

Leigh on Sea Town Council News

issue 11

Cover Image by John Pearman

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@LeighTCevents

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For any booking enquiries at Leigh Community Centre contact the Bookings Team
bookings@leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk

'MySouthend' is an online portal where you can manage your Council Services online:

www.southend.gov.uk

Registering is quick and once signed up you can report issues online, receive Council news notifications and contact us with requests or comments on your services. Report, apply and pay for services, including reporting a missed waste collection or pothole; requesting copies of birth certificates; managing your Council Tax, Benefits and Business Rates online and much more.

Welcome to the 11th edition of Leigh-on-Sea Town Council News.

2020 has been a roller coaster of a year so far – issues such as Brexit, the expansion of Southend Airport, the climate crisis and, most recently, Covid-19 will have huge implications for our town and its people – both now and in the future. However, there may be some consolation to be had from being a Leigh-on-Sea resident – an excellent example of what we can be grateful for is portrayed in John Pearman's beautiful cover photo.

Our intention is to produce a magazine that is both informative and interesting BUT it would be even better if our readers contributed articles on matters of local interest. For example, this edition includes articles on two 'local treasures' – Sheila Appleton and The Famous Potatoes but we know that there are plenty more talented people in Leigh-on-Sea and would love to hear from any of you who have any ideas on who else we could include in future issues. We would also be interested in hearing from you if you are a member of a local group or club and would like to tell us about what you do.

We hope to see you at the Annual Town Meeting on 24th April and would welcome some feedback on how we are doing with this publication and/or ideas of what you would like to see in future editions.

Best wishes, The Editorial Group.



John Pearman Biography

Cover photograph: Old Leigh by John Pearman

John Pearman is a devotee of the Old Town. He lives there,

photographs it and even kayaks its waterways.

We talked to John at his photography gallery. 'Old Leigh is my life and I love being part of it. Since opening the gallery it's become a hub for local life. I meet lovely people, interesting characters and hear such wonderful stories. I know how important the town is to people'.

You can see John's photographs at the Old Leigh Gallery opposite St Clements Church. You can also see Leigh from a different perspective by kayaking its waterways with Old Leigh Kayak Tours. Contact John on 07711 277 007

The Town Clerk and Council Team

I am pleased to report that the Council's facilities came through relatively unscathed following storms Ciara and Dennis. A few roof slates from the Community Centre needed to be fixed but that was all, thank goodness! We are now into a programme of remodelling and improving the Community Centre.



The ground floor toilets have been refurbished, several rooms decorated and the redesign of the cafe is well underway. Thank you for bearing with us during all of this. We have tried our best to keep the disruption to a minimum but can only apologise when it does cause some inconvenience. Much of the refurbishment is essential to keep our beloved Centre functioning and we feel sure that you will appreciate the end results.

Elsewhere, the new skate park extension is due to commence at the end of April. We were fortunate to be awarded a small grant from Enover Community Trust which meant that the project could proceed. It is an exciting one as we have the support of the skating community behind us who have designed the area themselves, as well as a local businessman whose help has been invaluable and meant finally, we could get work underway. Look out for the graffiti art wall that will coincide with the refurbishment when finished.

The team is also planning the Council events programme for 2020 including our VE Day 75 and Farmers' Market 20th Anniversary celebrations. Look out for details in this magazine but also on our website, Facebook, Instagram and Twitter feeds.

We have the pleasure of working with lots of community groups. We are delighted to have collaborated with Leigh Lions in enabling a defibrillator to be installed in the Old Town and the Leigh Partnership group which has been working hard on some special signage that will be arriving soon to promote our town.

In the past year, our thoughts turned to how we can help combat social isolation in our community and our fortnightly social club for the over 60's has seen numbers increase and a great itinerary has been arranged for those that attend. Our two youth clubs and youth forum are all part of this programme but we don't intend to stop there as the team are working on projects which we hope to deliver during the course of the year.

Some of you were able to attend the Coffee with Councillor sessions and I know Councillors are looking at some of the issues raised there along with the comments and ideas. Please feel free to contact us throughout the year though as we will always listen. This is how the defibrillator in the Old Town came about, Friends of Leigh Library Gardens came into existence and our Saturday Farmers' Market on Strand Wharf will be happening this summer. If it's possible for Leigh-on-Sea Town Council to act on ideas and suggestions from our residents and visitors, then we will do our best to do so.

Helen Symmons, Town Clerk

Note from Chairman, Cllr. Jill Healey

Welcome to the Spring edition of the Leigh-on-Sea Town Council news. I hope some of you were able to enjoy our annual Leigh Lights Parade in November. As always it was an evening filled with joy and festive fun. Thank you to everyone involved with the organisation and all our participants who braved the chilly evening!

Sadly, we were unable to hold the Carols on Strand Wharf last year because of safety concerns. I am sorry that many of you were disappointed but we must always consider the health and safety of the public and participants when holding events. I was also personally disappointed because it would have been an occasion where I could have promoted and collected donations for my chosen charity Age Concern Southend. The good news however is that I hosted a Wine Tasting event at the Community Centre in February and was able to raise £860 for my charity. My thanks to all who attended and helped to make the event such a great success.

Summer is just around the corner and the team at Leigh Town Council have started planning for events in May, June and July. These include a VE Day afternoon tea, the annual community day in Bonchurch Park, the Youth Market and also a holiday programme of events on Strand Wharf and in the Community Centre. Look out for further information on our website!

I am sure you will agree that the editorial team have excelled themselves yet again and I hope you will find the articles and information in the magazine interesting, informative and thought provoking! Wishing you all a very safe and happy summer season.



COUNCIL NEWS

Old Town Defibrillator

When one of our residents contacted the Town Clerk with regard to the possibility of a defibrillator in the Old Town, she was happy to add this as an agenda item for Council to consider.

Council immediately thought this a great idea as we have one in the Community Centre and knew that the Leigh Lions had enabled another in Leigh Road. With our good friends Leigh Lions, we will be imminently locating a new defibrillator on Strand Wharf. As the box does require to be heated, it will be located to the rear of the Heritage Centre but we feel sure that all in the Old Town will happily display window stickers for us so it can be found easily in an emergency.

Volunteer of the Year & Good for Leigh Awards

Councillors have deliberated and chosen their winners for the Donald Fraser Volunteer of the Year Award 2020 and our Good for Leigh awards. Thank you to all of those who made nominations. Our winners will be announced at the Annual Community Meeting on Friday 24th April.

Bonfires at Leigh Allotment Sites

The Council has now agreed that the use of bonfires on Leigh Allotment Sites is strictly prohibited. Since 2016, bonfires were limited to just two weekends per year, but many complaints were received from nearby residents and the fires were not always kept to these set weekends.

Recently Southend Borough Council declared a climate emergency and on the website state that bonfires are not recommended, it would be remiss of Leigh-on-Sea Town Council to not follow suit.

Allotment holders are encouraged to compost on the site and Southend do offer a garden waste collection scheme or green waste can be taken to the Household Recycling Centres.

With poor air quality in Southend and a changing climate, any action - no matter how small - should be taken to make a positive step in the right direction.



You said, we did! *Many of our residents had commented there were insufficient bins in Leigh Library Gardens and the Skate Park, we listened and several new bins have been installed.*

#OpLeigh

On the 16th January a number of local groups joined forces with the Southend Community Safety Partnership to engage with the community and businesses on a variety of issues. This is the second time this type of event has been run in Leigh, and after last year's success it was decided that this kind of community engagement is incredibly beneficial.

Members from HARP, Essex Police, Volunteer Southend, Street Pastors, Southend Borough Council and Leigh-on-Sea Town Council and others all took part in the day.

Leigh was made a priority area following challenges identified in and around surrounding residential streets. Activities that were carried out on the day included:

- Prayer Walks
- Public Engagement
- Stop Smoking Services
- Road Safety Advice
- Engagement with retailers
- Youth Engagement
- Patrols
- Community safety surveys

The public were asked to rank issues that concerned them most, the top 5 were:

1. Drug taking/dealing
2. Burglary
3. Homelessness
4. Dog fouling
5. Vehicle Crime

We'll bring you updates throughout the year on initiatives and actions based on these findings.

GRANT AWARD SCHEME RECIPIENTS

Friends of Leigh Library Gardens

The Friends of Leigh Library Gardens (FOLLG) were delighted to be successful in obtaining a grant from LTC. With the grant, the Friends have been able to obtain a variety of hand-tools, Public Liability insurance and have also secured a lockable tool store. In addition, the volunteers have been busy planting seasonal bulbs throughout the gardens. As a relatively new charity, the grant has made a significant difference to FOLLG and has been vital in kick starting volunteering work in the Gardens which will begin to show in the next few months. The remaining funds will contribute to further planting arrangements throughout the Gardens.

The Southend Scout and Guide Gang Show

The Southend Gang Show, a variety show performed by Scouts and Guides in the area was thrilled to receive the news of the successful grant application. The show offers the cast, many of whom do not belong to dance or drama groups, the opportunity to perform in a professional show at the Palace Theatre. Shows cost money and to cover the budgeted £25,000 many fund raising activities are organised. The grant went to pay for the hall hire in which we held a fund-raising Barn Dance with the Famous Potatoes. With nearly 150 guests we had a wonderful night and hope to do it again next year!



Further grants were also approved at this year's intake for Endeavour Trust who use the Leigh Community Centre to hold regular committee meetings, and the Beat It - Breast Cancer Rehabilitation Class a unique exercise and support programme for those living with Cancer, our grant enables the class to be run for free for their members.

