



# Leigh on Sea Town Council News

issue 12

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@LeighTCevents



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## Note from Council Chairman - Cllr Paul Gilson



Dear Leigh Residents,

I love Leigh. My family has been active in Leigh for hundreds of years and, likewise my wife, who is a Joscelyne - a family that has resided in Leigh for even longer. Leigh is in our blood.

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council is here to serve its residents as best it can and as an elected body we can speak on your behalf. We have a group of relatively young councillors with fresh ideas and enthusiasm and they want to make a difference.

When you come to Leigh you can, and do, get personal service from our independent shops. You can get some of the best food, wine and coffee anywhere and it's on your doorstep, just walking distance from home. We want to keep that cornucopia of businesses thriving. Our location also gives you some of the best views over the Estuary, while the colours at sunrise and sunset are breathtaking. These wonderful scenes and facilities are obviously drivers for Leigh's popularity.

We have had offers of funding and sponsorship from businesses to improve the children's play areas in the Library Gardens and Bonchurch Park. Leigh Lions have offered to continue to work with us on projects that benefit the people of Leigh and all this came within two weeks of the election of a new Chairman and committees.

We have plans and ideas growing within the Council. We will be different. Watch this space.

We all hope you enjoy this edition of the magazine.

*Cllr Paul Gilson*

# Note from Town Clerk

Helen Symmons

What a year!

The Community Centre reopened on 1<sup>st</sup> September, but we have very strict guidelines and procedures that we must follow, so unfortunately have very limited capacity. Our hirers are delighted to be back though, as many of them use our facility to run their businesses and also play a huge part in the health and wellbeing of those who attend the classes in their various shapes and form. However, to keep the building COVID safe all other visitors must be by appointment only at this time.

Staff throughout the crisis have continued working, doing their best from home like everyone else in the same position, but throughout we have done our best to keep serving our community.

Through lockdown and all the restrictions since, there has been an enormous amount of administration dealing with Community Centre hire that could not proceed, ensuring allotment holders had appropriate guidance and that all other facilities and services were adapted. Staff have been contacting our community transport members regularly to help with any social isolation issues and we assisted with shopping and pharmacy collections. We signposted as many people as possible to the help they needed, whether residents or businesses, and we engaged with partners to try and sort out issues as they arose.

The refurbishment and remodel work at the Community Centre continued and the skate park was refurbished and repaired. Throughout, the allotment sites remained open. Council meetings moved to online conference platform Zoom and we 'risk assessed' to ensure all was COVID-safe when the time was right to reopen.

During this time there were lots of issues occurring around the Town and, on behalf of the Council, I approached Southend Police and the Borough Council, asking what could be done. As a result of this, I was invited, along with David Elcock on behalf of the Leigh Partnership Group, to be a part of the stakeholder partnership group in getting Southend reopened safely. David and I worked with the Southend BID team and other shopping districts on helping to provide guidance and support to our wonderful independent businesses, and they were able to download or collect from the Community Centre a range of materials to support their safe openings. Safety measures were put in place and monitored to help with queuing issues in key pinch point areas. When it was the time for hospitality to reopen, our advice and insight led to a traffic regulation order for the Old Town just to ease gently back in to a new normal. Weekly meetings were a chance to engage with various partners around the Borough as well as with Borough Council Officers, Councillors and Southend Police. Discussions



were obviously difficult at times, hearing the struggles of traders throughout Southend and there were concerns with the huge numbers of visitors when the weather was so good. Finding a balance can be hard and sadly we can never please everyone when there is so much guidance to follow. The group listened and implemented as much as it could.

As time has moved on, the Safer Southend Stakeholder meetings are now morphing into a real collaboration to enable a strong tourist partnership to form across the Borough. We are looking at what can be achieved over the coming year to keep our Borough safe and welcoming, and we will always shout loudly about Leigh.

I know this time is challenging for everyone, including the Council, and it will continue to be so for so many more months. Your patience has been much appreciated when communication has been a little slow but we have now managed to return to the office in a limited capacity, and we look forward to the day when we are all able to work together again.



Julie and Jill (right)

#### JILL'S LAST EVENT AS CHAIRMAN

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council's Jill Healey took her last "step out" as Chairman in August on a thirteen-mile walk from Shoebury station to Benfleet Station with Julie Fosh, the High Sheriff of Essex. Julie was completing a series of walks along the Essex coastline from Harwich to Tilbury as part of her year as Sheriff and invited local community groups and clubs to join in with the different stages of her walk.

The aims of the event were to raise awareness of the Essex coastline and environmental issues and to engage others in the pleasures of walking and being outdoors, as well as raising money for the High Sheriff Fund which benefits Essex-based charities.

The Councillors, Town Clerk and the staff would like to thank Jill for all the work she did as Chairman.

# Council News

#### WELCOMING OUR NEWEST COUNCILLOR

At a remote Leigh-on-Sea Town Council meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> June, 8 applications were considered to fill a Councillor vacancy by co-option for the Herschell Ward. Each applicant gave a presentation on their suitability for the role and Dr. David Bowry was chosen by Councillors to be the latest addition to Leigh-on-Sea Town Council. There were 14 initial applications for the vacancy. The Town Clerk and Councillors were thrilled that so many people had applied for the position, and encourage those who were unsuccessful this time to please try again in the future. The vacancies will be filled by election on 6<sup>th</sup> May 2021, unless Government legislations changes this.

#### LEIGH-ON-SEA TOWN COUNCIL'S NEW CHAIRMAN

At the Annual Council Meeting held on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> August, Cllr Paul Gilson was elected as Chairman for the 2020/2021 Council year. Cllr Andy Wilkins – our youngest ever councillor – was elected as Vice-Chairman.

The Annual Council Meeting was postponed from May due to the pandemic.



Andy and Paul (right)



#### Getting to know Cllr Dr. David Bowry

##### **What made you want to be a Councillor for Leigh?**

I have lived in Leigh for over 30 years with my wife and four children, all of whom have attended local schools. I felt that as a Councillor I would have the opportunity and privilege to be able to return some of the support, guidance and assistance that I have been shown by the community over many years.

##### **What do you hope to achieve in your time as a Councillor?**

I hope to be able to work as an integral member of a team with a huge variety of skills and experience to enhance the quality of life for all our local residents. I want to ensure that we listen, and act upon, the views of all our residents, particularly those who may feel socially isolated for whatever reason and whose voices may not be the loudest. I also want to raise awareness of environmental issues in every way possible.

##### **What local issues are you passionate about?**

I am particularly concerned that we are inclusive and support those of our residents from disadvantaged groups and that we are proactive in seeking their views. I am passionate that we support and care for our elderly residents who have given so much to our community and those less able to care for themselves.

I also want to support local businesses who help to make Leigh the vibrant and unique town that it is. We also need to ensure that our young residents have the support and community facilities that they require.

##### **What do you love most about Leigh?**

Most of all I love the people of Leigh, voted one of the happiest places to live in the UK! I love Leigh's proximity to the coast and estuary, its excellent schools and the unique vibrancy of the Broadway with its eclectic range of shops and restaurants.





### NEW DEFIBRILLATOR FOR OLD LEIGH

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council, with the help of Leigh Lions, has installed a new Automated External Defibrillator (AED) on Strand Wharf (behind the Leigh Heritage Centre) for the safety of the Town. The machine was unveiled on Thursday 3<sup>rd</sup> September.

Town Clerk, Helen Symmons, said, "When one of our residents, Sue Middleton, contacted the Council with regard to the possibility of a defibrillator in the Old Town, Council immediately thought this was a great idea as we already have one in the Community Centre and knew that the Leigh Lions had enabled another in Leigh Road. With our good friends at Leigh Lions, we set in motion plans to install an AED unit on Strand Wharf. As the box does require to be heated, it is positioned to the rear of the Heritage Centre." To help someone who is in cardiac arrest effectively, a defibrillator needs to be found as quickly as possible. Leigh-on-Sea Town Council has asked for traders and businesses in the Old Town to display their AED stickers so it can easily be found in an emergency.

### CELEBRATING MERCHANT NAVY DAY

Merchant Navy Day is held annually on the 3<sup>rd</sup> September and Leigh-on-Sea Town Council is pleased to support Seafarers UK in their campaign to raise awareness of our island nation's continued dependence on professional seafarers.

