



Leigh on Sea Town Council News

issue 02



Arts & Culture | Clubs & Societies | Schools
Churches | Council Facilities & Outside Spaces
Council Budget 2015-16

Welcome to our second issue, and thank you for all the positive comments we received following our first one.

I'm still finding so much going on in Leigh on Sea and discovering incredible people who inspire others to get involved. We feature a couple of activities that might just help work off those extra pounds that are too easily put on at this time of year. Or if you prefer the sedentary lifestyle you could pick up a bongo and let music be your inspiration. For the historian there is such a lot happening in Leigh to identify things we might take for granted but would be sorry to lose.

I'm hopeful there is something of interest for all age groups especially junior school pupils who might be wondering what life might be like when they start secondary school.

All the Leigh Town Councillors and Staff wish you all the very best of seasons greetings and hope you make the most of your time and Leigh until our next issue.

Jane Ward,
Editor.



01702 716 288

lccnews@leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk
www.leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk

Front cover: Huge thanks to Lynn Tait for kindly sharing pictures from her extensive photo archive of Leigh.

Calendar

(LCC = Leigh Community Centre)

December

- 1 Community Facilities Meeting
- 5 Small Business Saturday
- 12 Carols on Strand Wharf 6pm-7pm
- 12 Betty Blue Eyes Fair at LCC
- 15 Planning & Licensing Meeting
- 16 Environment & Leisure Meeting
- 18, 19 & 20 Snow White's Got Talent Panto
- 19 Farmers Market 8.30am – 11.30am

January

- 5 Policy & Resources Meeting
- 6 & 26 Planning & Licensing Meetings
- 16 Health & Wellbeing Fair at LCC
- 19 Full Council Meeting

February

- 2 Community Facilities Meeting
- 6 Textile Exhibition at LCC
- 9 & 23 Planning & Licensing Meetings
- 16 Environment & Leisure Meeting
- 19 Farmers Market 9am – 12noon
- 15 – 19 Half Term Events at LCC

March

- 1 Policy & Resources Meeting
- 8 & 22 Planning & Licensing Meetings
- 12 Essex Vintage Wedding Fair at LCC
- 15 Full Council Meeting
- 18 Farmers Market 9am-12noon
- 19 Children's Easter Event at LCC 11am
- 29 – 8 April Easter Holiday Events at LCC

April

- 5 Community Facilities Meeting
- 12 & 26 Planning & Licensing Meetings
- 15 Farmers Market 9am – 12noon
- 19 Environment & Leisure Meeting

May

- 3 Policy & Resources Meeting
- 10 & 24 Planning & Licensing Meetings
- 17 Full Council Meeting
- 20 Farmers Market 9am – 12noon
- 30 St. Clements Church Fair at Library Gardens
- 31 – 3 June Half Term Events at LCC

June

- 17 Farmers Market 9am – 12noon
- 23 – 24 – 25 – 26 Folk Festival

All Council meetings commence at 7:30pm and are open to the public.



Where has 2015 gone! As I write this, I am in the thick of Leigh Lights event planning. Leigh's festive lights celebration, was originally an event organised by traders which set a trend for Rayleigh and others to follow suit. All of us here in Leigh ought to be proud that it was our town that lit the way.

Have you spotted yet that Leigh Town Council have introduced some festive lighting on the London Road?

Generally around 5,000 people now attend Leigh Lights which is on from 5pm to 8pm so you can imagine the team necessary to ensure everyone has a great time in a safe environment. A huge thank you to everyone who supported this event in whatever way they could - hopefully a great night was enjoyed by all and the weather was kind!

Talking of weather, what a glorious summer's day we had for the Leigh Maritime Festival held on 2nd August. The sun shone on the wonderful crowds that came to enjoy the splendour of the Old Town and its heritage. A wealth of features and entertainment were on offer for all to enjoy from the holiday Italian Food Market, Scott & Stapleton Maritime Marquee and our very own 'End of Pier' style show, complete with deck chair seating. Highlights of the event included the Lower Thames Rowing Club's annual Pier Race with entrances from all over the south of England, London Wreck exhibition complete with the dive crew talking about their fascinating work on this historic site and Party with Sid, the special muppet style puppet show at the Kids Zone on Strand Wharf. All day long the wharves were filled with visitors. The Blessing of the Catch was particularly moving by Father Clive of St Clements Church, with our fisherman Luke selling his catch straight from the boat – you couldn't get fresher fish!



The atmosphere was marvellous and lots of charities benefited from the event including the Fishermen's Mission and RNLI.

Coming up imminently, all are invited to Carols on Strand Wharf in Leigh Old Town on Saturday 12th December. This event runs from 6pm to 7pm and is always a memorable, enjoyable and friendly occasion in this wonderful setting overlooking the estuary. Look out for details of the lantern making session before the event for children.

Next up in the Leigh Town Council Christmas season is our community pantomime produced by Principal Girl Productions. This year it is 'Snow White's Got Talent', once again specially written by Samantha Lierens. We are so fortunate to have such wonderful talent in the town who volunteer their time and efforts to put on Leigh's very own Christmas production. Jo Farrugia and her team have been working hard to make this year's show a knock-out event. Matinee and evening performances run from Friday 18th through to Sunday 20th December. Last year's pantomime Cinderelleigh raised over £2000 for charity and this year's production will again be for charity.

