

# Neighbourhood Focus Group Meeting

Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June 2026

## Minutes of Meeting

Attendance:

**Residents:** Bob Ayriss (BA) - Chair, Ian Ward (IW), Trish Sneddon (TS), Pauline Harris (PH), Mike McKenzie (MM), Angela Burrows (AB), Lynne Thorpe (LT), Pauline Goddard (PG), Caroline Campbell (CC), Jon Morfitt (JM), Terry Coker (TC), Rebecca Watts (RW).

**Staff:** Nina Reardon – Housing Services (NR), Jamie Durban – Estates, Anita McGinley – Community Safety (AG)

**Guest speakers:** Laura

		Action
1	<b><u>Welcome</u></b>	
	BA welcomed everyone to the meeting.	
2	<b><u>Apologies</u></b>	
	Apologies were received from: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wayne Medforth – Estates</li><li>• Graham Harris</li></ul>	
3	<b><u>Declarations of Interest</u></b>	
	No declarations of interest were made.	
4	<b><u>Minutes of previous meeting</u></b>	
	<p>The minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a true record.</p> <p><b>ASB</b></p> <p>Anita requested to talk to the Focus Group about the ASB Service Agreement 2026 and the Good Neighbourhood Service Agreement 2026. Levels of risk are assessed by asking the reporter a suite of nationally recognised questions before assigning a risk level of low, standard or high. The response to the questions determines the risk level. The new Housing System will enable us to map incidents, and we are working on implementation over the next few months.</p> <p>SEH need to account for vulnerabilities, disabilities, Equality Act 2010 protected characteristics and conduct proportionality assessments of all parties. A question was asked about identifying the protected characteristics. Anita asked NR to check the South Essex Homes website.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> NR to email the draft service agreements to the Focus Group for review. Please send comments by Thursday 11<sup>th</sup> June 2026 to Anita's email address.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> NR to check website for protected characteristics in South Essex Homes <a href="#">Equality and Diversity Policy</a>. The Southend-On-Sea Council website has definitions of <a href="#">The Equality Act 2010 – Southend-on-Sea City Council</a> this lists all the nine protected characteristics.</p>	

	<p>Anita met with a new contact in Essex Police regarding ASB. NR noted the contact details:</p> <p><a href="mailto:Nicola.Drake@essex.police.uk">Nicola.Drake@essex.police.uk</a> Badge 74642, PC Drake</p>	
5	<p><b><u>Matters arising from previous meeting</u></b></p>	
	<p><b>Communal Lounge and Chairs – Bishop House</b></p> <p>Action: SG/Estates to look at the Bishop House programme and let residents know when the communal lounge and chairs will be refurbished.</p> <p>Action: Wayne and Jamie confirmed that a schedule of works has been organised. Update to be given at the next meeting about the chair cleaning.</p> <p><b>Mendip waste bin and capacity</b></p> <p><b>There is a missing food waste bin, and this is causing a build-up of waste that is attracting rats and foxes.</b></p> <p><b>Completed:</b> NR confirmed the location of the food waste in Mendip is not on an SEH property. AM confirmed this issue has been passed to the Tenancy team to find a resolution.</p> <p><b>General Bin surveys</b></p> <p>The Chair asked the Estates team if they can review the availability of waste food bins on estates before Suez present to the residents.</p> <p>Action: Estates team to conduct a survey</p> <p><b>Bishop House and Riverstone - Tree surveys</b></p> <p>Discussion about dead trees at Bishop House and Riverstone.</p> <p>Completed: JD will check with Tye but appears the tree survey was conducted and unsafe branches were lopped.</p> <p><b>Riverstone - Potting shed</b></p> <p>Discussion about clearing of rubbish by removing lock on garden gate and removing the potting shed.</p> <p>Action: The residents had fixed the lock but it is not a standard SEH lock so it does not have a key. JD to investigate replacement of the lock and survey.</p>	
6	<p><b><u>Caretaking</u></b></p>	
	<p>The Chair asked for the minutes to record that he was not happy that a representative was not present from Estates Management at the beginning of the meeting.</p> <p>Jamie was not informed of the meeting by his team and arrived part-way through the meeting to answer the Focus Group's questions.</p>	
7	<p><b><u>Waste Management – Suez</u></b></p>	

Laura and Andy gave a presentation on the services Suez offer to residents. The best way to communicate your waste needs is via the Waste App. They manage the Southend Council owned black, blue and red dog poo bins. There is an article about Suez services in the latest issue of the Insight Magazine.

Suez began the contract to deliver pink sacks to communal areas of buildings in 2016. They deliver Food waste bins, liners, textile bags, pink bags and waste sacks twice a year. Suez contractors are not allowed to enter private property this is why deliveries are in boxes in communal areas.

If you need supplementary pink sacks stocks of these can be found at libraries and council buildings. Residents asked whether SEH caretakers and cleaners could inform them of the deliveries of waste bags in advance.

Residents at Chiltern, Malvern, Quantock and Pennine were concerned that delivered supplies were gone from communal areas before they could collect their personal supply of bags.

Residents of Sandpiper and Kingfisher are receiving minimal bags supplies. The delivery driver is only leaving enough for a house; there are 8 flats in the building. The delivery driver at Sandpiper's behaviour had been challenging when asked about the delivery. There was also an incident of driver's foul language at Riverstone.

**Action: Andy to re-train delivery drivers and investigate.**

A resident at Christchurch Court stated that the caretaker was putting waste supplies on the doorsteps but many of the residents are elderly and have health issues that cause issues collecting them.