We raised the Red Ensign Flag on Strand Wharf at 11am and want to say a big thank you to those who attended the ceremony, including Southend Borough Council's Deputy Mayor, the 3<sup>rd</sup> Chalkwell Bay Sea Scouts and members of the Leigh Royal British Legion. Merchant Navy Day honours the brave men and women who kept us afloat during both World Wars, and celebrates our dependence on modern day merchant seafarers who are responsible for over 90% of the UK's imports, including almost half the food we eat, plenty of the fuel we rely on and virtually all the products and goods we tend to take for granted!

### LEIGH COMMUNITY CENTRE RE-OPENS!

The Leigh Community Centre has now been open for over a month, and we are delighted to have a number of our usual hirers return to our rooms, with yoga, exercise classes, baby groups and educational clubs currently being our main activities.

The new schedule of classes is available on our website at [www.leighcommunitycentre.com](http://www.leighcommunitycentre.com). The information is being constantly updated where government guidelines are changing, so please do keep checking. Please contact your class leader directly as all sessions will need to be pre-booked with them. The protocol for returning is quite strict, but we have put these measures in place to help ensure the safety of everyone visiting us. We thank you for your cooperation during this difficult time. We have also now implemented the Government's new QR Code poster to allow people to check-in, which will assist with Track and Trace.

### CHAIRMAN'S CHARITY 2020/21

Newly elected Chairman Cllr Paul Gilson, has chosen the Endeavour Trust as his Chairman's Charity for 2020/2021. The Endeavour Trust is a charitable organisation set up in 2001 in order to restore and maintain a historic fishing boat from Leigh-on-Sea to its former glory. Endeavour is one of only two surviving Leigh-built fishing boats that went to Dunkirk and is registered with the Association of Dunkirk Little Ships. The charity focuses on the restoration and maintenance of the ship as well as providing educational talks and trips for schools and groups. More information can be found about The Endeavour Trust on their website: [endeavourtrust.blogspot.com](http://endeavourtrust.blogspot.com) The Council already has an alliance with this charity, supporting it over many years through the Council's Grant Aid Award Scheme. Last year, Cllr Jill Healey raised £948.58 for her charity Age Concern Southend.



## Councillor Caroline Parker Obituary By Virginia Parker

***It is with deep sadness that Leigh-on-Sea Town Council learned of the passing of Cllr Caroline Parker on 19<sup>th</sup> June. Caroline had suffered with ill health for some time but it was only recently that she had to withdraw from Council life. She was the longest serving member of the present Council administration and her passing is an immeasurable loss to the Town Council.***

Caroline Ann Parker was born on July 4th 1942 - during the Second World War - growing up in Benfleet. As a child she enjoyed tap and ballet classes and getting her brother out of mischief. From a young age Caroline was a keen and enthusiastic Elvis Presley fan and set up a fan club with her best friend June.

She was a firm believer in standing up for her community and this was never more apparent than when in 1973 she and her children joined a group taking a petition to Downing Street in order to stop more oil refineries being built on Canvey Island. This battle took some 14 years and the victory belonged to the residents of Canvey.

Caroline had a kind, warm, giving and loving spirit. Although she was not one to talk about it, she donated to many charities that supported children and animals. She made people feel special and would go out of her way to make a difference and she selflessly worked hard to make things better for those around her.

She was very ambitious, hard-working and proud of her achievements, from getting a job in London after leaving school and later running three of her own companies. In 2003 she took on the extra responsibility of becoming a member of Leigh-on-Sea Town Council. There, she was in her element. It gave Caroline a great sense of pride and equally her family were very proud of her. Her achievements during office were most beneficial to the community of Leigh, including the Elm Road school crossing, speed humps, a 'Welcome to Leigh-on-Sea' sign as you enter the town, the Bonchurch Park outdoor gym, the skate park and Leigh Lights. Her favourite venture was the Easter Event held in Leigh Library Gardens. She was also very proud of her role as school governor at North Street School, which was one of her biggest achievements and passion in her later years.

Caroline had lots of hobbies and was a very active person. She loved to walk, dance and garden. She also had a passion for the arts. Her thirst for knowledge saw her up till 1am most days watching documentaries on her favourite subjects, writing notes throughout to share with others. Her passion for learning never wavered and she loved sharing her knowledge. She was a perfectionist and when she believed in something, she never quit no matter how tough it was.

She loved to travel and visited many different countries. Two of her greatest adventures was fulfilling a childhood dream to see elephants in the wild on a Safari to the Serengeti, and she visited Machu Picchu - appealing to her love of history and learning about other cultures. Closer to home, she had a fondness for the west country - she was a spokeswoman for selling Devon to anyone who would listen, although her heart was always in Leigh, persuading four of her family members to move here.

And of course, one of her favourite things to do was to spend time with her family. Caroline had 4 daughters, 5 grandchildren and 4 great grandchildren - and that meant plenty of family occasions, which was where she was at her happiest. She was an inspiration to her family, never quitting when things got tough and teaching them to follow their hearts and always believe in themselves. Everyone believes their loved ones are one in a million, but she truly was. There will never be another Caroline Parker.







# Lockdown Life in Leigh

Back in January, when Coronavirus was first being reported, no one seemed to take much notice. But things changed very rapidly and no one really knew what to do. Panic buying ensued, events were cancelled, schools closed and then suddenly we weren't able to leave our houses.

This has been an incredibly difficult and unprecedented time for everyone, so we set about to find out what the people of Leigh had done during Lockdown. And it is clear to see that we have a community of exceptional people.

## Allan Webb, The Art Ministry Chairman

Last year I received a "Good for Leigh" Award for my services to The Art Ministry charity. This meant a great deal to me, as after living in Leigh for nearly 30 years I now truly felt that this was my home. Little did I know that a year later I would have contracted COVID-19, being admitted to hospital on 30th March, where I remained for 37 nights, half of which I was sedated and intubated.

I had a couple of close calls with death, but I finally returned home on 6th May, just in time for the VE Day Celebrations and my birthday, both on the same day - which I celebrated in the streets with my neighbours. I was amazed to see our front hedge adorned with pom-poms. Whilst in hospital, our neighbours and many of my contacts from Leigh had been making them and putting them there in support of me, an idea started by my wife, Sheila.

When I finally caught up with my social media, I found that my sister Jane had been keeping people up to date with my progress, or lack of it initially. This had prompted hundreds of messages of support, which helped my wife as they came in, and me as I recovered. Our neighbours were fantastic during and after my hospitalisation. They rallied round to keep Sheila supplied with food (and wine!) and met in the street at a safe distance to socialise with her every Sunday afternoon.

Leigh has been "Good for Me" and Sheila in helping us get through this difficult time. Thank you to residents of Leigh and to Leigh-on-Sea Town Council for your support of me, my wife and The Art Ministry.



**Tim Watts**, President of Leigh Lions Club

I have lived in Leigh all my life and thought I knew my community well, but getting involved with the COVID response has shown me otherwise.

Leigh Lions joined Southend Council's Coronavirus Action Support Line early on, undertaking shopping for people self-isolating/shielding, taking them to medical appointments and collecting prescriptions. We also learned the value of the brief doorstep chat, often the longest interaction with the outside world that the people had at the time.

With more than 200 jobs under my belt, I've come to know quite a few people and explored areas of the town I'd seldom visited in years. Generally, it's been a positive, if tiring, experience and I've made several new friends amongst clients and other volunteers along the way. Though, as Lions, we have often discussed the problems isolation causes, I hadn't realised the extent of this in Leigh – my home town. It's clear loneliness and physical isolation are massive issues for some individuals and I'll be thinking about what more we can do to alleviate that: we can't lose contact with these people, and we know there'll be others. COVID has brought together many volunteers - groups and individuals – and I'm optimistic, now those relationships have been made, that we can make a positive difference.



**Natalie Tennant**, Personal Trainer at NaturallyFit4Life

At the start I will openly admit, I felt panicked. I watched every news update, constantly scoured the web for info and felt a fear I've never experienced before. Fear for my family, especially my vulnerable sister and parents, for friends and elderly neighbours. I cried listening to heart breaking stories of wives losing husbands and families losing mothers, the worst to hear were of those who had contracted the virus through caring for others. I felt a bit helpless and also struggling to 'teach' my son at home, a bit of failure. It was all overwhelming and depressing.

Then things started to lift, I started to read some incredible books, I channelled my energy into exercising and trying to help neighbours and friends as well as supporting my family. Everyone rallied. We had the most fantastic socially distanced VE Day street party. The sense of community I felt was wonderful and uplifting after so much gloom and anxiety. This all coincided with practising meditation and mindfulness after a friend sent me a brilliant 21-day programme to follow. I started to really appreciate all I had, practising gratitude and enjoying the small things such as a walk with my dog, a meal with my family, a Zoom chat with all the family.