Finally, planning is already underway for events in 2016, starting with our annual Easter Event which will be on Saturday 19th March in Leigh Community Centre. Once again we will be opening the doors of the community centre to offer a family fun event to celebrate the Easter holiday.

If you would like to stay up to date with Leigh Town Council event news, do follow us on Facebook – Leigh Town Council Events or twitter - @LeighTCEvents

Helen Symmons

Events Officer and Assistant Town Clerk

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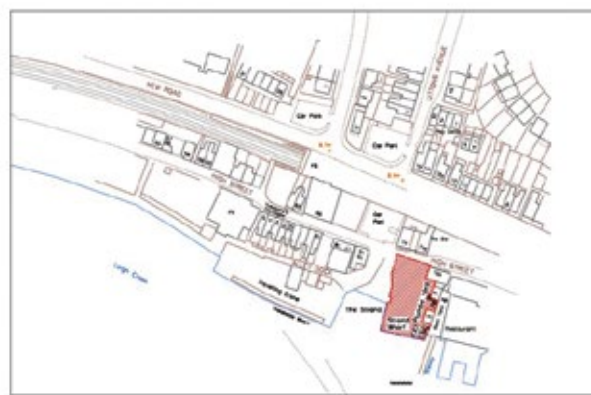
Events | Clubs | Art | Culture

	Volunteering at Leigh Library	15
	Leigh Camera Club	16-17
	The Leigh Literary and Arts Fair	18
	Leigh Art Trail - Group Exhibition	19
	Leigh Sailing Club	20
	Royal British Legion	21
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	Leigh Ramblers	25
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Chairman's Update: Strand Wharf REFURBISHMENT



It is not often that the Chairman of the Town Council gets the opportunity to make an announcement as exciting as the refurbishment of Strand Wharf in Old Leigh.

Strand Wharf has, for many years, had a neglected appearance and is little used, except for specific events. At one time it was threatened by a proposal to sell it for commercial development. As a public area it appears semi derelict and the changes of level where some of the buildings stood make it unsuitable for many uses. For many years the Town Council has been planning and saving to improve and refurbish the wharf and work will now begin at the end of the year to create an attractive and usable public space which reflects the heritage of the area.

The thousands of visitors who flock to the area for its scenery and ambience see a very pretty historic village but may not realise how much bigger and more important it was in the past. Large ships could tie up to its

wharves before the estuary silted up and it became too shallow. Hundreds of fishing boats, merchant vessels and barges would be moored off its shores.

There were many more houses. On Strand Wharf there stood a row of wooden cottages that have now long gone although the two Plumbs Cottages still remain and provide part of the attractive setting.

Fishing, boat repairs and, of course, leisure and tourism are the driving force of the economy here; it is still a working village with many inhabitants who live and work by the water.

The Wharf will be levelled and paved in natural stone which will show the outline of the buildings which once stood on this site as though we were seeing the original foundations peeping through the new paving and reminding us of just how different life was here in previous centuries.

Seating will be handcrafted using natural wood, brick and stone, and signage and an open air classroom area will inform about the past and how this Wharf still forms a focal part of a working village.

Low level, unobtrusive, soft lighting will give an impression of moonlight, leaving the night sky to continue as an attraction in its own right.

The surface will be smooth and easy to walk on as well as easy for buggy and wheel chair use and the open-air classroom will provide a safe area for children and schools. Planters will hold natural wild grasses from the area, which can be touched and smelled. Benches with backs will be provided for comfort as well as unbacked benches for easy viewing of events and the scenery.

The new wharf will be an attractive public space which can be enjoyed by all and a safe and effective space for Leigh Town Council events such as our Carols on Strand Wharf and Leigh Maritime Festival. It will also be available for community events. There will be educational opportunities for both organised school trips and the casual visitor and it will provide a link between the other cultural and heritage groups using this area such as the Heritage Centre and the proposed Maritime Museum.

Planning affects us all

One of the very important jobs that Leigh Town Council does on behalf of its residents is to consider all the planning applications which are made within its area. It's not an easy task as there are many of them (250+ to date this year) and they are sometimes complicated and confusing.

The Town Councillors who sit on the Planning, Highways and Licensing* Committee are all lay people, so what do we bring to the party? Well, hopefully, commonsense and more importantly a local knowledge that the planning officers at Southend could not be expected to have in detail.

The Town Council's Planning committee meets twice each month because of the deadlines which are set for responses, and our meetings are open to the public who are allowed to put forward their views which the Committee will consider when it comes to a decision.

But for you the resident who may have an objection to a scheme, or indeed support a scheme, that shouldn't be the end of the process. You must put your views across to the Borough Council as well within the deadline they set because they make the final decision. You can do this in writing or online.

Many applications are decided by the planning officers at the Borough under delegated powers. Those which are of a major nature usually go to the South End Development Control Committee made up of Borough Councillors.

Borough Councils have the ability to request that an application is considered by committee - this is called 'calling it in' and you can ask your local Borough Councillor to do so, but your comments must be based on planning grounds for them to carry weight.

Like the Town Council, the Borough Committee meetings are open to the public but you can't just turn up and speak, there is a procedure to follow which is on the Borough Council's website.