Yantlet Residents Association



The members of the Yantlet Residents Association have been working hard to put together a community garden, available to all residents of the Yantlet building. The Yantlet is a community of mostly older people, some with physical disabilities, mental health issues or learning difficulties, so the garden has become a real hub and provides an excellent way to engage with more reclusive residents. This is a great boost to the wellbeing of tenants. Projects they are hoping to develop with the use of the Council funding include a pergola, herb garden, patio and seating improvements, as well as maintenance of their flower beds, hanging baskets and pots.

Leigh-on-Sea SEND Families



Leigh on Sea SEND families is a support group set up by and for local parents of children with special educational needs and disabilities (SEND). As parents of children with SEND ourselves, we've experienced first-hand how confusing, frustrating and isolating it can be trying to do the best by your child when they have additional needs. Or if you think they might need help but don't know where to turn or who to speak to. Understanding the services available and the best route to the right kind of help can be challenging to say the least. Often we found talking to other parents of children with SEND the most valuable source of support, advice and information. We identified the need for a safe space where parents could get together, ask questions, share experiences of SEND services that worked for them and offer each other support. We created the Leigh SEND families Facebook group to share information about local services. We meet regularly for coffee mornings (or evenings) at Leigh Community Centre so people can meet face-to-face for support. We have also just started running a few small events for the children to come together and take part in fun activities. We welcome parents or carers from Leigh and the surrounding area whose children have received

or are awaiting a SEND diagnosis. Join us on Facebook at Leigh on Sea SEND families or pop along to one of our coffee mornings. Come and meet other parents who might be able to signpost you to a useful service, share their experience of negotiating the system or just offer a friendly and sympathetic ear. You can find all the latest details of our next meeting and events on our Facebook page or email us at Leighonseasendfamilies@gmail.com.



The Phab Shop & The Phab Café

The Phab Shop recently made a successful bid to take over the café lease granted by Leigh Road Baptist Church, formerly the Oasis Café. The Phab Shop was set up in 2012 as a self-sustaining charity shop that offers much needed opportunities to people with learning disabilities/difficulties. By extending their work into a community café they can offer further opportunities for work experience, training and qualifications in the hospitality sector. Without this, many of the young people we work with are at risk of isolation and low self-esteem. The funding has enabled us to advertise the café and cover some of the initial start up costs. We hope the café will be continue to be a well-loved asset to the people of Leigh and will continue to operate the suspended meals scheme for homeless people.



N-Act Theatre Group

N-Act is a not-for-profit theatre company who deliver interactive theatre projects and performances in schools and communities. The three plays in our portfolio are "Linked" about internet safety, "Friend" – focusing on gangs and knife crime and our latest production "Invisible" which examines mental health issues. Alongside "Invisible" we have started to offer a training package which aims to enable people to open up about mental health issues, raise awareness and reduce stigma. We want to make sure this is available to all communities, including those on a lower income, so this funding has allowed us to provide our performance with training at a reduced rate.

Our latest round of applications will be considered by Leigh-on-Sea Town Council in the coming months. If you have a community project that you would like support with you can apply for up to £500 funding, the deadline for applications is 30th Sept 2020. **Contact council@leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk for more information.**

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES



SOUTHEND AIRPORT

A key issue voiced by residents in recent discussions with Leigh-on-Sea Town Councillors is extreme displeasure with noise and pollution generated by Southend airport.

A recent petition encompassing over 2500 responses (www.change.org/STOP-nightflights-LSA) highlights some very upsetting impacts on the quality of life for our community - people unable to function at work due to lack of sleep, babies and children waking due to planes overhead at night, being just a couple of many worrying examples

At the same time, there are great concerns about the increased pollutants. Southend already has the ninth worst pollution in the country and there are fears that additional particulate matter being emitted from burnt jet fuel will exacerbate poor air quality and health issues. Over 20 schools and nurseries reside within the confines of the flight path and we must ensure the next generation are unaffected.

The community concern is great and was further illustrated by a recent march by climate change and airport protestors through Southend high street.

The recent ruling against Heathrow airport expansion provided a clear indication that climate commitments must be considered on all major infrastructure projects. Southend is no different.

Cllr Carole Mulroney (in her role as a Southend Borough Councillor) advised us that the airport is in a strong position with a valid planning permission and a legal agreement with the Borough Council. Even the new night flights comply with that agreement. But being compliant is not good enough. She has suggested that the Airport Management Team undertake an Environmental Action Plan to put measures in place to mitigate the problems. It's not the solution but it does show a potential way forward. She went on to explain that pressure to comply is also now

coming from within the aviation industry, technological advances and the growing awareness, so these issues cannot be ignored.

We need a strong steer from Government and penalties for non-compliance. Airports nationwide need to realise they are privileged to be in our communities and should treat residents with respect and a duty of care.

It is apparent that Southend airport needs to take action and start addressing concerns as a matter of urgency. A harmony can be struck but action must be taken to balance commerce with community.

Your Town Councillors are fully committed to representing the needs and views of our residents and as such, will be providing a formal council position on airport expansion. Cllr Forde represents the Leigh-on-Sea Town Council at the Southend Airport Consultative Committee meetings.

Cllr Damian O'Boyle



Community Special Constables Scheme

by Francesca Smith

What is a Special Constable?

Special constables are volunteer police officers with the same powers as regular officers. Specials spend approximately four hours a week supporting the police to tackle crime in their communities. (Duty hours may vary from force to force.)

Specials are recruited locally by all 43 Home Office police forces in England and Wales. They work in partnership with regular officers and the wider policing family, such as Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs).

Who can be a Special Constable?

The basic requirements are:

- You must either be a national of a country within the European Economic Area or, if not, have leave to remain in the UK free of restrictions.
- You must be at least 18 years old when making your application.
- You should be in good health, and of good character.
- You must be able to speak and write English competently.

You must not:

- Be registered bankrupt, subject to CCJs or IVAs
- Omit to declare any offences or 'spent' convictions
- Have defaulted accounts
- Ideally not have been convicted or cautioned for a serious arrestable offence
- Applicants who have received cautions, reprimands, formal warnings and final warnings will not be considered until a full five years from the date of the sanction

Why become a Special Constable?

- Do you want to be more pro-active in your Community?
- Do you want a pathway into the regular police force?
- Do you want to volunteer for an exciting role?
- Do you want to fulfill childhood aspirations?
- Do you have transferable skills from your day job that you want to use to help your Community?
- Do you want to add a career booster to your CV?
- Do you want to have access to leadership opportunities?

What do Special Constables do?

Specials take part in frontline police work. They can spend much of their time on the streets, doing intelligence-based patrols in crime hotspots or taking part in crime-prevention initiatives. This could mean anything from keeping town centres safe at night to conducting house-to-house enquiries or helping prevent vulnerable members of the community from becoming victims of crime.

It is hard, demanding work - but from your first time on duty you will see the impact you are having. It is also extremely varied, and you could easily find yourself doing any of the following:

- Ensuring public safety
- Assisting at the scene of accidents, fires or incidents - helping control situations, ensuring people are safe.
- Providing security and crowd control at major public events - preventing injuries and disorder.
- Preventing crime
- Carrying out high-visibility foot patrols to deter and detect criminals.
- Educating businesses and the community about crime and how to avoid it to reduce crime and people's fear of it happening.
- Talking to schoolchildren about crime reduction and community safety to help them stay safe and make the right choices.
- Tackling crime
- Confronting anti-social behaviour on the streets such as gangs or intimidating behaviour.
- Managing alcohol-related incidents such as public drunkenness or violence.
- Enforcing road safety laws in local communities.
- Investigating crime
- Conducting house-to-house enquiries to gather information and support larger enquiries.
- Taking part in police operations to disrupt and arrest offenders.
- Securing convictions
- Presenting evidence in court to support the justice system in prosecuting offenders.

Why does Leigh-on-Sea Town Council need Special Constables?

- To have an active police presence
- To help tackle and deter anti-social behaviour
- To help deter break in's and burglaries
- To deter gang culture among youths, in turn preventing drug misuse, graffiti, vandalism and other crimes

How do you become a Special Constable?

To become a Special Constable, you must first apply through your local police force. Read a copy of their Application Guide for the full details and to check your eligibility.

Step 1: Make an initial application through the Essex Police Website

Step 2: You will be invited to an assessment centre to complete a fitness test, competency-based interview and take 4 written exams. Results will be posted within two weeks

Step 3: Pre-Employment checks will take place, you will need to attend a medical examination, provide DNA and fingerprints, provide information about yourself and attend an induction day.

Step 4: To become a Special Constable you must undertake 20 days of classroom-based training before you can be attested. This can be done either as an intensive course which is Monday to Friday over 4 weeks, or on alternative weekends for 20 weeks.

Step 5: After 20 days of training you will be attested in front of a Magistrate and receive your warrant card, plus full policing powers.

Special Constables: Dispelling the Myths

- Special Constables DO have all the same access to training, equipment and opportunities as regular police officers
- Special Constables DO have the same powers as regular police officers
- Special Constables CAN drive police vehicles
- There is NO minimum time requirement that a Special Constable must complete
- Special Constables CAN be a part of specialised teams, such as marine, operational, support, drones, search, dogs
- There is NO upper age limit for a Special Constable
- Special Constables have NO paperwork to complete
- Training and support IS ongoing, with an excellent support network in place
- Workplaces often ALLOW their staff to undertake 8 hours of volunteering a month as part of their normal working day

Precept

By Helen Symmons

For the past 3 years Leigh-on-Sea Town Council has been able to keep the annual rise in the tax for residents at less than 2% per annum.

In 2020/21 it is essential that we carry out necessary emergency repairs to the Community Centre to ensure it meets current regulations to provide a safe environment for the thousands of our residents and visitors from all over the Southend Borough who enjoy its facilities.