I realised it didn't matter that I couldn't teach my son, I'm not a teacher! But I could go on bike rides, have fun with him and enjoy our time. I like to think I've continued on this positive path and learned from this experience. I live in the moment more and enjoy little things. I feel truly blessed. Of course, I wish this had never happened, I'm sad for not being able to deliver my classes and work and for businesses that have folded or suffered. But I also see it as a wakeup call... to be a little kinder, more patient, more grateful and a better person.

**Richard Maddison**, Leigh Allotment plot-holder

It is well known that fresh air and working the soil benefit body and mind and COVID-19 has certainly highlighted such advantages to allotment holders in 2020. Whether enjoying peaceful solitude or distanced chats, exercise and fresh produce have been most welcome and we have been better able to observe and appreciate nature; swapping the roar of easyJet for the buzzard's cry and listening to magpies arguing with crows.

With more time invested, the Marshall Close site is tidier and more productive than ever and the community spirit, already good, has been strengthened in adversity; how lucky we are.

**Robert Norton**, Leigh-on-Sea Resident  
Project 49 on Alexandra Street, Southend provides innovative day services to adults with learning disabilities and associated needs.

At the beginning of lockdown, I was contacted by Southend Hospital's Learning Disability Nurse who asked if I would do an interview with them as part of their Learning Disability Week.

I talked to many different people about the different jobs that they do. It is such a supportive atmosphere and I have kept in touch with those involved and made new friends.

**Valerie Morgan**, Friends of Leigh Library Gardens Volunteer and Past LTC Councillor

Friends of Leigh Library Gardens worked very hard over last winter getting the gardens ready for spring then COVID and lockdown happened. In spite of us working outdoors and being socially distanced we were banned from working by SBC. We had to watch as gradually much of our hard work was undone and the weeds once again took over.

Then at last, in May we were told we could start work again if we submitted documents to SBC stating our rules for keeping safe. Volunteers eagerly returned wanting to "get stuck in" again and a busy work schedule was begun with weeding, planting and general tidying up. The playground being closed gave us the opportunity to repaint the equipment.

Our hard work was repaid by all the kind compliments we received on Facebook and in passing.



**Bob O'Leary**, Secretary of the Leigh Royal British Legion

Sadly, the current global Pandemic has affected all Charities in their fundraising efforts. The Royal British Legion is no different, and the local team is extremely disappointed that this year's Poppy Appeal will be badly affected. There will still be a Poppy Appeal, but social distancing rules will unfortunately have a big impact. Local plans are still being made – but last year's record total of £42,165.44 looks safe at present. We are also making plans with Father Clive of St. Clement's Church for a small Remembrance Service – which will be made available live online.

We had lots of community led events scheduled this year including Southend Carnival, a Community Tea Party to celebrate VE Day, the Community Day in Bonchurch Park, Leigh-on-Sea Regatta, as well as planned trips to the Royal Hospital in Chelsea and Portsmouth. Our monthly meetings have been cancelled since February and it looks doubtful that we will be allowed to hold meetings again until the New Year. We also have plans to undertake litter picks at Leigh Cemetery – which has 31 war graves maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.

The Branch was able to attend events to commemorate VJ Day and we have continued to provide community support to local Veterans as and when requested. Limited activity for The Royal British Legion during the lockdown has allowed our members, like many others, to undertake lots of the decorating and maintenance jobs in the home and garden that we normally don't have time for.

However, I hope very soon that life for all of us will return to a degree of safety and normality. Next year The Royal British Legion celebrates its Centenary, so we intend to play our part in the celebrations.

**Linda Mitchell**, Administration Receptionist  
at Leigh-on-Sea Town Council

The Community Transport Scheme and Over 60's Social Club, both of which are organised by LTC, aim to offer trips and social meetings throughout the year to support those in the community looking to meet for friendship, whilst engaging in a variety of activities and events together. Sadly, of course, the restrictions resulting from Covid-19 have made these meetings impossible.

Led by Helen Symmons, Town Clerk, the initial, immediate response back in March was to write to everyone known to us through these schemes to provide them with the Council phone number, including an emergency out of hours number, to ensure no one felt isolated. Members of these groups were able to call this number to ask for help with essential shopping or collection of prescriptions and a group of Councillors formed a small team to respond to these requests.

Today's technology has helped us to stay connected in a variety of ways but not everyone has access to these mediums. Sometimes what is needed is to hear a friendly voice. It has been a very real privilege and joy to connect with many of our members by that old-fashioned idea of picking up the landline and having a chat.

Conversations have been rich and varied; book titles shared, jigsaws tackled, knitting and baking projects, gardening and veg growing tips, poetry, languages, VE Day and WW2 stories, to name a few. Inevitably of course we have chatted about the impact of COVID-19 on our lives; the limitations and isolation, how we all move forward from here and what it means to us all within our individual circumstances. So, we encourage each other to share stories and these conversations emphasize the importance of human connection.

A big thank you goes to the Arts Ministry which, free of charge, provided the Council with plain calico bags filled with paints, pencils and pens with which to decorate the bag. These have been distributed out to those members who have expressed an interest in craft projects.

Not everyone wants or needs our support and it has been heart-warming to hear also of those in our community who are amply supported by family, friends and neighbours.

However, if you are reading this article and like the idea of chatting regularly with someone to build connections then please do get in touch with us here at LTC and we will be happy to link you up with a "happy chatter and listening ear".

**Hilary Le Marie**,

Leigh Resident and  
local volunteer

What did I do in lockdown? I went from doing volunteering work for various organisations to not being able to help anyone. I am of a certain



age and diabetic and vulnerable, so not allowed out even after lockdown, which I deeply miss. I had lots of telephone calls with friends far and wide. I caught up with all those programmes that had been recorded, plus reading without feeling guilty that one should be doing more. There were also free online events to watch; I became addicted to Cannon Hall Farm's daily broadcast via Facebook about life on a Yorkshire farm. Sunday's Pastor Steve Mayo of Wesley and Belfairs Methodist Churches also produced an online service, which I took part in. My family were very good, doing all my shopping and keeping an eye on me and we connected with each other every evening, doing something different like bingo, quizzes, charades and drawing challenges. It was all good fun. Stay safe.



#### Reanne Nash, LODS Member

LODS (Leigh Operatic & Dramatic Society) have been performing award-winning musical theatre in the Southend area since 1917. 2020 was supposed to see us perform Madness musical 'Our House' in May, but COVID-19 had different plans and theatre as we knew it has now changed. The seats emptied, performers left the stage, and the lights went dark.

However, LODS haven't let corona stop them and are still eagerly awaiting our chance to get back to doing what we love. We've been keeping busy with themed Zoom quizzes, a virtual ensemble sing and regular meetings. We absolutely cannot wait to get back together and do what we love on the stage.

With plans bigger and better than ever for 2021, you'll be sure to catch us singing and dancing our way back onto the Palace Theatre stage as soon as we can, ensuring that no matter what, the show WILL go on.

#### Liz Evans, Leigh Resident

Following Lockdown in March our road formed a WhatsApp group to create a great community spirit, looking out for vulnerable neighbours and sharing unwanted fruit and vegetable plants. Our front gardens became the focal place for Easter Egg Hunts, "Clap for Carers" and bunting for our VE Day celebrations. We shared birthday parties including a "Spiderman" visit and even a postponed wedding. We also stood there to pay our last respects to dear neighbours on their final journeys.

Keeping busy has been our salvation - walking in nature, gardening, enjoying the peace and the blue skies.

Family and friends have been so important to us and the benefits of communication have been immeasurable. Our one big regret is those important missed cuddles with the grandchildren but we enjoyed our hilarious Facetime moments with them.

Our lockdown has been full of "highs and lows", as it has for everyone, but the kindness of strangers and their ingenuity have been inspirational throughout as we all adapt to the "new normal".

**David Elcock**, Leigh Resident, who is involved in many community groups in the town

The Coronavirus pandemic has brought with it much sadness, suffering and anxiety, but it has also brought together communities, streets, neighbours and local shops in ways not seen for a long time. So, let's celebrate the good of lockdown and hold on to that mentality as we move into the 'new normal'.