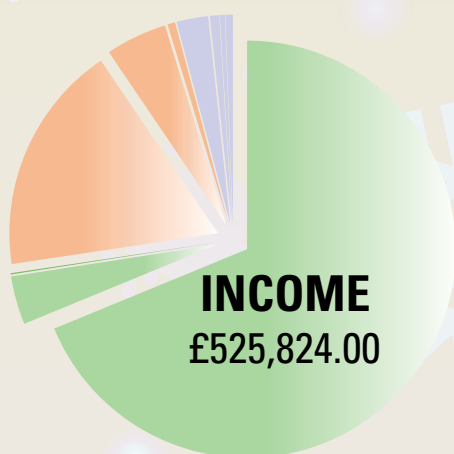
We all know that despite all of this scrutiny applications sometimes end up at an appeal. This is where permission has been refused by the Borough and the applicant has appealed to the Secretary of State. Objectors will have the opportunity to either state their views to a government inspector in writing or at a hearing or inquiry and he or she makes the final decision. So we may not have the final decision, but the Borough do take the Town Council's comments into account and there is ample opportunity for local people to put their views forward and they should do so. Planning shapes the nature of our town and we cannot do that without taking part. Win or lose, it's our right.

*The Committee also considers any proposals for traffic orders and licensing applications - the final decisions on these are also taken by the Borough Council.

Permitted Development and Lawful Use/Development

Two areas you may come across are 'permitted development' and 'lawful use or development'.

There are certain types of development which may not need planning permission if they fit in with the guidelines, this is called 'permitted development'. Lawful use or development is where the Borough considers whether, in law, what has been done or is wanted to be done is lawful. The best advice on each of these issues is to speak to the Borough Planners. The same advice applies in respect of development in conservation areas and listed buildings. These are specialist areas and different rules apply.



Precept	68.8%
Council Tax Support Grant	3.8%
Bank Interest	0.1%
LCC Hire Income	17.9%
LTC Premises Contribution	4.8%
Other Income	0.6%
Allotments Income	2.4%
Community Transport Income	0.7%
Farmers' Market Income	0.4%
Leigh Lights Income	0.6%



Planning Expenditure	4%
Planning & Licensing Staff Costs	96%



Policy & Resources	41%
Office and Administration	25%
Policy & Resources Staff Costs	34%



Community Centre	32%
Community Centre Staff Costs	60%
Highways	4%
Skate Park inc Staff Costs	4%



Allotments inc Staff Costs	19%
Community Transport inc Staff Cost	9%
Farmers' Market	2%
Leigh Lights	31%
Strand Wharf	2%
Other Events	23%
Environment & Leisure Staff Costs	14%

Leigh on Sea Town Council
BUDGET 2015-16

Leigh's Heritage is Important to all of us

The Annual Town Meeting is always a time when the difficult question pop up from the audience and this year's was no exception. The cry was "What are we doing to look after our heritage assets?"

This mainly stemmed from a concern about the ever present march of development encroaching on our already overloaded amenities and facilities. People were concerned that some of our less obvious heritage assets and town identity could be lost if we didn't do something about it.

The answer from the Town Council was "Yes you are right, we do need to look to protect, and save if we can, those things that make up Leigh's rich past - and future."

We have to be realistic - we cannot save everything and we cannot stop legitimate development, but what we can do is to photograph, record, research and document the heritage of the town in whatever shape or form it may be. We have listed buildings and conservation areas and they are protected by law - what we are talking about is things that may not be worthy of that protection of themselves but to Leigh are very important - like our last red telephone box in the Old Town or the drinking fountain at the top of Leigh Hill.

We could also assist the Borough Council in their work of looking after heritage and local listing of buildings which whilst not protected by law do have a local status that is recognised.

The Town Council decided it had to try and do something about it. In July we held a public meeting to gauge peoples' interest in getting involved and offering their skills in the various aspects which needed to come together to turn this into a project for the whole community.

All sorts of ideas came out of the discussion and a small group volunteered to work with the Town Council and other organisations to progress these forward with the aim of making a record for future generations of what makes Leigh tick in heritage terms.

We hope this will feed into developers so they are aware of how much Leigh cares about its heritage environment and we also hope to get local schools and youth involved as well as our senior citizens who are our greatest resource for remembering the town and the assets and their place in our history.

If you or a group you belong to are interested in taking part in this project or would like to nominate an 'asset' (with as much information about it as possible and a photo) please email cllrcarole.mulroney@leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk





So what's happening with SEEORG next year?

Our 2016 programme starts on Monday 18 January with Steve Oakley and Faye Owen, the founders of The Friends of Shopland Churchyard.

SE Essex Seed Potato Day quickly follows on Saturday 27 February, in partnership with Trust Links, when approximately 40 varieties of seed potato (some organic) will be sold individually, plus some onion sets, between 10am and 2pm, with free admission. Come along and see for yourself!

And the rest of our programme? All flagged up, of course!

Monday 21 March: Henry Webber (Mistletoe Trees)

Monday 16 May: Dr. Keith Tyrell (Director Pesticide Action Network UK)

Monday 18 July: James Campbell, Chief Executive Garden Organic, to whom we are affiliated

Monday 19 September: Ben Lambert, a permaculturist working at Crapes Fruit Farm, Aldham

Monday 21 November: Either English Saffron or Home Composting

All these events take place at Growing Together Westcliff. When planning your visit, please use the entrance in Prittlewell Chase, Westcliff-on-Sea SS0 9AG, which is on the corner of Fairfax Drive and Prittlewell Chase.

To join SEEORG, or for any other enquiries, please contact the Secretary, Carole Shorney: caroleshorney@hotmail.com

You can find details of all these events on our website: www.seeog.org.uk/about

STOP PRESS NEWS!