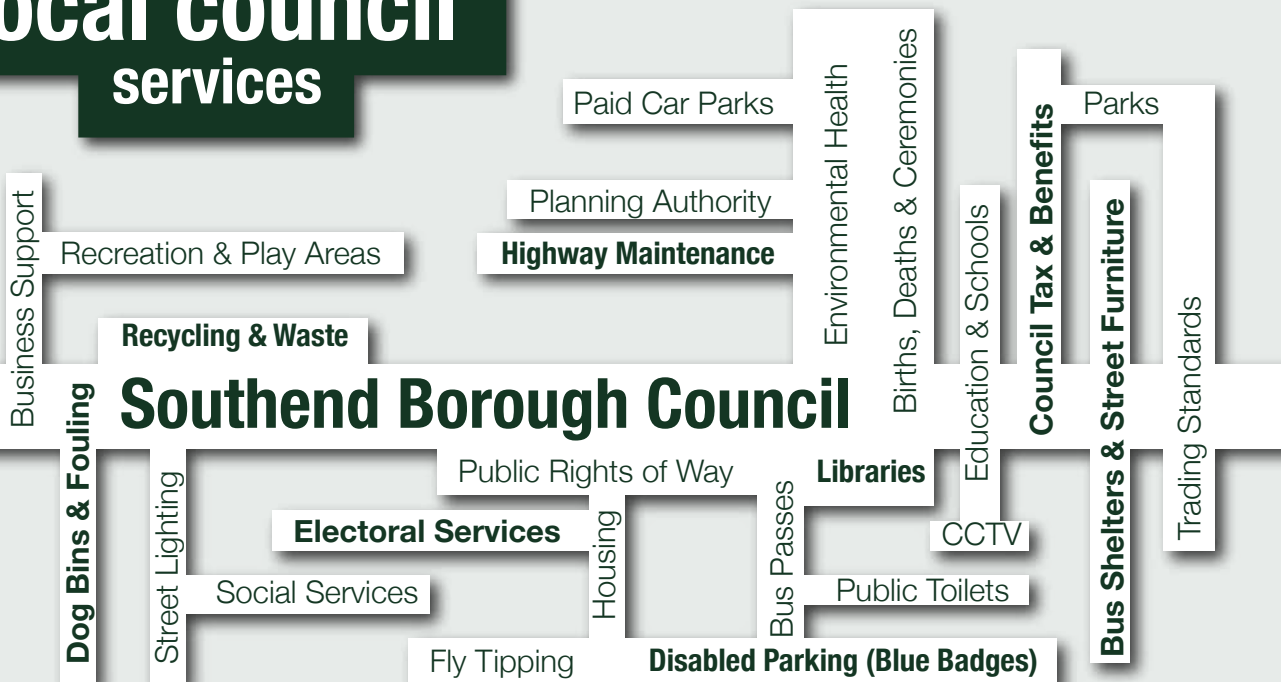
This has necessitated a slightly higher increase to the tax of 6%, the equivalent of £2.88 per year for a Band D tax payer.

Information & Support Services	169,550
Finance & Governance	35,450
Community Facilities	205,400
Health & Wellbeing programme	57,100
Community programmes	10,500
Allotments	31,850
Environment facilities/services	21,050
Planning and Licensing	9,200
Capital & Strategic Projects	90,000
Increase to General Reserves	5,392
Finance & Governance	-2,100
Community Facilities	-152,000
Health & Wellbeing programme	-13,000
Allotments Income	-19,000
Environment facilities/services	-2,000
Total Precept 2020/21	447,392

The Council continues to remain totally committed in helping to provide services to meet the needs and aspirations of our community and the 2020/21 budget will provide the following:

- Help, support and information for our residents on a range of issues
- Our role as statutory consultee on planning, highways and licensing issues to help influence the shape of the future of Leigh
- Working with volunteers and partners and supporting community groups
- Helping to protect the environment and heritage of Leigh
- An extension to the Skate park to accommodate all wheel-based sports
- Steps to implement a Special Constables programme for the Leigh Town Council area
- Funding a school crossing patrol and Leigh Old Town First Aid Post
- Providing and managing community facilities in particular the Community Centre, Skate Park, Strand Wharf, Bell Wharf Beach paddling pool and 17 acres of Allotment sites
- Community engagement with our residents
- A community news magazine twice a year and a newsletter in the local press twice a year.
- Regular and new Town events such as Leigh Lights and VE Day 75 Afternoon Tea
- Supporting the Arts in Leigh with our Art Wall exhibitions and Artist in Residency Programme
- Christmas Lights street decorations and street hanging baskets of flowers
- Promotion of initiatives and incentives to help local businesses
- Representing our residents to other authorities
- A Council run monthly Farmers' Market
- Provision of two weekly Youth Clubs and a Youth Forum
- A Council run Community Centre Children's' Holiday Programme
- A Community Trips Scheme supporting elderly residents and providing social contact, including a social club every two weeks to combat isolation
- Be a local employer of 13 staff to facilitate and manage all Council services
- Be a facilitator of a community café which is a local employer of 8 staff
- Continue with repairs and improvements at the Community Centre
- Host the Annual Town Community Meeting

your local council services



Police Fire & Crime Commissioner for Essex

- Essex Police
- Essex County Fire & Rescue Service

Citizen's Advice

Free advice & information on financial,
legal & consumer problems

Environment Agency

- Flooding

Youth Market

Chairman's Charity

Community Art Wall

Carols on Strand Wharf

Old Town First Aid Post & Public Defibrillators

Over 60's Social Club

Statutory Consultee on Planning

Good for Leigh Awards

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council

Leigh Community Centre

Annual Community Meeting

Strand Wharf

Community Transport Scheme

Artist in Residence Scheme

Information Services

Hanging Baskets

Funding School Crossing Guards

Allotments

Skate Park

Leigh Lights

School Holidays Activities

Regular Magazines

Volunteer Programme

Community Day

Special Events

Community Grant Award Scheme

Youth Clubs & Forum

Planning, Licensing & Highways

- To make observations where appropriate on all planning applications within the Council area and Government and Borough Council planning consultations and to make site visits where necessary. To make observations on any Licensing application within the Council area the Committee thinks appropriate. To make observations on any relevant Highway issue referred from or being discussed by the Highway Authority.

- Cllr. Jill Healey - Chairman
- Cllr. Caroline Parker - Vice-Chairman
- Cllr. Douglas Cracknell
- Cllr. Anita Forde
- Cllr. Paul Gilson
- Cllr. Damian O'Boyle
- Cllr. Vivien Rosier
- Cllr. Vinice Cowell

- Tuesday 21st April 2020
- Tuesday 12th May 2020
- Tuesday 2nd June 2020
- Tuesday 23rd June 2020
- Tuesday 14th July 2020
- Tuesday 4th August 2020
- Tuesday 25th August 2020
- Tuesday 15th September 2020

Report

At the time of writing, the planning committee have met 6 times since the last magazine and we have considered 111 applications at our meetings. This is an average of 19 applications per meeting however in December there were 35 applications to consider - a most unusual occurrence! The change to the frequency of our meetings from every 2 weeks to every 3 weeks appears to be successful and I am hoping that this will encourage more of my fellow councillors to give the committee a try!

Many of the applications that come before us are for single rear/side extensions and loft conversions. As always, I invite you to attend one of our meetings to see how things are discussed and the material considerations that are taken into account for each application.

Cllr Jill Healey

A useful information sheet entitled 'Public participation in planning' has been produced by Leigh-on-Sea Town Council. **Contact the Town Council offices if you would like a copy.**

Community & Culture

- To consider and develop all leisure, foreshore and environmental matters relating to the Councils business.
- Responsibility for all Council premises and assets and for supporting the operation of the Leigh Community Centre (LCC) and considering their further development and the development of other facilities.

- Cllr. Anita Forde - Chairman
- Cllr. Andrew Wilkins - Vice-Chairman
- Cllr. Keith Evans
- Cllr. Alan Hart
- Cllr. Jill Healey
- Cllr. Carole Mulroney
- Cllr. Caroline Parker
- Cllr. Vivien Rosier
- Cllr. Mike Wells

- Tuesday 28th April 2020
- Tuesday 16th June 2020
- Tuesday 18th August 2020

Report

I was elected Chairman of this committee in October 2019. Since then the Community Centre has seen further renovations and improvements necessary to make better use of the interior space and provide comfortable and safer facilities.

The committee has recently agreed to an eventful programme for 2020. We continue to support the Artist in Residence; promote a growing, healthy, youth culture; engage with senior members of Leigh through the Community Transport and Social club and work tirelessly to listen to the residents of Leigh.

I am also the representative for Leigh-on-Sea Town Council at the Southend London Airport Consultative Committee and endeavour to act for residents and keep them informed of developments.

Cllr Anita Forde

In October 2018 the Council launched a new monthly social club for local residents over 60 as a way to help combat social isolation and loneliness for some of our elderly residents.

As of the start of 2020, the Council have increased the amount of sessions available and the Club will now run on the first and third Wednesday of the month at 2.00pm - 3.30pm.



The Club takes place in Room 3 at Leigh Community Centre. The building is fully accessible with ramps at the entrances, a lift and disabled toilet. Refreshments are included, there is unlimited tea and coffee as well as biscuits, and at special events throughout the year we have extra treats as well. Each session costs £2.

We are unable to offer transport to the Club, but Age Concern Southend may be able to help. They provide a transport scheme for people who struggle to get out of the house, at a cost of fuel by mile, making it very affordable compared to a normal taxi service. Call 01702 345373 for more information.

Community Transport

After a Winter break Leigh-on-Sea Town Council's Community Transport Scheme is back in operation. The scheme provides days out for local residents over the age of 60 or with disabilities.

Door to door transport is provided on all of our trips, and anyone who resides within the Town Council Boundary is eligible to join. Letters are sent in the post periodically with details of the trips. Minibus hire is provided by Age Concern Southend, our current Chairman's Charity, without them the scheme would not be able to continue.