#### Local Food Banks

Leigh Road Baptist Church (LRBC) on Marguerite Drive is open on Sunday, Monday and Wednesday between 10am and 11am to receive donations for the Foodbank in Southend. **Cass**, of Southend Foodbank writes "Over lockdown, two local churches have gone out of their way to be available for Foodbank donations to be dropped off at their premises. Between them they collected over 6 tonnes of food! Thank you so much to Leigh Road and Shoburyness & Thorpe Bay Baptist Churches' amazing work!" **Minister, Steve Tinning** of LRBC said, "They may have been our doors but it was your food, thank you Leigh-on-Sea and for all your donations! Keep them coming, the need remains very real!" Many streets had collections each week from their neighbours that they dropped off at LRBC. Please keep donating.



**Grant for Packed with Smiles:** To help ensure school children and their families suffering hardship at this time have the right equipment to enable them to participate fully and confidently as school restarted. Volunteers Elle Beadle, Elizabeth Carr Riley, Emily Bailey and Laura Kirkby.





**Marguerite Drive neighbours launched a monthly street clean**

**Glenys and others were saddened by rubbish being left on our beaches and in the Old Town, so they donned gloves and litter pickers and collected the mess to protect local wild-life and our environment.**



**Local cards fundraising cards and Leigh-on-Sea montages created by David Shields raising over £330 for charity.**



**LRBC food donation**

### **Good Neighbours**

Streets, drives, avenues, closes and roads were locked-in but reached out to their neighbours in new ways. WhatsApp, Facebook and messenger groups launched as a way of staying connected. Postcards were popped through letterboxes offering mutual support to those in need and in self-isolation. Bunting, rainbows and 'we're praying' cards went up across our town creating smiles and thanking frontline workers. Food collections for those in need took place and street cleans were organised and still continue. Where neighbours were formerly anonymous, now they are greeting each other on a first name basis.

These examples are by no means exhaustive of all the good that has and is taking place across Leigh-on-Sea from bric-a-brac trails to phone calls to neighbours for a chat, but let's use them as a way of celebrating all that can be achieved when we pull together rather than push apart.

### **Local Independent Businesses and Churches**

As people were forced to self-isolate, local grocery and DIY shops adapted and launched delivery services to get supplies to those who could not go out. Cafés became delis with over the counter one-in-one-out service to keep customers and staff safe. Pubs entertained with online quiz nights each week where many came together to have fun, exercise the grey matter and combat feelings of isolation. Local photographers created new works and shared profits from sales to support the local foodbanks.



**The Broker Freehouse, Leigh Road: Online weekly quiz nights throughout lockdown**

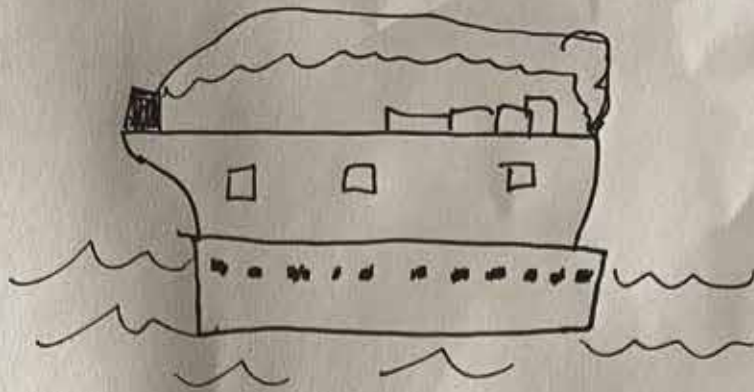
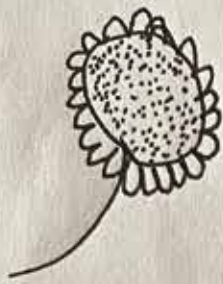
**We salute and thank the local independent businesses of Leigh-on-Sea and encourage you to keep supporting them and shop local as they have supported you when shelves were bare at the town's supermarkets.**

### **FRONT ROOM FOLK FESTIVAL**



#### **Leigh Front Room Folk Festival**

Many of the festivals and events that bring vibrancy to Leigh-on-Sea each year had to be cancelled due to the pandemic. However, that did not stop the organisers of Leigh Folk Festival who streamed an amazing weekend of live music, interviews and workshops directly into our homes over 48hrs on the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> May. What's more they raised an amazing £7,204.31 for 3 charities; Southend Emergency Fund, Help Musicians and Leigh Folk Arts Association. What a way to keep our spirits up!



I like in a town <sup>near</sup> ~~near~~ the sea

It's very special to me  
my school is here too  
my uniform is blue

I meet up with my friends in the park  
we play there until it gets dark

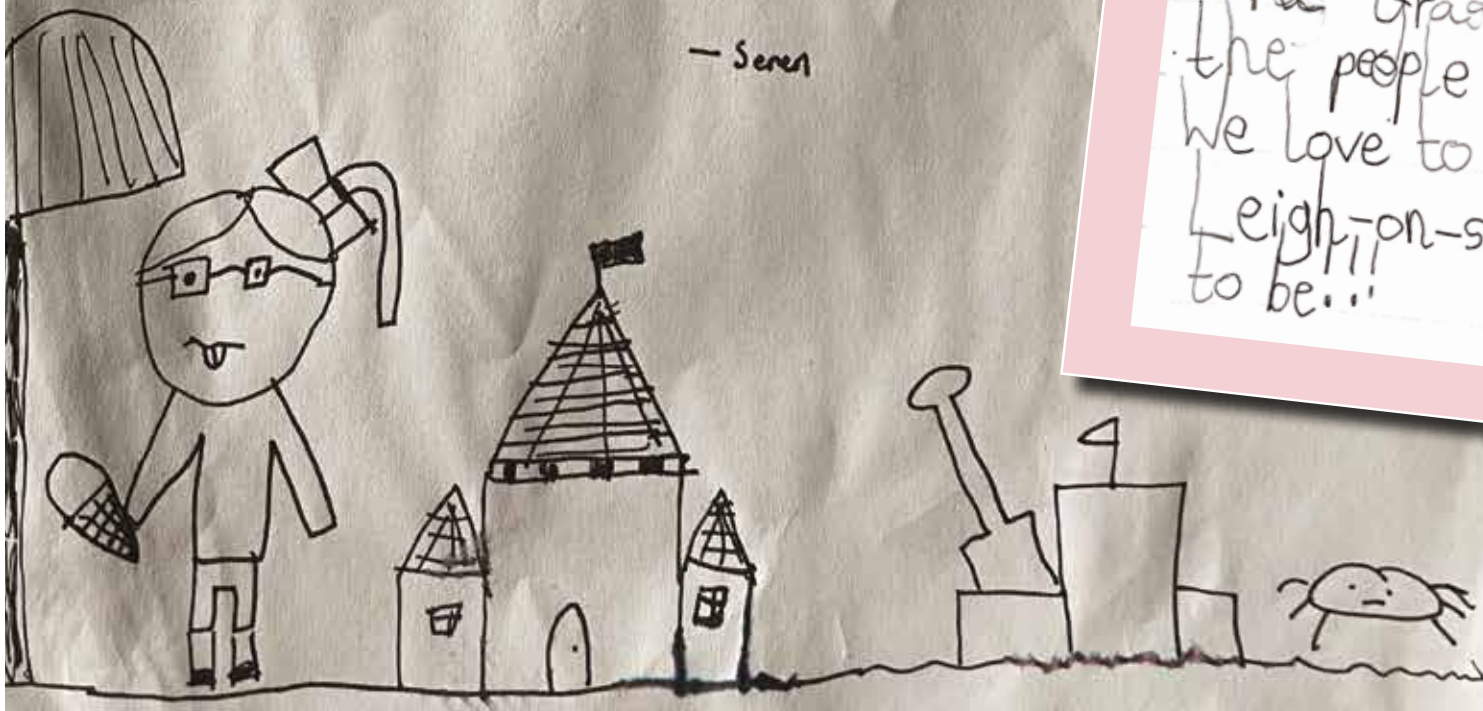
I like the sand in my feet

I go in the water when there are heat

There is always lots to do  
and plenty of shopping too!

There is no where I'd rather be  
than living in Leigh-on-sea

- Seren



W

Col

The sky  
the sea is  
there are  
fun things  
the sand  
the clouds  
go to the  
or fly a kite  
the shells  
the grass  
the people  
we love to  
Leigh-on-sea  
to be...



# Writing Competition



Leigh-on-Sea Town Council has a dedicated Arts Group who work on delivering art projects around the town as well as managing our exhibitions and Artist in Residence scheme at the Community Centre.

As a way of branching out from the usual paintings and photographs, the group decided to launch a writing competition earlier in the year, and asked all ages to send in their stories or poetry about our home town of Leigh-on-Sea.

