South Essex Homes to address these challenges is discussed. • HF. The potential for road gardening and other small improvements to boost community spirit is mentioned. • HF. The importance of overcoming conservatism and implementing new ideas is highlighted. <p>10.5 Coffee Mornings and Community Support:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The role of coffee mornings in identifying and supporting needy residents was reiterated. • The potential for more community activities and support through resident engagement was discussed. • The need for ongoing efforts to maintain and improve community support was emphasized. <p>10.6 Recycling and Waste Management Continued:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A discussion on the council's recycling policies and resident compliance. • The benefits of using bins over bags for recycling are reiterated. • The council's refusal to collect contaminated bins and the need for resident education were mentioned. • The importance of proper waste management in maintaining a clean and orderly community was emphasized. <p>10.7 AB said that residents should look at the Live Well site (www.livewellsouthend.com)</p> <p>10.8 RM told the group about the Macmillan Cancer Support coffee meeting they held a Nickolson house that raised £272 for them.</p> <p>10.9 Chair Exercise Group:</p> <p>HF told the group that there is an exercise group that meets in Barringtons. It is run by ATF on a Thursday between 5:30 and 6:30pm. If you can't get in, go round the right side (Southchurch Road) and tape on the window that you can see in to the lounge.</p> <p>10.10 Important: KD reminded the group about making sure that they update SEH of their profile with things they should know, so they are aware and can tailor their service for you and give you and your household help and advice if you need it. i.e. disability - age of people in their home - if they have a key safe give the key number - if they have a key holder, give the persons details – etc.,</p> <p>KD asked that everyone pass on this information to all their neighbours and friend so that they also update their profile.</p>	ALL
<p>11.</p> <p>11.1</p>	<p>Meetings:</p> <p>Would people please not talk over each other or hold individual conversations, as it is impossible to hear what is said on the recording when this happens. Then it's not possible to produce an accurate account for the minute.</p> <p>Please remember this is a disability and carers group and all meetings have a set agenda, you can bring anything that has to do with disability or caring to the meeting. we welcome any concerns or ideas you have and will discuss anything that is of</p>	

11.2	<p>concern or worry to you as a disabled resident or carer within the city.</p> <p>Any other concerns, complaints or help not related to the meeting subject, must be after the meeting. you will then have time to bring to the attention of the correct person, anything that is not disability or carer related.</p>	
12.	<p>Date of next meeting:</p> <p>No December meeting due to the Big Conversation on the 10th</p> <p>14th January 2026 11am at the Civic Centre</p>	
13.1	<p>Future Meeting Dates and Venues:</p> <p>All meeting will be shared between the Civic Centre and the Sheltered in 2026.</p> <p>Please provide me with an email address if you have one, as it cost a lot to send through the post. A copy of the agenda and minutes will be emailed or posted out.</p>	