The planned trips this season:

FRIDAY 24TH APRIL
Chelmsford Cathedral
Lunchtime Concert & Tour

FRIDAY 26TH JUNE
Beeleigh Abbey Gardens
Open Day (Maldon)

FRIDAY 24TH JULY
Barleylands Craft Village &
Tiptree Tearooms

We are always on the look out for more volunteers who are keen to help out with our Community Transport Scheme, so if you would be interested then please get in contact.

Reasons to come along...

*A chance to socialise
and make new friends*

*Learn new skills
and stimulate your mind*

*Get out the house, be active and
improve your quality of life*

Different activities every session

Refreshments included

Everyone is welcome!

SPRING SCHEDULE

*Wednesday 1st April - Easter
Crafts with the Art Ministry*

*Wednesday 15th April - Bob's
Barber Shop Boys Performance*

*Wednesday 6th May -
VE Day Party*

*Wednesday 20th May -
Elders Inspired (Staying Steady
Style Exercises) Taster Class*



If you would be interested in joining please contact Francesca at the Town Council on 01702 716288 or by email francesca.smith@leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk



Youth Club



Leigh-on-Sea Town Council is pleased to work in conjunction with the Southend YMCA to bring two Youth Clubs to Leigh Community Centre every week.

The project is funded by the Town Council, but is delivered by enthusiastic and specially trained youth workers, including Sacha Edwards and her team. They offer a variety of activities throughout the year and work on improving confidence, communication skills, enabling children to build effective relationships, and promote a sense of wellbeing.

The Youth Club benefits from the late-night opening of the Community Centre's on-site café Lorna & Lottie's which serves drinks, snacks and hot food.

The different activities on offer include board games, chess, indoor football, badminton, hockey, pool, arts and crafts, team games and projects. The sessions are free to attend but spaces are limited. To register your place please go to www.bookwhen.com/southendymca.

The Youth Club is held on Thursday evenings at Leigh Community Centre. 5pm-7pm for ages 8-11, and 7.30pm-9.30pm for 12-16 year olds.

Southend YMCA are also working on a new initiative to tackle youth loneliness, the funding for which has been supplied by the Co-Op. The Town Council's Youth Forum had raised the issue of not having enough support for LGBT+ youths, and this project aims to be a direct response to this issue. The sessions would work as a peer support group and will be held on the first Monday of the month from 5pm-7pm at Leigh Community Centre for young people aged over 13.

The first dates for this are 6th April, 4th May and 1st June.

**For more information call 01702 431676
sachaedwards@southendymca.org.uk**

Don't forget all the clubs and classes that go on in the Community Centre. Grab one of our 'What's On' flyers or check the website for more information.
www.leighcommunitycentre.com/classes

Baby & Toddler Groups in Leigh

Looking for affordable and friendly groups for your little ones? There is a lot on offer in Leigh-on-Sea at a variety of locations.

Monday

West Leigh Baptist Church

Little Steps Toddler Group
9.30-11.30am & 12-2pm
Morning session £3 + 50p for additional children. Afternoon session £2 + 50p for additional children. Includes refreshments, free play, crafts, songs and Parish Nurse Clinic. Waiting list currently in operation.

Highlands Methodist Church

9.30-11.30am £2.50 for one child, 50p per extra child. Refreshments inc. For 0-4 yrs.

Tuesday

St Clements Church

Buggy Time 10.45-11.45am, no charge, donation for hot drinks and biscuits.

Leigh Elim Church

9.30-11.30am £2 per family – Refreshments inc.



Wednesday

Wesley Methodist Church

Parent and Toddler Group
10-12pm £1 per family Refreshments inc. (bring drinks for children) For 0-5 yrs.

St Margaret's Church

Edward Bear Club
9.15-11.15am For 0-5 yrs. £2.50 for 1 adult and up to 2 children, +50p for additional children. Refreshments inc.

Leigh Road Baptist Church

Bright Sparks 10.30-12 pm
0-2yrs, 1.30-3.30pm 0-4 yrs
- £1 per adult and child, 50p for additional children or adults.

Thursday

Leigh Elim Church

9.30-11.30am £2 per family. Refreshments inc.

St James's Church

Parent and Toddler Group
9.30-11.15am £1 per session. Refreshments inc. For 0-5yrs.

St Michael's & All Angels Church

Carers and Toddler Group 1.30-3.30pm £1 per family. Refreshments inc. For 0-5yrs.

Admiral Court Care Home

Songs and Smiles 11-12pm. The Together Project runs intergenerational activities, for children aged 0-4. Free of charge, donations welcome.


Friday

Blenheim Children's Centre

Stay and Play 9.30-11.30am £1 per family

Leigh Library

Story and Rhyme Time
10.30-11.30am Free.



Family days out that won't cost a penny!

By Cllr Emma Smith

With a young family it can be challenging to get out of the front door, let alone to organise a full day out with activities everyone can enjoy.

We're very lucky in Leigh-on-sea that we are surrounded by an array of attractions: bike parks, amusements, farms and fun fairs. But if you're looking for something to keep the children entertained, without the need for buses, trains and car rides, then why not stay closer to home?

We've picked one of our favourite local days out... and there's a few other ideas to get you started.



Belfairs Woods

We're known for our blue flag beaches, but many people don't realise we also have a wonderful, wild wood! Belfairs Woods is a vast woodland with ample space for cyclists, horse-riding, dog walkers and anyone who enjoys being in nature.

There is a sculpture trail and 'Seven Woods Walk,' provided by the team at the Woodland Centre. Here you can pick up a coffee, grab snacks for the day or treat the family to an ice cream when they are tired and muddy.

But the real joy is that the 1160 acres means there is space to get immersed and lost on your own woodland walk. I love to draw out a homemade 'map' and ask my son to show us around - he loves the responsibility and really feels like he's in charge. We also make a 'Treasure List' with items to collect along the way. A sharpie pen and some sticky tape to add leaves and twigs to the list makes for a lot of excitement and pride!

Does your child love The Stickman? Why not collect some treasures and make your own Stickman when you get home?

When you get peckish, find a felled tree trunk and set up camp. A homemade picnic is the perfect reward after the scavenger hunt. And if they have any energy left there is a fantastic wooden play area tucked behind the Woodland Centre.

Other local days out

- If you have some little bookworms Leigh Library has a wonderful selection of children's books, and you can get your library card for free so you can take some home. Why not spend an hour in one of the cosy corners and then finish up with a walk in the Library Gardens and playground?
- Our children love walking through the 'tree tunnels' along the Prittlewell Brook. You could take a shortcut or spend a few hours wandering along to Belfairs Woods for some muddy fun!
- And don't forget the beach. We're so lucky to have the beach on our doorstep, and what's even more wonderful is that children enjoy it in the winter as much as the warmer months! My son can spend (literally) hours throwing stones into the sea and collecting different shaped rocks. If there's a chill in the air, throw their wellies and splash pants into the buggy. On a warmer day, take a packed lunch, some sunscreen and buckets and you'll be set for hours!

Youth Forum

Since the Youth Forum's first meeting in October 2018, we as a Council have listened to what our young people have to say and delivered on a number of requests.

They asked for a Youth Club for teenagers and so now Leigh-on-Sea Town Council, in collaboration with the YMCA, provide two Youth Clubs for different ages every Thursday. See website for details.

They asked for advice on the LGBTQ+ community and we introduced them to members of the charity 'Figuring It Out' who came and talked with the youth about their concerns and offered support.

They asked for an opportunity to do voluntary work, especially those teenagers undertaking the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, and we introduced them to SAVS.

They asked how we, as a Council, can make Leigh residents more aware of climate change so we invited speakers from the Youth section of Extinction Rebellion to give a talk.

Wherever we can, we will endeavour to support our youth the best we can. After all, they are our future.

YOUTH FORUM DATES
THURSDAYS EVERY MONTH:

9th April 2020

14th May 2020

11th June 2020

9th July 2020

13th August 2020

10th September 2020

8th October 2020

12th November 2020

10th December 2020



1. Untitled, Nov 2019

2. Untitled, Jan 2020

3. Untitled, Jan 2020



2



3

Inez Eden is a 16-year-old student at Westcliff Girls, living in Leigh. Most of her art is influenced by personal life, especially her experiences with body image. In terms of style, Inez is inspired by impressionism and art journaling.

Isolation

We have many interesting discussions in Youth Forum meetings and one issue that has come up is whether or not 'isolation' is an effective strategy for schools to use to manage student behaviour and what impact it has on the individuals that it happens to.

Here is one account written by a Youth Forum member ...

When I was in Y8, I was given an Isolation for something that was misunderstood and not true, but the school didn't know that, and I was too scared to explain because children aren't allowed to stand up to teachers. At first, I thought that it was the worst thing that could have

ever happened to me and I was crying every few days whenever I thought about it too much. The thing that troubled me most when I was scared about having the isolation, was what my other friends would think of me and what my teachers would think of me. When the day arrived that I was going to be put into isolation, I thought that it would just be me in a room all alone, but it ended up being me, my friend, and 3 other students of my school in the same room.

The fact that I was in the room with 4 other people made the atmosphere around me more relaxed and less stressed than I thought it would and gave me the impression that this wasn't a punishment but instead

almost like an excuse to spent time away from people I didn't like. To me, an isolation isn't a punishment, but an excuse to go to school and do nothing. It also is a reason to catch up on things that you wouldn't be able to usually. An isolation, in my school, wasn't what I thought it would be like and had been set in my mind as a place to be separated from other students. I had been told that if you were put into isolation, you were bad, naughty and were being disowned by the school and fellow students, but it wasn't anything like that at all. Isolation was more of a way to relax whilst being in the school environment and not participate in lessons I don't enjoy!

What do you think?