The competition happened to coincide with the lockdown so we were thrilled to have over 50 stories submitted, with a large amount in the 12 - 15 years category from students working at home.

Many of the stories were colourful and happy tales about our seaside town, while others were a stark realisation of what lockdown and the coronavirus meant to them.

A panel of Councillors judged the submissions and each picked their favourite. The winners of each category are printed for you to enjoy. We hope that when we can reopen the Centre fully, we will be able to exhibit all of the entries for everyone to enjoy, as intended.

## WINNERS

5-7 yrs "Colours of Leigh-on-Sea" by Teddy Giles

8-11 yrs "Untitled Poem" by Seren Smith

## Lovely Leigh-on-Sea

Lovely, lovely Leigh-on-Sea .....the place where,  
 Everyone wants to be.  
 In comes the tide so we have water play,  
 Going out again means a trip to the ray, "YAY!"  
 Having fun getting stuck in muddy trenches,  
 Our parents sit laughing on comfortable benches.  
 "No, but mum I've lost my shoe!"  
 So we all start looking, my best friend finds it, "PHEW!"  
 Enjoying a celebratory ice-cream while mum packs to go,  
 All of us lucky to call this place our home.

## 'My Old Leigh Town'

A squawking seagull  
 A familiar breeze  
 A sky so clear  
 As beautiful as the seas

A coastal walk  
 Ice creams in the sun  
 Picnics in the park  
 A whole day of fun

A centre of creativity  
 That sparks the imagination  
 A daily retreat  
 A lifetime vacation

Community at heart  
 A feel-good town  
 Here I was born  
 And my heart is bound

### Leigh-On-Sea

Leigh-On-Sea is the place to go,  
 If you want to go with the flow.  
 Fancy some ice-cream? Check out The Mayflower  
 Come inside if the weather decides to shower.  
 Or if it is seafood you are looking for,  
 Have a browse at the cockle sheds along the shore,  
 Where lots of boats all sorts of shapes and sizes,  
 Rock and wobble as the sea tide arises.



The Leigh Broadway is a great place to shop,  
 From household essentials and fizzy pop,  
 To fashion finds at Just Fox  
 And local artists beautiful artworks.  
 Take a trip to the Farmer's Market  
 At the Leigh Community Centre's Friday outlet,  
 Where you will find local produce  
 Plants, vegetables, and even fresh orange juice.



There is lots to see and do in Leigh-On-Sea,  
 It is definitely the place to be  
 Watch the sunset from the beach,  
 Go to Sara's Tea Garden and grab a coffee each.  
 There are plenty of pubs, restaurants, and cafe's  
 For when the skies are grey.  
 And do not forget to visit the Leigh's Regatta event,  
 Fun-filled with sailboat races to your heart's content  
 And other side shows and local talent!



*Writing Competition continued*

### WINNERS

8-11 yrs "Lovely Leigh-on-Sea" by William Hutley  
 12-15 yrs "Leigh-on-Sea" by Ryan Fey-Whitman  
 16+ yrs "My Leigh Old Town" by Sophia Faraway



# A Youth Perspective of Lockdown

By Maddie Balcombe

“People say that youth is wasted on the young, and I can't believe it took a global pandemic for me to start appreciating all of the little things in life. Life as a teenager is fast paced, and I definitely speak from experience when I say that my mind is constantly consumed with thoughts about my upcoming plans. From school work to holidays, festivals to parties, there is always something new around the corner, leaving us no time to stop and reflect on what is actually important in life.

When the COVID-19 lockdown hit, it stopped my busy lifestyle in its tracks. I was in Australia – the first of many of my gap year destinations – when I heard that the UK was going to enter a full lockdown. I flew home early and quickly went from living the dream to being locked away for the foreseeable future. I couldn't believe it! Initially, I hated lockdown. I felt unproductive, upset, and I couldn't wrap my head around the fact that no one knew how long this would last. However, with each day that passed, I started to adjust to this unprecedented change.

I've lived in Leigh-on-Sea my whole life, but it wasn't until my daily walks that I truly appreciated how much I enjoy living here. When the stress of lockdown was getting too much to handle, a stroll through the park or a walk along the beach did wonders to clear my head. I also had time to reconnect with my family – be it through game nights or family dinners – and, when we could eventually mix with other households, I looked forward to seeing my friends more than I ever have before. Socially distanced picnics were the new night out!

Looking back on lockdown, I definitely believe it was a blessing in disguise. Today's generation can be so wrapped up with the minor details, but lockdown taught me that there's more to life than getting the perfect Instagram picture. What really matters is the people you're surrounded with, the places you visit and the memories you make along the way. In later years, when I look back on my youth, I know that I'll fondly remember all of these things, but lockdown has taught me not to take anything for granted and to appreciate the joys of youth whilst I'm still young.

”

## Summer Bummer

By Maddie Balcombe

This summer is a bummer,  
Will it ever end?  
Sun rise, Sun set. An eternal cycle –  
It drags on, reminding us of all that is lost.

Sunlight seeps through the cracks in my curtains,  
And laughter lingers in the empty streets.  
The lockdown generation are scared to emerge.  
Where has the life gone?

Each cotton candy cloud in the hazy sky,  
Carrying memories of summers past;  
We used to stroll by the sea, disregarding all responsibility.  
We used to dance in the fields, as day turned to dusk.

This summer is a bummer,  
Bittersweet nostalgia pumping through our hearts.  
We will meet again in the soft summer sun,  
But, for now, we are longing for an escape.

## Youth and the Perseverance for Success

By Andy Wilkins, Leigh-on-Sea Town Council Vice-Chairman

Lockdown has seen the best of people. The youth of Leigh are included as they have battled for their right to achieve success in education. When lockdown came around in March, some students were only a matter of weeks away from taking their GCSEs, A-Levels and other exams. The confusion that surrounded all of education was enough to make anyone upset.

But the success and perseverance by all during this period has been massively downplayed by the media. Educational exams are stressful at the best of times but this year has been monumental when compared to previous years.

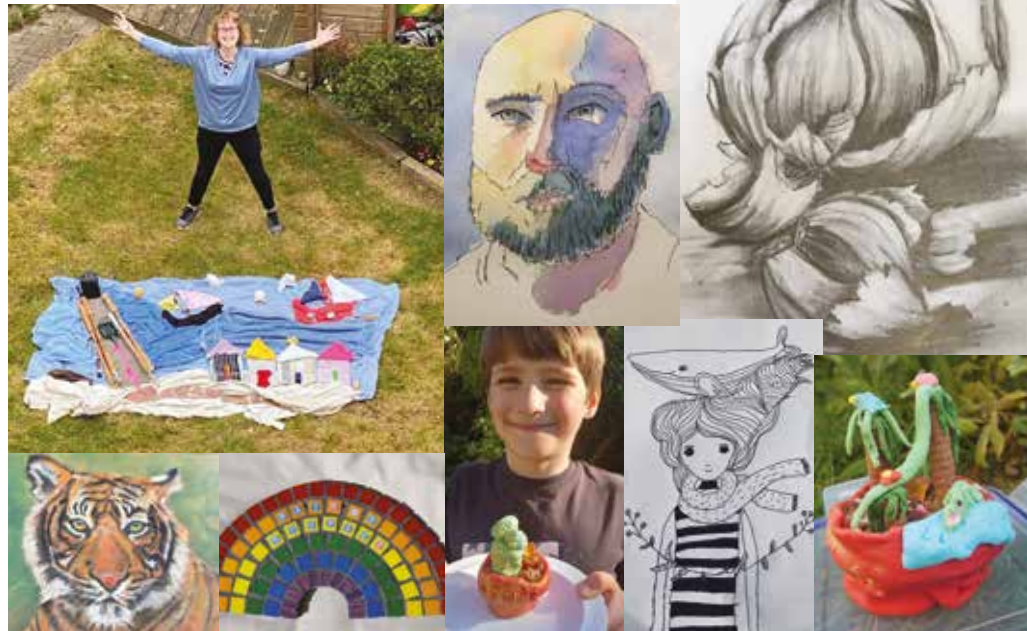
There is a desire by those still in education to be successful in 2021 as we enter a post-COVID world. I include myself as I'm set to complete my degree at the University of East London in 2022. Two years after COVID came along and changed our lives forever.

Hopefully future generations will be able to look back and see what we achieved. We might have struggled but we did as well as we could under the circumstances.

