

## South Essex Homes' Service Area Updates – June 2021

DEPARTMENT	UPDATE
<p><b>CarelineSOS</b></p>    <p><b>Repairs Contact Centre</b></p>   <p>From Deborah Hill-David</p>	<p>The team will begin to undertake training on the new platform next week. IT rollout of laptops for each member of staff instead of sharing has nearly been completed. The issues with the length of time it takes to have the user applications downloaded, access given and them actually working has proved a challenge for everyone. New ways of working are proving both negative and positive as the service continues to change. The new platform could see smarter ways of working with sheltered and our partners schemes.</p> <p>New starters are Ellie Sheraton and Millie Krise who have been with us for two weeks and are learning the systems.</p> <p>Both teams are fully stretched due to holiday cover. We continue to follow COVID guidelines at the West Office, however most staff have been doubled vaccinated.</p>
<p><b>Communications</b></p> <p>From Julia Pack</p>	<p>The South Essex Homes website build is now well underway and we are aiming for a launch date probably in early August.</p> <p>We are in the process of standardising the design of all the company Policies &amp; Procedures, so they have a more consistent corporate feel. This is a huge task but we are committed to completing it ahead of the start of the new Staff Intranet build in August.</p> <p>We will soon be starting the process of gathering stories for the summer issue of Insight.</p>
<p><b>Estate Services</b></p> <p>From Tony Holliday</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Caretaking and cleaning re designed rounds and schedules working effectively</li> <li>• Fire door and window maintenance on schedule with this year's annual programme - over 90% of long term non access properties now completed</li> <li>• Grounds maintenance – Everything's growing exceptionally fast !!</li> <li>• SEPS Maintenance commenced PAT testing at Castle point.</li> </ul>

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<p><b>Finance</b></p> <p>From Rebecca Coleman</p>	<p>Finance are preparing for our annual external audit during the week commencing 5 July 2021.</p>
<p><b>Housing community safety</b></p> <p>From Anita McGinley</p>	<p>South Essex Homes was recently awarded DAHA Membership. DAHA is the Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance and shows a commitment by South Essex Homes to improve our response to domestic abuse through a set of standards to achieve DAHA Accreditation</p> <p>There are 8 standards that will affect every area of the organisation for both staff and residents and we will be approaching both to be part of this journey. The first stage is to complete a self assessment and identify our current position against these standards. Once identified, we will setting up working groups to consider short and long term outcomes.</p>
<p><b>Projects</b></p> <p>Paul Longman</p>	<p>Balmoral Refurbishment Works – Project currently being evaluated contract award expected shortly</p> <p>Cecil Court Sprinkler installation – Project evaluated, currently awaiting approval to award.</p>
<p><b>Property Services</b></p> <p>From Russell Haynes <b>Capital and Planned Maintenance team</b></p>	<p>Works in progress on the Decent Homes side. Capital Programmes are currently in various stages of Tender preparation.</p> <p>Recent award of the Window Contract has been made, Thermoshield are the successful Contractor.</p> <p>Bishops House Lift Refurbishment works in progress.</p> <p>All works at this time are still subject to Covid restrictions and any possible changes made by Government.</p> <p>Please find amended list of works programme attached.</p>

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<p>From Bradley Staff</p>	<p>The tower block window cleaning tender has been re written and is due to got out to tender. I am starting to undertake some analysis of repairs data for the last two years. This will be used to `target` frequent users, and properties that may benefit from a property inspection.</p>
<p><b>SEPS</b> From Lynsey Hurd</p>	<p>The brand new SEPS website will be the first of the company's new websites to be completed and is on track to launch in July.</p>
<p><b>Specialist Income Management</b> From Laura Thomas</p>	<p>The ban on evictions was lifted at the end of May and, although we do not have a backlog of cases awaiting eviction, we do have our first case post-ban with an eviction date set.</p> <p>We are slowly and steadily seeing possession cases move through the court system. Our aim still being to sustain tenancies and avoid evictions whilst reducing rent arrears. The extra measures we have adopted over the past year to engage with residents about their rent arrears remain in place. We are only taking possession action when all other avenues have been exhausted.</p> <p>The new debt respite scheme "Breathing Space" came into effect on 17<sup>th</sup> May. We have not been notified of any cases to date.</p> <p>The team continue to mainly work from home but we're hoping to get together face-to-face rather than virtually soon!</p>
<p><b>Support Services</b> From Sam Elliott</p>	<p>Early Help working closely with Support Services to support families within Temporary Accommodation, they provide advice and guidance and short-term interventions for families who require support.</p> <p>The team are planning a number of community activities within Hostels and Sheltered which will take place once restrictions are lifted, we are holding activities where possible within the current Government guidelines i.e. art sessions with limited numbers and use of technology.</p>

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	<p>A new Resident Engagement Strategy is being produced which will meet the requirements set out in the Social Housing White Paper.</p> <p>We are supporting Southend Association of Voluntary Services (SAVS) with the 'Folk Like Us' project which seeks to reduce loneliness and social isolation for people aged 60+ and will be identifying residents who could benefit from the project. We would welcome any referrals for this project, please contact Neve Barr for more information.</p> <p>Contemporary Elders Project - A video has been produced in partnership with Focal Point, SBC and Sheltered residents. The video takes a positive look at the lives and experiences of three of our residents in Sheltered, how they have coped throughout the pandemic and how technology has played a important role in their socialisation with others. The video can be viewed here:</p> <p>Full length: <a href="https://vimeo.com/548007731/f05674b107">https://vimeo.com/548007731/f05674b107</a> (8mins) Short length: <a href="https://vimeo.com/548020742/71c8e25771">https://vimeo.com/548020742/71c8e25771</a> (2 mins)</p>
<p><b>Tenancy Services</b></p> <p>From Paul Davey</p>	<p>Two new starters this week, who will be working on high profile ASB cases. They will be taking the top 5 ASB cases from the Tenancy Officers and working through them. This is a pilot project for 5 months to see if it is beneficial and provides a better service.</p> <p>The patches have changed slightly, where officers will now be covering their own area and additional roads within the East 1 and East 4 area. I have attached the list to this email (tabs at the bottom explain it in more detail).</p>