YOUTH PODCASTS

Local young people have been using podcasting to make their voices heard. Whether it's a critical break-down of the monarchy, interviewing fellow students, or simply having a conversation, podcasters have been sharing their thoughts and opinions. Whilst the age of social media has provided teenagers with different pressures, it has also provided a platform to share our ideas and be creative. Featured here are some of the podcasts that students in the local area have started, and we encourage you to give them a listen!

All featured shows are on Spotify, Apple Podcasts and other platforms.

Just Chattin'

We are the podcast Just Chattin'! We're made of hosts Natasha Sood and Esmè Russell, and Aron Swindell who records and edits each episode. We are three sixth formers currently studying at Westcliff High School for Girls. The creation of this podcast was all about providing a platform for the interesting and wide range of opinions and experiences we were hearing at school every day. We bring on new guests each episode and have discussed a variety of topics such as our sex education within our schools and families, our experiences with therapy and whether we truly have a responsibility to vote.

Search using Just Chattin' and Instagram @justchattinpod or email justchattinpod@gmail.com



Chattin' Chit

Three Year 12 boys, Jacob, Louie and Casey talk about the wonders of the world every Wednesday. But what "wonders" exactly? Well, to name a few, the podcast has featured topics including teenage development, conspiracy theories, festivals, New Year resolutions, with the most recent instalment covering tips for surviving the end of the world. Having only run for 3 months, Chattin' Chit has established a listenership, intending to entertain and inform teenage and young adult listeners.

Their podcast can be found at www.anchor.fm and posts on their Instagram page.

Jobless Students

Every Saturday, The Jobless Students podcast brings new views on a topic, wide or niche. Three British teenagers examine the lives of eccentric individuals, weird forms of government, review on top of much, much more. In summary, three dysfunctional lads chatting nonsense.

Search using Jobless Students.



Youth Forum tackle Environmental Issues!

1. Give up flying. Flying is the most carbon-intensive way a person can spend their time. Holiday closer to home.
2. Avoid using the car. This is one of the biggest things a household can do to save tons of CO2 emissions a year. Cycle or walk.
3. Buy less STUFF. Join a library and ask yourself "do I need another...?" before you buy it.
4. Reuse. Buy secondhand, donate, swap or exchange.
5. Reuse bags. Avoid single-use plastic bags. Remember to carry a reusable bag at all times.
6. Reuse bottles. The UK uses more than seven billion throwaway plastic bottles a year!
7. Buy local. Reduce energy and pollution of food transport by buying locally sourced food.
8. Turn taps off. A tap left running while you brush your teeth wastes 6 litres of water per minute.
9. Flush toilets less. As the saying goes; "If it's yellow, let it mellow - if its brown, flush it down"!
10. Count Wildlife. Volunteer to record wildlife numbers by taking part in events such as the Big Butterfly Count each August, or the People's Trust for Endangered Animals annual hedgehog survey.

Did You Know?

by Alexius Brown

Since November 2019, uncontrollable wildfires have spread over every state in Australia and, by now, they have killed 33 people and also killed or injured a staggering 1 billion animals over the 25.5 million acres of land that has been devastated. Some animal species have become endangered and many have become threatened. The fires were declared "contained" on 13th February, but next came the torrential rains and a massive amount of pollution from the fires. We encourage the inhabitants of Leigh-on-Sea to donate to help save the species in danger of extinction in Australia and the many thousands of animals that were injured.

One could donate to charities, such as Red Cross Australia, through websites, or the youth of Leigh-on-sea could donate to their favourite youtubers through charity livestreams. For any young people who are particularly passionate about helping Australia, the Australian government, on 17th February, announced special arrangements for those who hold or are about to apply for the Working Holiday 417 visa. This allows all British passport holders from 18-30 to live and work in Australia for 12 months. If they do paid or volunteer work to help with the disaster recovery, they can now do so with the same employer for 12 months rather than the usual six. Also, this paid or volunteer work will count towards the "specified work" needed to apply for a second- or third-year visa.

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council Arts Group

Cllr Vivien Rosier



The Art Wall

We are fortunate to live in a town that seems to have more than its fair share of talented artists of all ages - and even more fortunate in that some of them are keen to exhibit their work on the Community Centre's Art Wall. Exhibitions over the past few months have included photography, ceramics and a wide range of 2-D mixed media pieces of work.

Once again, we have an exciting line-up for the spring and summer... Why not pop in and have a look?

The Town Council is keen to raise the profile of local artists and exhibiting on the Art Wall is completely free of charge.

April 12th - May 16th

Inside/Outside

A mixed media exhibition by Hannah Faraway, Sophia Faraway and Mary Lister

This exhibition is the result of a collaboration of three local artists emphasising the unconscious links between creative people as their separate work comes together in concept and curation. It is an exploration of the combination of various elements of the organic, breaking down the barriers of inside and outside and playing with scale and perspective. It does this by isolating parts of various natural forms to create new amalgamations in a playful way and the artists use paint, pen, aquatint, lino and clay to explore and celebrate biology of flora and fauna.

May 19th - June 21st

Leigh Art Trail

An exhibition of the work of students attending courses at Southend Adult Community College. We are very pleased to have been asked again to be a venue in the highly successful Leigh Art Trail. This year's exhibition will include ceramics as well as a range of 2-D work.

June 21st - July 19th

Calling all local artists! To be part of an exhibition inspired by Leigh Library Gardens

Over the next few months, members of the 'Drawing in the Park' Art Group will be using the Library Gardens as inspiration for pieces of work for this exhibition. There will be plenty of room for any other local artists, crafters and photographers who would like their work to be included. Keep your eye on the Leigh-on-Sea Town Council website or on our Instagram for more information.

July 19th - September 6th

Create98 Young Artists

Create98 is proving to be a very successful local arts hub and provides a range of classes for people of all ages. This year's exhibition will focus on work generated by the Young Creatives and Kids Classes that run throughout the year. Visit their website www.create98.co.uk to find out what is on offer for children and young people - you never know, it may well be the start of a career in the arts!



September 6th – October 4th

Local Writing Exhibition

The Arts isn't just about paintings or photography, so Leigh-on-Sea Town Council is keen to showcase the written word on the Art Wall.

We will be inviting local residents of all age groups to send us pieces of writing. Keep your eyes open for further information and check the website.

ARTIST IN RESIDENCE

Applications are welcome from any local artist who is interested in being the next Artist in Residence at Leigh Community Centre. The current residency finishes at the end of August and the next one is due to commence in September 2020.

The closing date for applications is at the 31st May 2020 - this will give the incoming artist time to meet with the Arts Group and begin to plan for their year in residence.

If you would like to get involved with our Art Wall as either an exhibitor or Artist in Residence then please contact the Council on

01702 716288 or email council@leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk.

 @leightowncouncilartsgroup



Sheila Appleton's and Ian Smith's Retrospective Exhibition is showing at the Beecroft Art Gallery, Southend 8 March - 2 May 2020

My Leigh: Sheila Appleton

One of our local Artists shares her favourite spots to paint around Leigh.

The Creek

It is lovely to watch the tide come into the Creek and the boats return from cockling. I never grow tired of painting it. It harks back to times when I went out on the boats and stayed on board overnight. When you got off the boat you were still moving. It was great to look back at Leigh from a distance when you were out on the river.

The Old Sea Wall going to Two-Tree Island

I love looking back at Leigh from the lovely cafe near the Golfing Range. It has a charm of its own because it hasn't been done up. There is a wonderful tree in front of it. I love to sit in the cafe and look at it and view Hadleigh Castle like a pepper pot in the distance.

The Beach

I like drawing people on the beach and watching people walk along. My favourite spot is at Bell Wharf on the slope outside the Osborne's shed. I sit with my back against the sea wall. Tucked away. Somewhere where I can't be bothered. If someone speaks to you it inclines me to not answer because your concentration goes. I am in a trance, working automatically, which is interrupted. I don't want to be rude but it is difficult sometimes.

The Bridge

I love to stand on the bridge by the Billet. You get a very good view of Old Leigh. I think "I am going to do this..." You get rooftops, creek and people going down. The people make it interesting.

The Famous Potatoes

Est. 1979

Written by Keith Baxter



The band has just celebrated 40 years of playing music together.

A bunch of us who had Saturday jobs at a Leigh-on-Sea second hand bookshop joined with some youth club buddies to play folk tunes. The Grand Ceilidh Club needed a band for a date in August 1979 so we said we'd do it, getting them all dancing happily! We were the Folk Pistols for our first couple of years till we became The Famous Potatoes. British Isles folk tunes were our repertoire, influenced by Flowers & Frolics and The Albion Band. Our keenness for The Specials, Madness and Dexy's led us to feature saxophone and trombone alongside the melodeon and recorder. With a couple of callers in the band, we started getting booked for barn dances around the Southend area.

Drummer Paul joined in 1981 introducing his enthusiasm for 1920s American string band music. We began taking turns to solo during the dance tunes – fiddle, guitar, accordion – to provide interest to our audience the way that jazz bands do, and between dances would sing to them. At first it was novelty Dance-Band songs but soon we performed numbers from the rockabilly, Cajun, country, skiffle and Tex-Mex traditions. Early on, we started presenting such material to listening audiences at old peoples' homes, pubs and outdoor festivals.

We sold home-produced tapes then LPs to spread around our soily sounds. Dave Hatfield ran Projection, the record shop in Leigh, and released our discs on his Waterfront record label.

Our friend Ken McKinnon had us play for the congregational singing at his folk carol services in Old Leigh which we're still doing today. This event was featured on Radio 2 a few Christmases ago.

New Potato, Charlie replaced Nick Pynn as fiddler in 1990, since when our eight-piece line-up hasn't changed.