# Surviving and Thriving at Create98

**We started lockdown with a huge round of phone calls, contacting more than 400 people booked onto classes we had to cancel! Everyone was really understanding, and most people asked us to keep their booking and roll it forward to when we re-opened in 'a few months' time' – little did we know how many months that would be!**

At the same time, a chance discussion with a customer challenged us to go online to continue to reach our audience and provide them with activities during lockdown. We didn't really know what that could mean but set about creating a YouTube channel (@Create98) just in case. We decided our channel would give a free art or craft tutorial to the adult and children's community every day. Discussions began with our tutors to see how we might adapt their specialism to the online world, and a big planning spreadsheet was created.



All our wonderful tutors were really up for helping in any way they could, and by the following Monday we had the first 2 weeks of content mapped out and plenty more under construction. We used our social media channels (@create98leigh on Facebook and Instagram) to alert everyone to the programme. Our first schedule was shared over 6000 times on Facebook, which was both rewarding and daunting, expectations were high!

We set photo challenges, big art projects, stitching and crafting activities and encouraged people to share their results... and they did. 4 weeks in, we started some competitions and partnered with other great local businesses who donated prizes and kept the engagement high. 8 weeks in, the content kept coming, cooking, yoga and outdoor activities were added, and we had nearly 100 free video tutorials on YouTube. We held an open coffee morning on Zoom every Friday at 10am and used it to share cooking and gardening tips. It was so good to chat to different people, both local and far away.

One coffee morning someone asked if we could try live online classes, so in June our new content moved towards that. Many tutors, now more confident with the camera and using Zoom, started live painting, drawing and pastels classes. Students booked online and we delivered materials to them with a Zoom or video link. We expanded to include a fortnightly doorstep flower arranging class (Doorstep Flower School) where some weeks more than 70 people received a bucket of flowers on their doorstep and a link to our freshly made arranging tutorial!







It felt right to start re-opening during July with our now COVID-friendly studio, with individual desks and materials, and individual slices of @VbytheSea's wonderful vegan cake! We have a full programme mapped out to Christmas, with smaller in-person classes. Zoom classes carry on also for those not able, or not ready to come out, and we now have over 20 craft-at-home kits we deliver to help us all continue to 'Live Life More Creatively'. All those free tutorials are of course still available on our website too if you'd like to check them out.

Overall, we've definitely tried our best to make the most out of a difficult situation and are looking forward to hopefully having a somewhat more normal Autumn!



# Autumn Activities

As the nights begin to draw in and the days become shorter it's easy to run out of ideas of how to keep the children occupied. Long days at the beach seem like a lifetime ago, but just because the sun is taking a back seat for Autumn, that doesn't mean the fun stops. We've put together some ideas to keep the whole family occupied this fall, especially as half term fast approaches...

## FOR BABIES & TODDLERS:

Autumn offers some wonderful textures, sounds and shapes so why not collect different items from the woods, park or beach and create a 'Treasure Basket' for your little ones to keep their fingers busy. Pine cones, leaves, conkers and stones for them to explore and enjoy, scrunch and even paint. Just make sure no small items make it into the basket and give it all a rinse first.

Naming colours and counting fallen leaves is also a good way to engage them with their natural surroundings.

## FOR CHILDREN:

Create a collage of an Autumn scene with leaves, twigs, acorns or even seaweed. Leaf printing, twig sculptures and bark rubbing are also fun ways to get involved with nature.

Get ready for Hallowe'en and create some paper chains and spooky bunting ready to entertain the neighbours. Or have a go at making your own sweet treats, there are lots of online recipes available for homemade fudge created in a slow cooker!

## AND FOR THE WHOLE FAMILY:

Get outside and enjoy the sounds and sights. Kick the leaves, jump in puddles (wellies recommended!) and collect conkers as they fall from the trees. It's also a great time of year for foraging for blackberries and other fruits hidden in the hedgerow – make sure you know what you are picking though!

When you get home why not have a hot chocolate competition to see who can make the yummiest drink, or toast marshmallows over an open fire and get that cosy feeling!



# Leigh Farmers' Market First Virtual Market!

**Our Farmers' Market is one of the longest running markets in the Essex area. This year we are proud to celebrate 20 years of delivering local produce to our residents! With this in mind, the Council had planned to hold a special outdoor Farmers' Market this summer on Strand Wharf, but unfortunately it was not able to go ahead – so we held a Virtual Farmers' Market instead on Saturday 25<sup>th</sup> July through our Facebook page!**

The market was first set up by the late councillor, Janet Hammond, who 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 2000 with the support from then Council Chairman, Donald Fraser. It was first held at the now demolished St. Clements Church Hall and was later moved to Leigh Community Centre.

Our innovative virtual event was a way for us to still provide a service to the community, and to support local traders. We advertised all of our stallholders, who had lots of special deals on offer including new products, free delivery, money off, introductory offers and prize draws.

We hope that our Farmers' Market will be able to return soon, we are currently assessing how to do this in a safe and secure way for all involved. The Market is usually held on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Friday of each month, 9am-1pm at Leigh Community Centre, hosting approximately 16 stalls selling all kinds of lovely local produce including meat, vegetables, eggs, cheese, bread, honey, skin products and sweet treats.

**Look out for our Virtual Christmas Farmers' Market which will launch online through our Facebook pages in the weeks leading up to Christmas.**



## STALLHOLDER DETAILS

**Ann Cushion** locally made set and runny honey

**Bradfield's Farm Dairy** locally produced milk, cream, cheese & yogurt  
[bradfieldsfarm.co.uk](http://bradfieldsfarm.co.uk)

**Elixirs of Life** locally made natural skin products  
[elixirsoflife.co.uk](http://elixirsoflife.co.uk)

**Flour and Spoon** Leigh-on-Sea based artisan  
[bakeryflourandspoon.com](http://bakeryflourandspoon.com)

**The Food Beaver** Unique spice blends and seasonings  
[thefoodbeaver.com](http://thefoodbeaver.com)

**Lovely Bread & Stuff** Allergy friendly baker based in Leigh  
[facebook.com/lovelybreadandstuff](https://facebook.com/lovelybreadandstuff)

**Highfield Farm** Beef joints, steaks, mincemeat and free-range eggs

**Hoppily** Craft beers for local, independent brewers  
[hoppily.co.uk](http://hoppily.co.uk)

**My Choc O'Leight** Hand-tempered and masterfully sculpted chocolates  
[mychocoleight.co.uk](http://mychocoleight.co.uk)

**The Perfect Pudding Company** Pickles and chutneys all year round, Christmas puddings and cakes seasonally  
[facebook.com/The-Perfect-Pudding-Company-of-Leigh-on-Sea](https://facebook.com/The-Perfect-Pudding-Company-of-Leigh-on-Sea)

**Rhyne Park Farm** Rare-breed, free-range pork products  
[farmshop.uk.com](http://farmshop.uk.com)

**Sarah Green's Organics** Wide range of seasonal vegetables  
[sarahgreensorganics.co.uk](http://sarahgreensorganics.co.uk)

**Sharpening Solutions** Mobile sharpening for tools, knives and scissors  
[sharpeningsolutions.co.uk](http://sharpeningsolutions.co.uk)

**South East Essex Organic Gardeners** Plants for sale  
[seeog.org.uk](http://seeog.org.uk)



## OFFERS

### Gambardeli

Award winning pies for the second year running at the British Pie Awards. "We were delighted to receive a silver award for our steak and mushroom pie this year, and for our Wellington in 2019."

"Whether you are fully vegan, vegetarian or seeking a couple of meals per week, Gambardeli's meat free offers a wide range of chilled vacuum-packed meats which can be kept in your fridge for several weeks or in the freezer for at least 3 months."

Gambardeli's range of meat-free alternatives includes; BBQ steaks, sausages, burgers, medallions, ribs, chorizo, brisket, bacon, cold meats, roast dinners and hampers at Christmas. **We offer free delivery in the local area.**

Visit [gambardeli.co.uk](http://gambardeli.co.uk) for more info.