We're collaborating with Southend RSPB on an "Allotment Breeding Birds Survey 2016", as part of quantifying the environmental benefit of allotments. But we need your help! If we manage a local one, the results will be presented in a future issue of Leigh Town Council News. We need to identify at least one sympathetic allotment site willing to assist us and wonder whether any allotmenters/keen ornithologists in Leigh would be interested? If so, please do get in touch!

Manchester Drive Allotment Society

Grow your own has never been more popular on the Manchester Drive Allotments. Over the past year the site's 276 plots have been almost fully let to people who love the wonderful taste of fresh home-grown fruit and veg. Just a handful of plots are still available. So if you'd like to taste the difference with your own freshly picked sweet and juicy tomatoes, sweetcorn, strawberries, apricots and a host of other produce, why not try taking on one of the few remaining plots for next year. Come and visit the site on a Saturday or Sunday morning before Christmas to see what plots might still be available. Of course an allotment will need time and determination to work on it but by next summer you'll see and taste that it's been well worth the effort.

And you'll be part of the allotments community. The Allotments Open Day in early September inspired some of the crowds of people visiting the site to take on an allotment for themselves. With a live band, stalls, cafe & bar-b-q, children's games and craft demonstrations, it was just one of the activities the Allotments Society run through the year to encourage us all to grow our own. The Allotments Society's shop, cafe and clubhouse are central to the allotments community and through the year it organises social events and fund raising for its charity, MacMillan Nursing.

So – really tasty fruit and veg for you and a good community atmosphere. What could be better than an allotment at Manchester Drive!





Leigh Allotments Orchard

David Hammond

In the first issue of 'Leigh on Sea Council News' I described how the orchard was set up in 2003 by a group of allotment plot holders, with the active support of Leigh Town Council.



In spite of enthusiastic support from the group members with money to buy trees and/or help with site clearance and tree planting it was not all plain sailing; security of the allotment sites was not good at that time and it was not long before some of our trees suffered damage at the hands of youngsters out for a bit of fun. Branches were damaged, trees and support stakes were broken and in one instance a tree and its stake completely disappeared. Few crops in the early years survived to maturity. To improve diversity a pond was landscaped soon after establishing the first trees and this was trashed within weeks, so we eventually compromised on a sunken, second hand bath in which vast numbers of tadpoles have subsequently started life.

Thankfully, with completion of restoration work on the perimeter fence the above problems have largely disappeared, but the topography and geology of the site bring their own problems. In a normal summer the orchard is often extremely dry and extra watering has to be arranged for any newly-planted trees. In an average wet winter, however, it seems that a number of springs are generated at the top of the allotment site and these result in the orchard becoming waterlogged and in late winter it is not unusual for many of the trees, if not all of them, to have their roots under water for weeks at a time, luckily so far with no lasting detrimental effects.

In spite of difficulties, the orchard is thriving and this year several trees have had bumper crops and it is still probably the only orchard that can boast a complete set of currently available Essex –bred apples and pears. Group members gather on site several times a year to carry out maintenance tasks, the most important occasion being in October when the grass has its annual cut using scythes and sickles. Potential new members of the Group are always welcome and can make contact through Leigh Town Council.

It seems the orchard is becoming known well beyond the boundaries of Leigh: following the article in the first Leigh News, we were contacted by Messing and Inworth Parish Council who are to start their own orchard and three of their councillors visited in September as part of their fact-finding process. Also, the charity organisation East of England Apples and Orchards Project which helps maintain the indigenous fruit varieties of seven East Anglian counties including Essex gave our orchard a mention in their latest newsletter.





As of the 2nd July the Community Centre became the home of the new café franchise “Lorna & Lottie’s” and is run by local Events Organiser, Neil Harding. Neil has named the café after his two daughters and is very keen on making the café a real asset for users of the Centre.

Neil has implemented a variety of services at the café including a loyalty card, catering for parties & weddings, providing teas & coffees for regular hirers, weekly specials and a late opening on a Thursday evening.

The new menu has many breakfast items and a variety of sandwiches, paninis, and jacket potatoes. All produce is fresh, bought locally and meals are made to order. The catering packages are great value for money and offer buffets, canapé and fine dining selections.

Bursary Funding Available For Groups at Leigh Community Centre

Leigh Community Centre is home for many groups in Leigh on Sea and the surrounding areas from baby groups to fitness classes, who hire the rooms on a regular basis. Whilst the rooms in the centre are very affordable, Leigh Town Council, who run the centre, recognise that there are some groups who offer valuable sessions for the community but have little to no funding available for room hire.

The Council have been running a bursary scheme at the centre for the last few years for charitable and not for profit groups that require assistance. The scheme runs bi-annually with applications being accepted in September and March.

The bursary scheme was put in place to support groups that require the centre on a regular basis and these applicants will be considered primarily. Bursaries may be for the

full amount or part amount dependent on the groups circumstances. Any applications that are specifically for one-off charity or fund raising events will still be considered, dependent on what funding is left after supporting regular hirers.

The Council invites all groups who fit this criteria to apply for a bursary, as well as encouraging applications from newly formed groups who are uncertain about their funding. All applications will be considered by the Council, and applicants should receive an outcome within 14 days after the Council Meeting.

Application forms are available at Leigh Community Centre reception, or can be emailed directly on request by contacting 01702 716288.