Some of us help to organise the Leigh Folk Festival at which we invariably perform. Career highlights include appearing on The Generation Game, recording a session for Andy Kershaw's Radio 3 show and reaching the top of the charts in Viz comic.

Forty years on it's still great to turn up to an empty hall for a Saturday dance and finish the night with a room full of happy and probably tired people... and we still play regularly at the Ceilidh Club.

Cllr Vivien Rosier was keen to find out more...

The Famous Potatoes have been playing their brand of folk and dance music since they formed as a band in Leigh 40 years ago and still love playing live and making people happy. The 8-piece act were mostly school friends at Westcliff High and have very strong connections with the community in Leigh. The band plays an important part in local events such as the annual Folk Carol Service at St Clements and the Leigh Folk Festival in the Old Town.

What's your secret to staying together for so long?

Richard Baxter and Nigel Blackaby explained that the band was always there to have fun and there are no prima donnas within the ranks. They know each other very well and, if their performances are anything to go by, obviously enjoy themselves when they get together on stage. They pride themselves in being good entertainers and their main motivation comes from seeing people enjoying their music and dancing with smile.

Why have you maintained your focus folk music?

The performances given by the Famous Potatoes are firmly rooted in folk music traditions so, in a sense, the tunes are timeless but they are certainly not 'stuck' in the past. The band members are keen to keep folk music alive by tracking down traditional tunes from obscure sources and giving them a second life. We do this by approaching a single tune a bit like a jazz ensemble would, with players taking solos to develop their improvised version of the melody, giving it a contemporary edge while maintaining the traditional feel. The fact that we have played music together for so long and know our material so thoroughly means that everything flows along harmoniously! The Famous Potatoes intend to be playing in Leigh and beyond for many years to come.



New bookings are welcome through the website: www.famouspotatoes.co.uk

Leigh Folk Festival

is back for its 29th edition

25-28 June 2020 *Written by Elliott Waters*

Images: Antonia Holdgate



Over the past 29 years, Leigh's much-loved event has gone from strength to strength with this year's edition being no different. The festival will officially open with a showcase of music on Thursday 25 June at Leigh Community Centre. Singer-songwriter, Will Varley, who has supported

the likes of the Proclaimers and Billy Bragg will headline the evening, with support from Lucy Kitt and Brother Jonathan - Tickets £13. This year's event will also include the addition of a new comedy night, headlined by Justin Moorhouse, star of Peter Kay's Phoenix Nights - Tickets £14. Proceeds from both nights help fund the festival with a further two ticketed events to be announced imminently.

Now a glorious four-day event with more stages, venues and an even more eclectic programme than ever, Leigh Folk Festival has rightly earned its reputation as the "little GEM" in Southend's busy itinerary of events. Only last month, LFF won the East Anglia Festival Network "Best Festival in Essex", beating over 100 neighbouring events.

What continues to prove amazing about the continued success of the festival is the whole event is organised and run by unpaid volunteers and virtually all the entertainment is free. One of the festival's unique characteristics is the contrasting ambiance of the two main days – Saturday's village fete atmosphere of Library Gardens compared to the bustling cobbles of the Old Town on Sunday.

As the festival grows so must the number of volunteers needed to keep it a safe and fun event. If you'd like to give back to the community and support the event you can register to volunteer on the festival's website, roles vary – everything from selling merchandise to stewarding audiences.

The festival is a registered charity and always in need of financial support. This year they've launched Club 50/50 a form of private lottery offering you the chance to win monthly cash prizes while helping to raise much-needed funds. Sign up on the festival website.

There is something for everyone during the four days of festival fun so begin planning your visit today. For more info and tickets visit www.leighfolkfestival.com or the festival social channels.



Autumn 2020 - Community Performance Project Cupid and Psyche

Inspire Community Arts are inviting local residents to take part in a unique community performance opportunity. The performance is based on the Greek Myth of Cupid and Psyche and opportunities are available for actors, dancers, singers, musicians, jugglers and gymnasts of all ages to take part in this exciting performance as gods and goddesses, mythical beings and mortals.

The performance is based on an original 16th Century masque script and will use the popular forms of entertainment in the Elizabethan Era of the Shakespearean style Play and the Masque which was a forerunner to today's musical theatre; combining speaking, singing and dancing.

The performance includes a full Elizabethan banquet which will also bring together groups from both the local area and the rest of the UK, offering the chance to work with experts in various fields.

We also wish to help people learn and develop new skills as part of the performance and there will be the opportunity to be involved in historical dance and choreography, dressmaking, costume design and construction, arts and crafts sessions, unique cooking and presentational skills, bread-making, jewellery and head-dress making, floristry, catering, sustainable living skills, waiting skills and much more.

Inspire Community Arts is committed to sustainable theatre production aiming to reduce, re-use and re-cycle as much as possible - please get in touch if you would like to donate any odds and ends you feel may be useful for this project.

The Performance will take place on the afternoon and evening of Saturday 19th September 2020 at a local Leigh Venue. Arts, craft, rehearsal and developing skills sessions will be held throughout the year leading up to the event.

If you or your group would like to be involved in this community performance project in any way please e-mail inspirecommunityarts@gmail.com or call **07527 945 467** for more information.

Limited tickets for this interactive performance event will go on sale in May and will give an option of a banquet seat or performance only option. Please contact us if you are interested in reserving a seat. All profits raised from the performance of this event will be split between Help for Heroes and Southend Hospital Breast Cancer Care.



The countdown is on to the 2020 The Leigh Art Trail as our town's cultural highlight becomes a TWO-WEEK event for the first time

Visitors' pleas for more time to get round the Trail's growing number of venues have been answered and organisers are laying on the best in contemporary painting, ceramics, mixed media, sculpture and photography from June 6 to June 20.

That means there's no reason to miss any of the 70-plus artists - including many exhibiting on the Trail for the first time - as shops, cafes, churches and even railway stations become pop-up galleries.

Details of who is exhibiting and where to find them are revealed in the FREE Trail Guide, which will start appearing around Leigh in May.

Don't miss the pre-Trail Artists' Market on Strand Wharf in Leigh's atmospheric Old Town on bank holiday Monday (May 25).

Then when the Trail proper gets under way, explore the Children's Art Trail (CAT) to get the whole family talking about Leigh's brilliant arty scene.

As ever, colourful A-boards outside the venues will help art-lovers plot their route and Secret Auction pieces donated by Leigh Art Trail artists await your bids in all the venues.

Roll on June!

Amelia Crickmar



Angelina Mounsey



Dominic Myroie



Joe Scotland



It's good to have friends!

By the Friends of Leigh Library Gardens

The Friends of Leigh Library Gardens (FOLLG) have made big strides forward in their plans to improve and develop the well-used green space at the heart of Leigh which is much loved by residents and visitors alike.

In the past 12 months, FOLLG has been officially registered as a Constituted Small Charity. This enables the group to apply for various sources of funding and it has already been successful in applying for a grant from Leigh Town Council which has paid for tools, Public Liability Insurance and enabled the planting of various bulbs which will add colour throughout the Gardens. A lockable tool chest has been installed and these measures mean the FOLLG volunteers can work independently of Southend Parks Department.

Six upkeep and maintenance projects are planned or underway in the Gardens including replanting one of the main beds south of the library. New bins, kindly provided by Leigh-on-Sea Town Council for rubbish and recycling have been put in the upper Gardens, the first green space in Leigh to install recycling bins. Litter is cleared by the volunteers regularly and more than 30 bags of rubbish have so far been removed.



The FOLLG Committee meet regularly having recruited members at the Folk Festival in June 2019. A volunteer base is building with 17 recorded volunteers and more joining FOLLG every month. In excess of 500 volunteer hours were given to the Gardens during 2019; an average of 42 volunteer hours each month.

A 'Head Gardener' has been appointed and 33 varied types of new plants have been planted across the site. A wildlife expert made contact with the Friends at the December consultation event. He will support the work in the Gardens to maximise its benefit for wildlife. A wildlife corridor has already been created. Six different wildlife fauna category species have been identified so far.

The Friends are working to improve the playground area too and have received a pledge for a new seesaw from Leigh Town Council and are in discussions with a generous donor for a wheelchair swing. An aim for the Gardens is also to have heritage signage around the space to inform and mark the history and development of the Leigh Library Gardens.

Almost 100 people visited the FOLLG consultation in December 2019 at the Community Centre. Volunteers from FOLLG were on hand to talk about the plans that have been drawn up already and to hear residents' views on how the Gardens should be used and improved.

The feedback from the consultation was supportive of the current plans for Leigh Library Gardens. Many commented on the need to improve the paths within the Gardens and to open up and improve the vista from the south of the library to the sea. A path will be installed where the 'desire line' (people's path) has been created. People also wanted to see a greater variety of seasonal planting to bring colour, and themed planting to bring interest to the Gardens. More activities for all ages were called for in the Gardens. These are all improvements that FOLLG have incorporated into their plans so far.

The Friends are now busy in the Gardens on a regular basis working with Southend Parks Department. Volunteer sessions take place on the first and third Wednesday of the month and the second and fourth Saturday of the month from 10am until 11.30am. Everyone is welcome and there is no need to stay for the whole session. Tools are provided but suitable clothing and footwear is essential.

Russell Hallmark, Chair of the Friends said 'FOLLG has achieved a great deal in a relatively short space of time. The Library Gardens are a genuinely loved and valued space and there is much goodwill towards our plans. We are very grateful for the support Leigh Town Council has given the Friends as we become established. 2020 is going to be a busy year for us and we are all excited about how the Gardens will develop over the next 12 months. We welcome new volunteers whether to work in the Gardens or to offer other skills such as publicity or fundraising.'