### Bean & Boy

Bean and Boy is a family-run business making award-winning handmade soap, using all-natural ingredients and traditional methods in Southend-on-Sea. We've been taking part in the Farmer's Market for four years, and we're really excited to announce that we've just taken over Margaret Raymond Florist at 81 Hamlet Court Road. Come say hello and see our soaps in person! **Show this page and get our exclusive market special of 3 large bars of soap for £12 until the end of 2020 in store only.**

We're online too at [beanandboy.com](http://beanandboy.com)





# Volunteer of the Year Winner

*In 2019 the Council launched the Volunteer of the Year Award in memory of longstanding past Councillor, Donald Fraser, who had served on the Council since its inception in 1996. Donald was an avid volunteer and helped many organisations during his lifetime, so the Council thought this award a fitting tribute.*

*This year's chosen winner is Christine Daniels, who was nominated by Sandra Allen at Cruse Bereavement Care where Christine does amazing work, volunteering on a regular basis as a Bereavement Support Counsellor for people in Leigh-on-Sea. Sandra said "Christine lives on her own and has ill health, but she never moans and gets on with her volunteering. I love Christine. She is a true asset in our community that needs support and help."*

*The Councillors thought that her dedication to helping those that have lost loved ones was a remarkable thing to do on a voluntary basis, so she was chosen as this year's recipient.*

*We have been informed that since the Coronavirus pandemic started, Christine has been able to continue to support bereaved people over the phone. She supervises several other bereavement volunteers, keeping regular contact with them and encouraging them to take on more clients that need support, and has assisted with the application process for nine new bereavement volunteers.*

## Good for Leigh Winners 2020

**Each year we honour worthy members of the community who do wonderful things for Leigh-on-Sea with our "Good for Leigh Awards". Normally we would present our winners with their awards at our Annual Community Meeting, which was unfortunately cancelled this year due to the pandemic. This year we had a large number of winners, who have each done fantastic work in our town.**

### Friends of Leigh Library Gardens (FOLLG)

The Council wanted to recognise FOLLG for their continued hard work and the time they have spent rejuvenating the Leigh Library Gardens. Their work was sorely needed, and it is fantastic to see such progress in such a small amount of time, and all done voluntarily!

### Jessica and Gracie

Jessica and Gracie were recently featured in the local papers for their eco-warrior efforts to litter-pick around Leigh-on-Sea. The Councillors felt they deserved proper recognition for their hard work to make Leigh a better place. They are incredibly proud to have two young people from Leigh who care so much for their local environment.

### John Cannon

John is an all-weather street cleaner; residents have noted his polite and friendly nature and a tirelessly diligent worker who keeps the Broadway free of litter.

### Kim Wilkins & Viv Porthouse

The Council wanted to recognise the hard work and dedication that these two ladies have put in over the years to fundraise and organise events at St. Clements Church.

### Russell Hallmark

Not only is Russell a key member of the Friends of Leigh Library Gardens Group, but he is also a dedicated volunteer for the Town Council's Over 60's Social Club and Community Transport Scheme.

### Sacha Edwards

Sacha from the Southend YMCA runs the Town Council Youth Club, and tirelessly works to create positive activities for children and teenagers in the Town.

### Barbara Armitage

Barbara has worked tirelessly for the community since she moved to the Southend area in the 1950's. Barbara worked nearly her entire life in government service as a social worker for Southend and Essex County Councils. She was on many local committees until the end of last year when her ill health, at the age of 90, led her to step down. She was instrumental in the opening of the Pier Museum and has kept a keen and active involvement to this day. She has run the Belfairs Residents' Association as the chair since 1973. She has been an active member of Southend Older People's Assembly and The Southend Area Bus User Group and for many years has helped with the Welfare for the Blind campaigns.





# Friends of Leigh Library Gardens

Friends of Leigh Library Gardens (FOLLG) had a great deal to report at their first AGM recently. Over the last year, FOLLG has recruited 20 regular volunteers and, in 2020 alone, has devoted more than 600 hours of physical work in the Gardens, planting, weeding, clearing, litter picking and watering.

The Friends have repainted the playground equipment and had new litter bins installed. The Broadway West/St Clement's entrance has been enhanced with new planting, bushes trimmed back and the retaining wall being rebuilt. Since the December 2019 public consultation, the Friends have worked on projects identified as priorities and 70% are now underway or have been completed, including enhancing all the flower beds, seasonal planting, and creating a small orchard in the Lower Gardens. FOLLG volunteer Nigel Morris has also done a really wonderful job in restoring the gates to the Gardens by the library to their former glory.

FOLLG was recognised by Leigh-on-Sea Town Council with a Good for Leigh Award. The Friends work closely with the Town Council and with Southend Parks Department to ensure the best outcome for the Gardens and the residents of, and visitors to Leigh-on-Sea.

FOLLG is actively collaborating with local business and initiatives such as LOS Incredible Edible too.

The Friends are currently fundraising for a path in the Upper Gardens along the existing mud desire line. The People's Path will greatly enhance the Gardens and make access easier for all. The total raised has now exceeded £2000. Details of how to donate can be found on the FOLLG Facebook or Instagram pages.

The use of the Gardens during lockdown has proved how well loved and necessary they are for the wellbeing of the town. The lockdown temporarily impacted the work in the Gardens but since then FOLLG has committed in excess of 500 hours to maintain and improve them.

**Email [follg2018@gmail.com](mailto:follg2018@gmail.com) to get involved.**

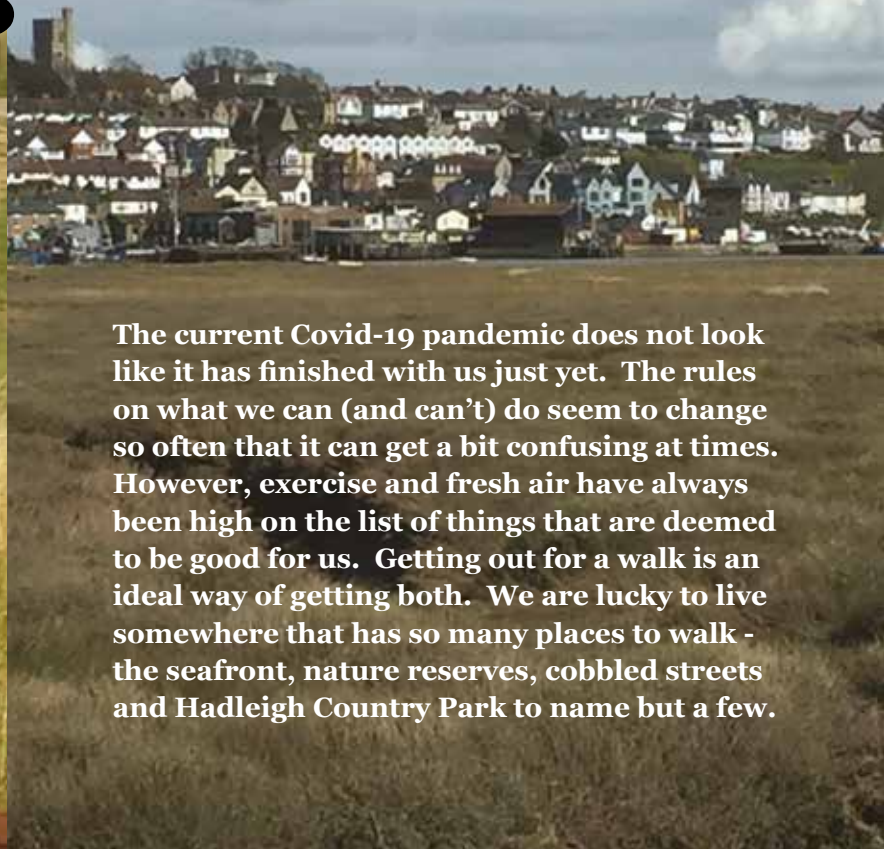






## **We need your input!**

Leigh-on-Sea Town Council is planning to produce a guide on walking routes in and around the town that everybody can enjoy. We want it to be useful and informative to as many people as possible.



The current Covid-19 pandemic does not look like it has finished with us just yet. The rules on what we can (and can't) do seem to change so often that it can get a bit confusing at times. However, exercise and fresh air have always been high on the list of things that are deemed to be good for us. Getting out for a walk is an ideal way of getting both. We are lucky to live somewhere that has so many places to walk - the seafront, nature reserves, cobbled streets and Hadleigh Country Park to name but a few.



**For example, what walks would you recommend that:**

- **Are manageable when pushing a buggy?**
- **Provide a physical challenge for our more athletic residents?**
- **Are accessible to wheelchair users and the less mobile?**
- **Young children would enjoy?**
- **Would appeal to teens?**
- **Would provide inspiration for artists?**
- **Bring you close to nature?**
- **Take you to places of local historical significance?**
- **Have great views?**

**And of course, any other walks you think our residents and visitors would enjoy.**

**Please get in contact if you have a favourite walk that you would like to share or if you have ideas on what would be useful to include in the guide and what format it could take.**

## Coronavirus Emergency Community Fund

In the midst of the coronavirus pandemic, Leigh-on-Sea Town Council spent a lot of time working on practical solutions on ways they could support the community during these uncertain times.