**Action: Andy has asked to attend 25 June meeting to give an update. NR to send an invitation. He will also let the residents know about the next planned delivery dates to the communal properties.**

A resident asked about supplying reusable bags for recycling to make it more sustainable. Some tenants take more than the fair share of supplies leading to incorrect waste recycling.

**Action: Suez will be phasing out pink sacks, currently supplying 10,000,000. A re-education programme about recycling will be rolled out.**

A resident asked a question about enlarging the bin rooms at the Western Approaches end of Bishop House. The two bin rooms are inadequate for the larger bins required for 64 flats.

**Action: Andy will follow up with SEH about increasing the collection rates.**

**Action: NR to ask Estates to look at contract and if we can increase to two collections to ease the rat problem. Does SEH have a budget to build a new larger bin room to accommodate the larger litre bins.**

A resident at Riverstone said that they had not received pink sack deliveries since 2022 and have no caretaker to distribute supplies.

**Action: Andy at Suez and Estates team to investigate.**

A resident made a comment about the roll of blue bags being faulty as majority are split at sides.

**Action: Andy to investigate with supplier and seek reimbursement for faulty bags.**

	<p>A resident asked for larger bins 140 litres at Chiltern and Christchurch. He went to depot to pick them up as they were ordered by Paris Copley in January and was told they are still waiting for delivery.</p> <p><b>Action: Andy will go to Suez depot and deliver to the buildings today.</b></p> <p>A resident raised a query about wear and tear on bins. They were advised to contact their Housing Officer and request for new 1,100 litre replacement bins.</p> <p>CC asked about bins being hooked onto her private fence.</p> <p><b>Action: CC to give Laura at Suez her address. She will ask staff not to hang bins on the fence.</b></p>	
8	<p><b><u>Matters arising from items 6 &amp; 7</u></b></p> <p><b>Suez Q&amp;A</b></p> <p>Laura offered to field some questions from the residents.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What are the dates for collections of communal bins?</li> </ul> <p>Laura confirmed that the dates for communal bin collections will be publicised shortly.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Is SEH responsible for the dog waste bins?</li> </ul> <p>The stick type of bin is SEH Property Services responsibility. The red bins are Suez responsibility.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are contaminated bins taken from site and replaced?</li> </ul> <p>Jamie from Estates confirmed that caretakers should be washing out contaminated bins.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What colour bag does cat litter need to be in and what happens if there are spills?</li> </ul> <p>Laura confirmed that this type of waste should be in general black waste bag and sealed. Jamie confirmed that the caretaker should be cleaning up any spills and leaves properly disposed of.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How does the recycling plant sort through all the different items?</li> </ul> <p>The Suez recycling site in Southend is a transfer station, and lorries take this waste to Suez's recycling plant on the Ipswich/Suffolk border. A sorting machines sifts all the recycling waste and sorts it into its component parts ready to be recycled. The residents asked whether SEH could organise a coach trip to the plant.</p> <p><b>Action: NR to ask SG if a day trip will be possible.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What happens to the textiles for recycling?</li> </ul> <p>Please use the textile bags. Any items not reusable are turned into rags for carpet liners. Please do not put pillows or quilts in the textile bags. You will need to book a collection on My Southend for the full bag to be collected.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What do residents do with large and small household items of waste?</li> </ul> <p>Small electrical collections are booked via MySouthend. The waste van will take small household items and if it is a large item you will need to arrange for the fly-tipping van to collect it.</p>	Estates

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What action can be taken if residents are not respectful of bin collections and create loose rubbish.</li> </ul> <p>Jamie in the Estates team suggested a block letter to the residents (Riverstone, in this instance) to remind them that part of the tenancy agreement is to comply with waste management rules. If this keeps happening, then an ASB report should be made.</p>	
9	<p><b><u>Any other Business</u></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A Resident had an ASB question.</li> </ul> <p>The Chair asked the Resident to make a formal complaint about it as an ASB case had already been opened and existing cases were not to be discussed at this meeting.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>How many hours should the cleaner be contracted to Bishop House?</li> </ul> <p>Jamie in Estates confirmed that the cleaner should be working four hours every afternoon and that is split equally between two buildings. Two hours in each.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Kingfisher and Sandpiper, Communal hall not cleaned after private function.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action: Jamie will visit the site and talk to cleaners.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A question was asked about Adams Elm pond maintenance.</li> </ul> <p><b>Action NR to contact Katy in Tenancy team and check whether pond was established when the building was erected or added after.</b></p> <p><b>Meeting frequencies</b></p> <p>The Chair asked the group to vote with a show of hands if they want to change the frequency of the Neighbourhood Focus Group meetings. They voted unanimously to keep these monthly.</p>	
10	<p><b><u>Date of next meeting</u></b></p>	
	<p>Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> June, 10:30am –12:30, Committee Room 4</p>	

**Key Outcomes from Meeting (to be completed in meeting)**

Residents were asked to review the draft ASB Service Standards and Good Neighbourhood Service Standards by Anita McGinley.	Feedback expected from the Neighbourhood Focus Group by 11 <sup>th</sup> June 2026.
Residents told us they did not know the nine protected characteristics in the Equality Act 2010.	In response to this feedback, we supplied equality and diversity information on websites.
Residents were asked if they wanted to change frequency of meetings.	In response to this question their feedback was a unanimous decision to keep the frequency of these meetings to monthly.

For Resident Engagement – You Said, We Did uploaded