Get Involved

FOLLG are seeking to collaborate with other local groups to improve inclusion and diversity for volunteering opportunities and other activities in the Gardens. If you belong to a group who may be interested in getting involved, want to join the Friends of Leigh Library Gardens or want to find out more, either email follg2018@gmail.com or drop into one of the working party sessions and talk to a volunteer. Follow on facebook @[friendsofleighlibrarygdn](https://www.facebook.com/friendsofleighlibrarygdn)s

Volunteer sessions - 10am-11.30am

- 1st & 3rd Wednesday of the month
- 2nd & 4th Saturday of the month





If you would like to be involved with any event, in any way, please email **council@leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk**



Youth Market at Strand Wharf, Sunday 12th July, 10-4pm

Our Youth Market returns for a second year

Hosted within a beautiful large marquee, we are inviting 14-25 year olds to take part in the event which aims to showcase the very best local entrepreneurial talents on offer. We are looking for a variety of businesses to take part, whether it's selling home decor, stationery, food and confectionery, face painting, marketing and illustration services, property and maintenance services, photography, beauticians, musicians and more – the list is endless and we want to hear from you! This is a great opportunity to tell your local community about your business and reach more potential customers.

Do you have an art and design business? We are also looking for a young person to design our event poster! Please get in touch if this sounds of interest.

The feedback from previous years has been great, with a number of stall holders already achieving brilliant things as an outcome of the markets.

This is a wonderful way to support local, small and up-and-coming businesses and continue to strengthen the Leigh-on-Sea community.

Farmers' Market 20th Year, Strand Wharf, Sunday 25th July, 10-4pm

Our Farmers' Market will be 20 years old in summer 2020!!

The late Janet Hammond, when newly elected as a Leigh Town Councillor, had been campaigning for some time for a local farmers' market and had travelled throughout Essex to gain appropriate knowledge and contacts. Her efforts came to fruition in June 2000 with the holding of the first Market which took place, with enthusiastic support from Council chairman at the time, the late Donald Fraser, at the now demolished St. Clements Church hall.

Our anniversary market will have an excellent range of products available and all the typical market stalls will be there offering meats, organic vegetables, bread, eggs, cakes, honey, cheese. We will also have stalls offering handmade soap, hanging baskets & flower displays, vegan cakes, biscuits & snacks, healthy skin products to name a few.

We would love you to come along and help us celebrate a fantastic milestone in the history of Leigh Farmers' Market and Leigh-on-Sea Town council.

Community Day, Bonchurch Park, Sunday 7th June, 1-4pm

Leigh-on-sea Town Council is thrilled to announce that we will once again host a Community Day at Bonchurch Park.

This is the third time this event has been held at Bonchurch Park, and has proved very successful with many visitors commenting on the notable community feel and how nice it was to see Bonchurch Park used as a facility for events.

Planning is in the initial stages and we hope to improve the event this year! You can keep up to date with developments on our Facebook page @LeighTCevents. We will also be writing to local residents to notify them of the event.

The Community Day aims to promote health and well-being in the community by bringing a variety of local charities and community groups together with the Town Council.

Last year's stall holders included West Leigh Baptist Church, British Legion, Leigh Lions, Women's Institute, Girl Guides, St Johns Ambulance, Community Police, Southend YMCA, Southend Adult Community College and more. There were also a number of performances throughout the day from local dance and drama groups.

The stall holders expressed that it was a great opportunity to meet local people and also network with other community groups to share their experiences, including volunteering opportunities.

We look forward to welcoming you for a fantastic community event that is sure to be lots of fun.



**TO BOOK, CONTACT:
01702 716288**

**VE Day 75 Celebration
Leigh Community Centre,
Sunday 10th May, 2-5pm**

In celebration of the 75th Anniversary of VE Day the Town Council in conjunction with the Royal British Legion – Leigh Branch are holding a special afternoon tea

Sugar Lump Lane will be providing an exquisite afternoon tea including sandwiches, scones and delicious homemade cakes with musical performances from The Daisy Bowlers and The Ray Miso Trio.

Tickets are just £7.50, subsidised in part by the Town Council, who want to make this an accessible event for everyone to enjoy, the ticket price also includes a £1.50 donation (per person) which will be made to the Royal British Legion.

To book your tickets contact the Town Council on 01702 716288 or visit the Community Centre reception, payment must be taken at the time of booking to secure your space.

We hope you can join us for this exciting community event!

2020 DATES

Fri 17 April
Fri 15 May
Fri 19 June
Fri 17 July
Sat 25 July
Fri 21 August
Fri 18 September
Fri 16 October
Fri 20 November
Sat 19 December

Leigh Farmers' Market By Sophie Partridge

The perfect place to get locally produced food including meat, eggs, vegetables, breads and vegan products - on the third Friday, every month from 9am - 1pm at Leigh Community Centre.

It is now 20 years since the Farmers' Market started and we're celebrating by holding an additional market on Strand Wharf - Saturday 25th July.

If you're stuck for inspiration on what to buy and to cook, why not try these recipes and pick up the fresh ingredients from the Market and the fish mongers?

Roast Vegetable and Lentil Stew

INGREDIENTS / SERVES 4

200g canned green lentils (drained and rinsed)
2-3 red onions
1 aubergine
1 can of tomatoes
1 tblesp maple syrup
1 teaspo of oregano
2 courgettes
1 bulb of garlic
1 carton of passata
2 teaspo mixed herbs
1 teaspo cumin

METHOD

1. Chop red onions, courgette and aubergine into cubes, add to a lined baking tray and drizzle with olive oil, sprinkle with cumin and a pinch of salt. Drizzle garlic with a little olive oil, wrap separately in tin foil and place on tray. Bake at 180c for 25-30 minutes, or until all vegetables are soft.
2. Place canned tomatoes, passata, maple syrup, herbs and lentils into a medium/large saucepan and place on a medium heat.
3. When cooked, remove vegetables from oven and add to tomato sauce. Remove garlic from tin foil and mash 3-4 medium cloves with a fork, add to tomato sauce. (The remaining garlic can be stored in the fridge for up to five days and used to make garlic butter for garlic bread or added to further sauces.)
4. Bring stew to boil, reduce heat and cook on low/medium for 20 minutes, stirring every so often.

This stew will keep well for up to four days in the fridge or can be frozen for up to 3 months.

Recipe by Regina of Kitchen Table Baking
www.kitchentablebaking.wordpress.com

Creamy Cockle Chowder

INGREDIENTS / SERVES 6

400g shelled cockles
½ lemon, juice only
2 sticks celery, trimmed and sliced
1 medium leek, trimmed, washed and finely sliced
300g potatoes, preferably Maris Piper
3 rashers rindless streaky bacon, cut into 1cm/½in slices
1 onion, finely chopped
100ml double cream
2 tblesp plain flour
300ml full-fat milk
1 bay leaf
roughly chopped parsley, to garnish (optional)
young celery sticks, from the centre of the head
6 large soda bread rolls
100ml white wine
25g butter
300ml chicken stock
bushy sprig thyme

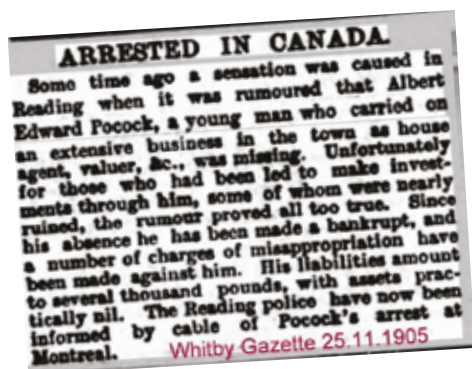
METHOD

1. Melt the butter in a large saucepan and gently fry the onion, celery and bacon with the bay leaf and thyme sprig for five minutes, or until softened and lightly coloured, stirring regularly. Peel the potatoes and cut into roughly 1.5cm cubes.
2. Stir the flour and then the potatoes into the saucepan with the vegetables. Slowly add the milk and stock and bring to a gentle simmer. Cook uncovered for 15 minutes, or until the potatoes are very tender and the soup has thickened, stirring occasionally. Pick out and discard the thyme leaf and bay leaf.
3. While the soup is simmering, add the leek, cream and wine to the soup for three minutes. Season to taste with salt and pepper. Stir in the cockles and cook for one minute more, or until hot.
4. Place the bread rolls on a board and cut off the tops with a knife. Pull out the soft bread from inside each roll. Place the rolls on plates and ladle the soup carefully inside. Scatter the parsley on top and add a young celery stick to each bread bowl. Top with the reserved bread tops if you like.





ALBERT EDWARD POCOCK



England.—Wanted on warrant, in the Borough of Reading, for obtaining £300, by false pretences, stealing title deeds of property, &c., thereby obtaining several large sums of money, Albert Edward Pocock, 28 to 30 years of age, 5 feet 7 or 8 inches high, medium build, black hair turning gray, brown eyes, pale complexion, oval-shaped face, clean shaven, has slight impediment in his speech; a native of Reading, Berks, is fond of company and talks a great deal about horse-racing. (Photo. filed at Inspector-General's Office. For inquiry only in first instance.)

New South Wales, Australia,
Police Gazettes, 1854-1930 14.12.1904

Local Knowledge Quiz

1. What does Two-Tree Island overlook?
2. Name the book shop that used to be on the Broadway near the Wimpy.
3. How long has Leigh Town Council been established?
4. Where and when was the first Rossi ice cream parlour opened?
5. Where is the memorial statue that was erected in 1972 honouring the courageous men lost at Dunkirk?

WHAT A BOUNDER! By Cllr Carole Mulroney

In 1911 the house known as Elmhurst Villa in Elm Road, on a site adjacent to the Community Centre roughly where Havengore House is now, was inhabited by two school mistresses and their boarding pupils, a governess and a lodger.

Edith Mary Hall was jointly head of the household with Florence Cook. Edith was listed as being married for 12 years with 3 children. These three children were listed as boarders, Gladys, Margery and Phyllis. Both Edith and the children were born in Reading. No sign of Mr Hall.