Back in May our Coronavirus Emergency Community Fund was launched. £10,000 has been set aside for the fund from an existing volunteer programme but Council will consider further funding in due course if necessary.

External not-for-profits groups/organisations, along with charities, are welcome to apply for grants from £250 up to £1000, to directly help support residents in Leigh. Additional applications can also be made again where proof of expenditure is provided.

Applications cannot be considered from political parties, commercial organisations or for projects that benefit individuals, private businesses, projects that fall outside the Town Council remit, or those that improve private land or property.

Full details of the application criteria and how to apply can be found on our website at [www.leighon-seatowncouncil.gov.uk/emergency-community-fund](http://www.leighon-seatowncouncil.gov.uk/emergency-community-fund)

The Art Ministry recently applied for one of our emergency grants and has used the funding to provide many socially isolated people with cotton bags containing arts and crafts items. The charitable group came up with this new method of reaching out to people, in lieu of their normal arts and crafts sessions and craft stations at local events.

Allan Webb, Art Ministry trustee, says "The grant will also allow us to make some of our sessions when we return after COVID free to participants, including a kids' session at Leigh Community Centre and sessions for Leigh Age Concern and Leigh Over 60's Social Club."

**For more updates follow them at [www.facebook.com/theartministry](https://www.facebook.com/theartministry)**



## Grant Award Scheme Recipients

At our latest round of applications for our Grant Award Scheme we were pleased to present bursaries for room hire to the Southend Area Bus User Group, The Royal British Legion and South East & Central Essex Mind charities for fundraisers and meetings throughout the year. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic and the subsequent closure of the Leigh Community Centre, these events have not been able to go ahead as scheduled.

We spoke to Keeley Hood from Mind about the plans they have for their event which will be taking place at the Centre when

safe to do so.

"Our planned event, 'Time for the Mind', focused on improving the wellbeing of the local community through encouraging participants to learn different skills and try new activities which could help them to better manage their own mental health. We were hoping to hold a range of seminars and workshops that would help people to connect with each other as well as themselves. Our event would aim to boost the confidence and self-esteem of attendees, as well as supporting their mental health. Being physically active is important for both physical

and mental health, so we hoped to involve sessions with an emphasis on exercise and wellness, such as a yoga or meditation classes. Alternatively, attendees could get involved in something more creative. Our programme of workshops was set to include an exploration into mindful eating and the relationship between food and mood, as well as crafting activities like macrame or calligraphy. We are looking forward to holding our event when it is safe to do so and, in the meantime, we continue to make sure that anyone in the community with a



mental health problem has somewhere to turn for advice and support."

South East and Central Essex Mind is a local independent mental health charity, providing mental health services across the South East and Central Essex area. We are affiliated with national Mind, but as a separate charity are responsible for raising money to fund our services. For more information about us and our work, **please visit our website [www.seandcessexmind.org.uk](http://www.seandcessexmind.org.uk)**



The recent Annual Council Meeting saw the formation of the new Council committees for the year and elected their members to represent the Council on outside bodies and organisations. The new committees with Chairman can be found below:

\*Council Chairman & Vice-Chairman are ex-officio members of all Committees and Sub-Committees.

#### FINANCE & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

To develop, monitor and review Council policies and functions and review the Council's accounts and finances.

Cllr Mark Bromfield, Chairman

Cllr Jill Healey, Vice-Chairman

Cllr David Bowry

Cllr Doug Cracknell

Cllr Keith Evans

Cllr Anita Forde

Cllr Paul Gilson\*

Cllr Carole Mulroney

Cllr Andy Wilkins\*

#### STAFFING COMMITTEE

To consider and deal with all matters affecting staffing issues except where the overall staffing budget will be exceeded.

In such cases the Committee will make a recommendation to the Finance & Governance Committee.

Cllr Mark Bromfield, Chairman

Cllr Keith Evans, Vice-Chairman

Cllr David Bowry

Cllr Paul Gilson\*

Cllr Jill Healey

Cllr Mike Wells

Cllr Andy Wilkins\*

#### COMMUNITY & CULTURE COMMITTEE

To consider and develop all leisure, foreshore and environmental matters relating to the Council's 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 Andy Wilkins\*, Vice-Chairman

Cllr David Bowry

Cllr Paul Gilson\*

Cllr Alan Hart

Cllr Damian O'Boyle

Cllr Emma Smith

Cllr Mike Wells

#### PLANNING, LICENSING & HIGHWAYS COMMITTEE

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 Doug Cracknell, Chairman

Cllr Paul Gilson\*, Vice-Chairman

Cllr David Bowry

Cllr Vinice Cowell

Cllr Anita Forde

Cllr Alan Hart

Cllr Damian O'Boyle

Cllr Andy Wilkins\*

#### By Cllr Doug Cracknell

"So, Chair of Planning, Highways and Licensing – who's up for that role?" was the question at the Annual Town Council Meeting. Not sure how I became the answer but I did!

An early note to self to ensure I looked into all the planning, highways and licensing rules and regulations was promptly met with meeting planners for a Licensing Hearing and a Licensing Appeal within the next 2 weeks – baptism of fire!

As we all find new ways to carry on our lives with the ongoing challenges of COVID-19, it is clear that many people are having to consider alternative ways to keep their businesses running and an increase in local licensing applications appears to be inevitable.

As the newly appointed Chair of the relevant committee on Leigh-on-Sea Town Council, my role is to ensure that Southend Borough Council (which is the ultimate decision-making authority in these matters) is made aware of, and considers, the concerns of local residents.

Notifications of planning and licensing applications are available to view on Southend Borough Council's website but how many Leigh-on-Sea residents are aware? I will be looking into ways of how we can notify you of the applications that may affect you and your families so that, together, we can make your concerns known.

[www.leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk](http://www.leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk)

#### STAFF DETAILS

Helen Symmons  
*Town Clerk & Responsible  
Financial Officer*

Abbie Cotterell  
*Assistant Town Clerk*

Emma Stratton  
*Assistant Responsible  
Financial Officer*

Emily French  
*Events and Projects Officer*

Francesca Smith  
*Marketing and Profile Officer*

Sophie Partridge  
*Administrative Assistant*

Linda Mitchell  
*Administrative Receptionist*

Ingmar Lindberg-Jones  
*Apprentice Administrative  
Receptionist*

Richard Flint  
*Senior Caretaker*

*Caretakers:*  
Graham Lock, Mark Doolan  
and David Skeels

#### COUNCILLOR DETAILS

**BONCHURCH WARD**  
Cllr Jill Healey

**ELMS WARD**  
Cllr Doug Cracknell  
Cllr Mike Wells  
VACANCY

**HERSCHELL WARD**  
Cllr Dr. David Bowry  
Cllr Damian O'Boyle

**HIGHLANDS WARD**  
Cllr Mark Bromfield  
Cllr Vinice Cowell  
Cllr Emma Smith

**LEIGH ROAD WARD**  
Cllr Anita Forde  
Cllr Paul Gilson

**ST CLEMENTS WARD**  
Cllr Carole Mulroney  
VACANCY

**ST JAMES WARD**  
Cllr Alan Hart

**THAMES WARD**  
Cllr Keith Evans  
Cllr Andrew Wilkins

Could you be Leigh Community Centre's next

# ARTIST IN RESIDENCE?

We are looking for local artists who can contribute to the creative life of the Leigh Community.

- THE RESIDENCY IS DUE TO START IN APRIL 2021 FOR ONE CALENDAR YEAR.

**Any type of artist will be considered whether you work with textiles, glass, photography, ceramics or paint and we also welcome joint applications and applications from groups. The extended deadline is Saturday 14<sup>th</sup> November.**

- THE CHOSEN ARTIST WILL HAVE USE OF OUR ATTIC STUDIO SPACE, GET TO CONTRIBUTE TO AND PLAN CENTRE EXHIBITIONS AND EVENTS, AND CAN CREATE A LEGACY PIECE THAT WILL BE ON PUBLIC DISPLAY.
- FULL DETAILS AND CRITERIA CAN BE FOUND ON OUR WEBSITE [LEIGHONSEATOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE](http://LEIGHONSEATOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK/ARTIST-IN-RESIDENCE)
- TO APPLY EMAIL [COUNCIL@LEIGHONSEATOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK](mailto:COUNCIL@LEIGHONSEATOWNCOUNCIL.GOV.UK)



Further information, including the Artist in Residence brief and application form can be found on our website at [www.leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk/artist-in-residence](http://www.leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk/artist-in-residence)