Children's Events at the Community Centre

For the first time this year the Community Centre started to organise their own variety of children's events over the Summer Holidays. From puppet shows to Viking training with Lion King dancing thrown in! The events were a great success and this has spurred the staff at the centre on to ensure a full programme of events is available over all of the school holidays.

Community Centre Administrator Francesca, who began working at the centre in July, says “The Community Centre is such a great facility for the local people, yet unfortunately before I started the space wasn't being utilised over the school holidays, I have tried to change that with different events for children of all ages”

Our Spooky Half Term Halloween Week was also chock full of events, with fun face painting and fancy dress competitions running all week. The centre hosted a soft play and inflatable day, spooky storytelling, a “Thriller” dance workshop and even a special Halloween themed Crime Scene Investigation Workshop for children. Lots of fun was had by all who attended and a similar programme of daily events is now being organised for February half term and the Easter Break.

Although the Centre closes over the Christmas week, there are still a variety of Yuletide events taking place. On November 27th – The Night of the Lights – the Centre hosted their Pre-Parade Fun with Arts & Crafts and entertainment for little ones. This year's pantomime “Snow White's Got Talent” is also running from 18th – 20th December following on from last year's super successful “Cinderelleigh”

Remember to regularly check our Facebook / LeighCommunityCentre and Twitter @LeighCommunityCentre for updates on what's going on at the centre.



Tips for Weddings on a Budget

With the average cost of a UK wedding sky rocketing to almost £21,000 in 2014 it's no surprise that couples are doing whatever they can to cut down the costs for their perfect day. Leigh Community Centre offers affordable wedding packages with catering options and a perfect blank canvas to create whatever kind of wedding you desire. The centre doesn't alter their wedding rates per season either, making it especially affordable over the summer months. We've come up with some more handy tips to help you plan a budget wedding!

Guest List

One of the easiest ways to cut down on wedding costs is to limit your guest list. You might feel obliged to invite all those cousins you've only spoken to twice in your life just because they're related, but that doesn't mean you have to. Another tip is to not offer plus ones for your friend's partners especially if you don't know them very well or they've not been together too long. Politely explain to friends that you're trying to keep your numbers down. A good friend should understand! Alternatively split your day into three parts, ceremony, wedding breakfast and evening, a good way to incorporate people into the ceremony who you're not fussed about having at your reception, and save on your evening catering costs by sending grandparents or families with young kids away who are more likely to want to leave early anyway.



Catering

To stop your food bill spiralling out of control, consider having a ceremony at dusk so you only need to feed guests once, or serve your own buffet or afternoon tea instead of a costly three-course dinner. If a sit down meal is a major priority try choosing cost effective entrées.

Something Borrowed

Don't be afraid to ask friends or family if you can borrow some of their accessories for your day. Likelihood is that they will enjoy seeing a friend use them on such a special day.

Talented Friends

Everyone loves a good wedding and a lot of people are happy to help out anyway they can, waive a traditional wedding gift and ask talented friends to help out on the day.

Entertainment

Another chance to rope in talented friends to perform a musical set or contact local music colleges for skilled students. Leigh Community Centre has a grand piano on site - just waiting for someone to play it!

Don't be afraid to haggle

It's always worth an ask to see if you can get a better price. Smaller businesses are more likely to give discounts, but try and offer them something in return such as displaying their flyers at the wedding or putting out posts on social media.



Flowers & Decorations

Opt for flowers in season to slash prices on floristry bills. Utilise trimmings from lavender plants or wild flowers to make miniature decorations or get crafty and try making flowers from paper or fabric. Pinterest is a great site for ideas on affordable D.I.Y's.

Pantomime for 2015 - Snow White's Got Talent



Leigh-on-Sea
Charity Panto 2015

SNOW WHITE'S GOT TALENT

Director: Jo Melville
Writer: Samantha Lierens

18th-20th December
4pm and 7.30pm

All tickets £7
Family Ticket (2 children 2 adults) £25

Tickets available from the Leigh Community Centre and Online at
www.ticketsource.co.uk/snowwhitesgottalent

PRINCIPAL GIRL
Productions

SaferPlaces
Domestic Abuse Support Services

facebook.com/SnowWhitesGotTalent

Leigh Community Centre 71-73 Elm Road, Leigh on Sea, Telephone: 01702 477248

Following on from the success of last year's panto, Principal Girl and Leigh Town Council are delighted to be bringing another pantomime to the Community Centre this Christmas.

Snow White's Got Talent is based around a fictional talent show in Leigh on Sea where the Wicked Queen banishes Snow White and the Bell Wharves to Belfairs Woods because they ruined her audition and her chance at stardom. The Queen will have revenge! A light-hearted take on the

classic fairy tale, Snow White's Got Talent is a show that is affordable and entertaining for the whole family. There will be plenty of fun, laughter and Christmas cheer.

Tickets to the show are available now. This year all proceeds will go to the wonderful charity Safer Places, a refuge for victims of domestic abuse.

For more information please visit our Facebook page
www.facebook.com/SnowWhitesGotTalent



Toddler fun!

The Buttercup Club Messy Play Toddler Group have been entertaining little people for almost 13 years. Based in Leigh on Sea Community Centre and run by Sharon Woodrow, a local lady who set up Buttercup Club with a friend when her 2 daughters were themselves toddlers.

Over the years we have met some lovely families through running Buttercup Club and have seen lots of people come together with their children and make true friendships which are still going strong.