I struggled to find a marriage between a Hall and Edith in Reading so I looked for the births of the daughters, all three were recorded in Reading but under the name Pocock. I found marriage of Edith Mary Hall to Albert Edward Pocock on 15 March 1899 in Reading. Albert was a solicitor's manager.

So, where had Albert gone and why had Edith taken the drastic step of reverting to her maiden name and changing the children's names as well?

Albert's father was Superintendent of Police for Berkshire and Albert Edward Pocock was easily found as having been born in Reading in 1877. Given his father's public profile a search of the British Newspaper Archive revealed a very sorry tale.

Albert is variously listed as an estate agent and auctioneer but in 1904 his life took a nose-dive when he absconded having swindled clients out of considerable sums of money. There was a massive intercontinental police hunt with notices placed in the USA, Australia, New Zealand and Canada.

In Minneapolis it was reported that when apprehended the suspect's thumbs must be displayed to see if they matched with identification sent from England, one of the earliest uses of fingerprint technology.

Eventually they tracked him down to Montreal where he had travelled under the name of HB Hope as a student. D I Anderson was sent across the Atlantic to bring him back to justice.

In March 1905 Albert appeared in court in Reading and the range of his misdemeanours was broadcast around the country. How embarrassing for his father to see his son in his own command station!

He had been living in a grand style, whether with Edith is not known. He put his troubles down to turf speculation on which he had lost around £10,000. He was sentenced to 5 years penal servitude. No wonder Edith wanted anonymity!

Albert went to jail and was later declared as bankrupt. Edith obtained a divorce and remarried in 1922 claiming to be a widow – which she was not.

As for Albert Pocock, interestingly the divorce papers had been listed as Hall v Hall – because Albert had decided to take his wife's name. He also used that name when joining the Air Force. He never changed his ways and was imprisoned in 1919 for further fraud and then seems to have disappeared.

You would have thought that Edith would have nothing to do with jailbirds or indeed embezzlers ever again! But her lodger in 1911 was Arthur Tabor – son of a local farm owning family. He had also been tried for fraud in March 1905 and sentenced to 5 years penal servitude. So, did he serve his sentence with Albert who suggested lodgings with his obviously accommodating wife on his release?

Useful Contacts

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council	01702 716 288
Southend Council Switchboard	01702 215 000
Parking, Highways & Transport	01702 215 003
Planning, Development & Building Control	01702 215 004
Environmental Health, Trading Standards & Licensing	01702 215 005
Waste, Fly tipping, Fly posting & Graffiti	01702 215 006

LTC COUNCILLORS

*Councillors can be emailed using 'cllr' and surname eg.
cllrswells@leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk*

Mark Bromfield	Carole Mulroney
Emma Smith	Vivien Rosier
Vinice Cowell	Anita Forde
Keith Evans	Paul Gilson
Andrew Wilkins	Alan Hart
Declan Mulroney	Douglas Cracknell
Damian O'Boyle	Caroline Parker
Jill Healey Chairman	Mike Wells

LTC STAFF DETAILS

*Staff can be contacted by email - please
use their full name, no spaces, followed by
@leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk*

TOWN CLERK

Helen Symmons

ASSISTANT RESPONSIBLE

FINANCE OFFICER

Emma Stratton

ASSISTANT TOWN CLERK

Abbie Cotterell

FACILITIES MANAGER

Graham Davison

EVENTS & PROJECTS OFFICER

Emily French

MARKETING & PROFILE OFFICER

Francesca Smith

RECEPTIONIST

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ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

Sophie Partridge

Ingmar Lindberg-Jones

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Beth Hooper 01702 534193

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John Lamb 01702 483908

cllrlamb@southend.gov.uk

2020 EVENTS CALENDAR

LISTED BY

DATE•TIME•LOCATION•ACTIVITY

APRIL

1	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
1	2pm – 3.30pm	LCC
	Over 60's Social Club	
	Easter Crafts wuth Arts Ministry	
1	From 7.30pm	LCC
	Lorna & Lottie's Café - Blues Night	
9	5pm – 6pm	LCC
	Youth Forum	
10	LCC CLOSED - Bank Holiday	
11	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
13	LCC CLOSED - Bank Holiday	
15	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
15	2pm – 3.30pm	LCC
	Over 60's Social Club	
	Bob's Barber Shop Boys	
17	9am – 1pm	LCC
	Leigh Farmers' Market	
18	From 7.30pm	LCC
	Leigh Rock – AC/DC Tribute Band	
20	From 8pm	Moose Hall
	Branch meeting of Royal British Legion. Talk by Bob Dalgarno	
24	From 7pm	LCC
	Annual Community Meeting	
25	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
25	12.30pm – 4.30pm	LCC
	Pop Up Craft Fair	

MAY

6	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
6	2pm – 3.30pm	LCC
	Over 60's Social Club	
	Celebrating VE Day	
6	From 7.30pm	LCC
	Lorna & Lottie's Café - Blues Night	
8	LCC CLOSED - Bank Holiday	
9	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
10	LCC LTC VE Day Celebration	
14	5pm – 6pm	LCC
	Youth Forum	
15	9am – 1pm	LCC
	Leigh Farmers' Market	
18	From 7.30pm	LCC
	Leigh Rock – AC/DC Tribute Band	
18	From 8pm	Moose Hall
	Branch Meeting of Royal British Legion.Talk by Lizzie Smith	
20	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
20	2pm – 3.30pm	LCC
	Over 60's Social Club	
23	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
25	LCC CLOSED - Bank Holiday	

JULY

1	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
1	2pm – 3.30pm	LCC
	Over 60's Social Club	
9	5pm – 6pm	LCC
	Youth Forum	
11	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
12	11am – 4pm	Strand Wharf
	Youth Market	
15	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
15	2pm – 3.30pm	LCC
	Over 60's Social Club	
17	9am – 1pm	LCC
	Leigh Farmers' Market	
20	From 8pm	Moose Hall
	Branch Meeting of Royal British Legion	
25	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
25	10am – 4pm	Strand Wharf
	20th Anniversary Farmers Market	
25	From 7.30pm	LCC
	Leigh Rock – Thin Lizzy Tribute Band	

SEPTEMBER

2	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
2	2pm – 3.30pm	LCC
	Over 60's Social Club	
3	10am – 11am	Strand Wharf
	Merchant Navy Day	
	Flag Raising Ceremony	
6	Throughout	Leigh Old Town
	Leigh Regatta	
10	5pm – 6pm	LCC
	Youth Forum	
12	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
16	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
16	2pm – 3.30pm	LCC
	Over 60's Social Club	
	Macmillan Coffee Morning	
18	9am – 1pm	LCC
	Leigh Farmers' Market	
21	From 8pm	Moose Hall
	Branch Meeting of Royal British Legion	
26	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	

JUNE

3	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
3	2pm – 3.30pm	LCC
	Over 60's Social Club	
6-20	All Day Throughout Leigh	
	Leigh Art Trail	
7	1pm – 4pm	Bonchurch Park
	Community Day	
11	5pm – 6pm	LCC
	Youth Forum	
13	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
13	From 7.30pm	LCC
	Leigh Rock – Pink Floyd Tribute Band	
15	From 8pm	Moose Hall
	Branch Meeting of Royal British Legion, with fish and chips	
17	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
17	2pm – 3.30pm	LCC
	Over 60's Social Club	
19	9am – 1pm	LCC
	Leigh Farmers' Market	
25-28	All Day Throughout Leigh	
	Leigh Folk Festival	

AUGUST

5	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
5	2pm – 3.30pm	LCC
	Over 60's Social Club	
8	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
13	5pm – 6pm	LCC
	Youth Forum	
17	From 8pm	Moose Hall
	Branch Meeting of Royal British Legion	
19	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
19	2pm – 3.30pm	LCC
	Over 60's Social Club	
21	9am – 1pm	LCC
	Leigh Farmers' Market	
22	10am – 11.30am	LLG
	FOLLG Volunteer Session	
31	LCC CLOSED - Bank Holiday	

HAVENS FUNDRAISING EVENTS

11am, 17 May 2020

**Havens to Havens Walk from
Little Havens, Benfleet, SS7 2LH**

9:45am, 14 June 2020

**Southend 3K Family Fun Run
East Beach, Shoeburyness**

11am, 05 July 2020

**Family Fun Day
Little Havens, Benfleet, SS7 2LH**

KEY

LCC = LEIGH COMMUNITY CENTRE

LLG = LEIGH LIBRARY GARDENS

**FOLLG = FRIENDS OF LEIGH
LIBRARY GARDENS**

LEIGH-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL'S



2020 ANNUAL COMMUNITY MEETING

FRIDAY 24TH APRIL | 7PM
LEIGH COMMUNITY CENTRE

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council are once again looking forward to welcoming their electors to the Annual Community Meeting

The doors will open at 7pm to a selection of community displays from local groups, who will be showcasing the good they are doing around the Town. This year we are pleased to be highlighting the work of the Community Police Specials, Friends of Leigh Library Gardens, the Leigh-on-Sea Town Council Youth Forum, Age Concern Southend and the Royal British Legion. You will get the chance to interact with each group, ask about volunteering opportunities, and how their services can help you.

Free hot drinks and delicious cakes (courtesy of the RBL) will also be available from 7pm.

The meeting will start at approx. 7.30pm, and will include talks from guest speaker Jonathan Cuthbertson, a Community Police Special Inspector, the presentation of our Good for Leigh Awards and Volunteer of the Year and our Annual Report. There will be an Open Forum, so this is the perfect opportunity for you to raise any issues or questions you have about YOUR Town. **There is no need to book, just come along and join in! We are all working to make Leigh the best it can be, but we need your input to make it happen.**