The group was originally set up as we understood there was a need for mums, dads, grandparents and nannies to get out of the house, meet other people, let their children mix and to have some fun whilst engaging in some activities you wouldn't necessarily do at home (unless you were about to redecorate!)

The sessions are great bonding time for carer and child, encouraging them to get stuck in playing and learning with a whole host of messy play activities from water, sand, food, compost play, painting, play dough. We rotate activities on a weekly basis to keep everyone interested and to bring lots of variety.

Messy play is an important part of learning, from measuring water in the jugs and pouring things out to starting to learn how to count items. All the textures and smells add to the fun!

We offer refreshments and then end our sessions with a sing song, starting off with parachute fun and bubbles and ending up with Hokey Cokey!

We offer a free trial session for our classes and also host birthday parties in the Community Centre.

Our website is www.buttercupclub.com and we can be found on Facebook and Twitter. Call Sharon on 01702 559179 for more information or bookings

Leigh Town Council Community Transport Group

Are you interested in outings or going to the theatre? Leigh on Sea Town Council runs trips for the over 60's, but remember to qualify you must live within the Leigh Town Council boundary. If you're not sure whether you do, please call in and check with us.

To give you an idea of what we do, recently we spent a great day at Tropical Wings, have taken a barge trip on the Chelmer from Paper Mill Lock and had a ride out to Tiptree Jam for afternoon tea as well as going to see local musicals, plays and other concerts. Coming up soon is a get together in the Community Centre for tea and a chat, with music and a short talk.

Membership of our Community Transport Group is free. All you need do is collect a form from the Community Centre, complete it and return it to Vivien at the Town Council.

Every couple of months she will send you a letter telling you what's coming up over the following few weeks and you can decide whether or not to come along. Simply complete the booking form and return it to her with your payment.

You are picked up from your front door, or communal entrance, taken to the event by minibus and returned back to your door. All you pay is the ticket cost, refreshment costs if included, and a contribution towards travel costs. All administrative costs of the scheme are met by the Town Council and we use volunteer drivers and helpers.

So don't sit at home, come and join the group and make new friends.



Visit to Tiptree.



Visit to Belfairs Woodland Centre 2014 and guided walk through the woods.

Volunteering...

Good for you and Good for Leigh

I'm sure you have heard all about the benefits of volunteering, which include meeting new people, improving confidence, being part of a team, involvement in the community and helping others but did you know it can also help you live longer?

According to a 2008 study by the Department of Voluntary Sector studies at the University of Lampeter:

“Volunteering can increase volunteers' longevity, improve their mental health, keep them fitter, and enable them to cope better with illness when it occurs.”

So if volunteering can do all that, what are you waiting for?

Leigh on Sea Town Council has recently started an initiative to encourage Leigh residents to volunteer for the benefit of Leigh. The programme is designed to complement the Council's strategic aim which is to promote the well-being and quality of life of the community of Leigh on Sea and as you've just read we believe that volunteering for the programme will be good for you as well as for Leigh in general.

To begin with, there are various things that we would really appreciate your help with, for example, delivering our next newsletter, helping out at local events or helping to keep common ground such as that on the edges of the allotments site attractive.

However we are also really interested in what the residents of Leigh would like to see done in their own environment. If you've got a great idea about something that needs doing that would improve the quality of life in Leigh and we think volunteers could help with it, we'd love to hear from you.

If you have any thoughts about how we can work with volunteers to make things better in Leigh on Sea, or you'd like to register your interest in becoming a Leigh Volunteer yourself please get in touch by emailing volunteer@leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk or phoning 01702 716288.

We're looking forward to hearing from you.



Volunteering at Leigh Library:

We have a number of opportunities for people to become Volunteer Library Assistants at Leigh Library. We are looking for enthusiastic, committed volunteers who can help us to keep Libraries welcoming, friendly places for many years to come.



Volunteers are supported through training at Leigh Library and the Forum Southend before they start their first session as a Volunteer Library Assistant.

Once in the role, volunteers are supported by the Library Officers, the Volunteer Support Officer, the Volunteer Support Apprentice, the Branch Network Manager and

Assistant Branch Network Managers. We are all here to help the Library volunteers settle in to their role and enjoy themselves while they are with us.

If you are interested in volunteering in libraries, please contact the Volunteer Support Officer on libraryvolunteers@southend.gov.uk or 01702 534668



Set up a Reading Group!

The best way to read is to share it afterwards! If you want to start up a book group, contact Debbie Williams 01702 534123 or email debbiewilliams@southend.gov.uk

- Free service
- Collect the books from your local library
- No fines to pay!

We can even supply a book list with suggestions of popular titles. Get together and discuss your next read now!



A Record-Breaking Event Came to Leigh Library!

This year's Summer Reading Challenge was all about Record Breakers and children across Southend have been achieving certificates, prizes and medals for their reading.

Continuing the record breaking theme Stuart Burrell, a local Record Breaker, holding an amazing 10 Guinness World Records Titles enthralled both the children and adults at Leigh Library on 6th August with his escapology and strongman feats. The children tied him up with rope and in a blink of an eye he'd escaped! Handcuffs were no problem either; some eyebrows were definitely raised when he managed to bend an iron bar and for a finale, a frying pan!

Stuart explained that both the desire and know-how to do such things came from reading books and children were inspired to find out more. Families said it was a brilliant and innovative angle to get children to read and everyone was really engaged and enthralled. One parent said, "My children are learning such a lot, without even realising it!"



Recommended Read

The Birthing House by Christopher Ransom

A chilling ghost story that is also a tale of exquisite psychological suspense. A story of possession, sexual obsession, and, ultimately, murder, as a centuries-old crime is re-enacted in the present. Borrow your copy from the horror section, if you dare!

Leigh Camera Club



'Foggy Winter Morning in Leigh' by Gerry Gallott

Leigh Camera Club was formed in the 1920's at a time when photography was in its infancy. In the 1970's the Club had a waiting list for members and even entering the 1980's the membership was around 100+. Through the 20th century and into the 21st, the Club has changed to meet photographic trends and fashions and has needed to keep pace with technology.

Since the mid 1980's the Club has encouraged a mixed membership of men and women and changed membership and club rules to allow the maximum possible participation from younger members. When digital photography started we were quick to encourage the adoption of this medium and put on events for our members.

Social and photographic trends have changed. In the 70's and 80's "glamour" and nude photography was a common theme for camera clubs and societies. Whilst there are

no subjects that are "out of bounds" these subjects are less dominant now and the most popular subjects are typically landscapes, portraiture and natural history.

Because of our open membership we have been successful in achieving two Lottery grants and have full digital projection facilities, a website and Facebook page.

We meet every Thursday evening at Leigh Community Centre between September and May. We break during the Summer to go on holiday and limit costs. Our Thursday evening programme is normally either a presentation by a visiting photographer or a competition evening. We have many successful and inspirational photographers who we ask to visit the Club. We have had Charlie Waite a couple of times! Competitions are an unusual concept, especially those coming from an academic background in photography, however they are a great way of getting your pictures seen and hearing comments and feedback from a trained judge. Monthly or regular competitions also provide a reason to produce work in higher quantities and get out there and take pictures.

If you join the Club you can expect to be

welcomed and we will listen to what you want to get out of it. Normally after a period of learning the basics new members find they quickly get into the swing of producing more pictures of a much higher quality and start to really enjoy the hobby.

Much to people's surprise we rarely bring our cameras to the club evenings. If anyone joins and needs some basic tuition on how to use the camera, we will put on a special event. Most of what the Club does is about the image. We do often have practical demonstrations and technical presentations in the programme. A common subject is how to use Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom where we will recruit a professional instructor to visit the Club.

Our club does compete with others locally and our members also submit photo's on an individual basis to magazines and online publications. Over the years our members have achieved photographic distinctions from the Royal Photographic Society. One of our newer members was published by Vogue Italy in September 15. We have seen a few members learn their craft at the Club then give up their jobs to turn professional.



'Preparing to Leave' by Phil Stepney



'Misty Estuary' by Richard Swinscoe

You can visit the Club a few times and pay £3 a visit. After that period we normally ask that you join full time at a cost of £75 for the year. That cost covers the cost of the hall, insurance etc. and is similar to other organisations such as cubs/brownies who face similar charges. Some people find that the club is very complimentary to academic courses from local colleges.

We have a partnership starting up with a Club in Holland and we will be swapping images and probably doing a trip out there. We have social/curry evenings planned and as the Winter starts we will probably do a few local field trips. The future is going to be about digital....more online interaction with members. One thing that doesn't change though is that some of the most passionate local amateurs at some time have spent time at the Club and that it has provided them with a life-long hobby that they can enjoy.

The Leigh Literary and Arts Fair

The Leigh Literary and Arts Fair at the Leigh Community Centre on Saturday September 19 was very well attended, and there was a huge variety of books and artworks for people to see, and buy. Talks and workshops were free, and the venue was welcoming and comfortable – with the cafe staying open for us. Thanks to everyone who came along.

Dee Gordon



Visitors in the hall.



Me, Dee Gordon and my stand.



Councillor Bernard Arscott with Audrey Snee of Estuary Publishing, Sir David Amess and storyteller Colin Taylor.

Drum Circles

If the voice was the first musical instrument, the DRUM was the second. Drum Circles are one antidote to modern technology.

You need a minimum sense of rhythm. Often you can borrow a drum when joining a group of drummers; they always have fun. JamBeats, (found on Facebook) organise drum meetings for all the family, often at the Iron-Age Round House replica at Hadleigh Country Park. Twenty or thirty drummers sit around a large log fire in the Round House experiencing the therapeutic benefits of group drumming.

People report feeling connected to some deeply rooted element, particularly when drumming involves meditation and dance. It is worth trying at least once.

Contact www.jambeats.co.uk or email glicence@btinternet.com





Leigh Art Trail Artists Group Exhibition

Amy Mountney, Leigh Art Trail Press and Marketing Director



This winter, the Leigh Art Trail has collaborated with the Beecroft Gallery, and Southend Museums, to bring you a dynamic showcase of art work paying homage to the Thames Estuary.

The artists all live and create their work within a few miles of the gallery, highlighting the innovative and energetic artistic talent to be found here. Much of the inspiration comes from the artists' and makers' close relationship between Leigh's fishing history and the urban landscape within which it now finds itself; the gallery being an ideal 1960's regenerated industrial setting.

Kevin Marsh, Beecroft Curator is highly supportive of showcasing local talent: 'The Beecroft is delighted to exhibit the Leigh Art Trail Artists Exhibition. The work displayed demonstrates the diversity of work shown during this wonderful annual fixture and gives the exhibitors a gallery environment in which to showcase their talent.'

All artists involved are working in a professional capacity to raise the profile of the arts locally, and the trail is proud of the creative community that continues to thrive locally. Bronwyn Oldham, a Leigh Art Trail Director, and Photographer, is proud of what the trail has achieved thus far: "The Thames estuary has always been a hub of industry, growth and creativity, and it is no different today. The Leigh Art Trail is delighted to be invited to preview the 2016 trail collection in Southend we hope this will bring Leigh and Southend's artistic community closer, and encourage new visitors to the trail next summer."

The exhibition is free for everyone to enjoy until 2nd January 2016, with all work for sale. Budding collectors can purchase a piece of local creativity at an affordable price, ranging from jewellery to ceramics, painting and photography – perfect for Christmas.

For further details please visit www.leigharttrail.com or www.southendmuseums.co.uk



Leigh on Sea Sailing Club

Mark Emmerson



We have had high levels of activity on the water this summer with competitive dinghy and cruiser events. The club has welcomed a number of new members who are now actively involved in club activities. A highlight of our sailing season was the weekend of 18-19 July when the club hosted open events for two dinghy classes. The GP14, a two man boat that has a long history in the club and the Solo class, a single handed dinghy of traditional design which is currently very popular at the club. These events were a real spectacle on the foreshore and we were proud to be able to host them, I have included the reports from each day to give you a taste of the event.

Saturday 18th July 2015 - GP14 Open Meeting

The sun was shining at Leigh on Sea to welcome the six visitors for this round of the London & SE Travellers Series and racing for the Cockleshell Trophy. As usual at Leigh on Sea there was a short wait for the tide to cover the mud while enjoying a bacon roll and coffee. Once the tide had arrived to float the committee and support boats the fleet launched from the beach managing to miss the families enjoying the summer sunshine.

The wind was generally from the South West but with some large swings which allowed for much place changing throughout the fleet as some managed to take advantage of big lifts while others suffered by being on the wrong side.

In race one Richard Lord with Norman Brown playing with the spinnaker and genoa managed to be in front when the race officer shortened the race to 2 rounds. Race 2 was started very quickly and again there was much place changing up the first beat, Richard Ham and Steve Browne rounded the windward mark first with the sole local boat of Steve Corbet and Liz Noblet in second. However in one of the afternoon's windy spells Steve and Liz struggled to set their spinnaker and slipped down the placings. Richard Ham and Steve Browne moved ahead to win over the three rounds. For the third race the tide had turned and the wind dropped making the beat rather slower than for the other races. Steve Cooper and Helen Allen made the best of the lighter conditions to take the winning hoot after two rounds of close racing and much place changing.

After three races each with a different winner two boats tied on 3 points each, following the RYA discards rules and who beat who in the last race sorted out the final placings for the first three boats, with Richard Ham and Steve Browne retaining the Cockleshell Trophy for the second year in succession.

Sunday 19th July 2015 - SOLO Open Meeting

25 boats entered the Solo Open meeting at Leigh on Sea on Sunday 19th July. The local fleet of 17 boats mainly older sub 4000 fun racers were joined by 8

newer regular open meeting travellers looking for some exciting sea sailing. As is the norm at Leigh it was necessary to wait for the tide to cover the mud, the wait was helped by a good supply of tea, coffee and bacon rolls from the club's galley. As the tide covered the mud there was a flurry of activity and soon the fleet was afloat gathering round the committee boat while the course was being set.

The wind was a fresh 12 to 22 knots throughout the afternoon with the direction varying from South West to just North of West. The variations in direction gave some opportunities for place changing up the beats as it was important to play the shifts.

The start of the first race saw a very keen fleet bunching on the line, only one boat was recalled but Ron Lawrie suffered with a hole in the side which ended his day. The wind against tide conditions kicked up some large waves in the Ray channel which gave some excellent planning conditions on the reaches. Some of the helms found the conditions a little too demanding and the support boats were kept busy helping those helms swimming around their boats. At the end of the two rounds Ron Lawrie took the winning hoot with Steve Ede scoring the first of his three second places.

A rapid adjustment to the course was necessary for race two. The conditions allowed for this race to run for three rounds again with a number of boats having a turn in the lead. The best of the local, sub 4000 boats, sailed by John Charles scored a very creditable 4th place while the winner was Vince Horey. As the tide had turned the race team set a very much shorter course aligned to the new wind direction for the third sprint race. After the two round sprint Jarvis Simpson took the first place.

When the results were computed we had the three leading boats all with 3 points, using the well established procedures for breaking the tie, gave the overall first place to Vince Horey with the Mighty Oak Solo Trophy. John Charles was the best of the sub 4000 feet in 5th place overall. All enjoyed a barbecue tea and cakes on the club balcony in the afternoon sunshine before the drive home.



Coast Community

Leigh on Sea Town Council is collaborating with the Cultural Engine and other local organisations to produce an economic plan for the area as part of the Government's Coastal Community Teams (CCT) initiative. 116 CCTs are in the process of becoming established across England, with three in Southend Borough (the others being Shoeburyness and Central Southend). The purpose of CCTs is to encourage a greater level of partnership working, support the development of local solutions to economic issues and encourage the sustainable use of heritage and cultural assets. It is also intended that a network of CCTs across England can work together and with Government to tackle issues facing coastal communities. Leigh has many assets including the historic Old Town which is major draw for visitors with the pubs, cockle sheds and fishing boats, as well as a diverse business base across the wider area. There will be a focus on identifying projects that support the cultural vibrancy of the area, looking in particular at how a sustainable fishing sector is important to other sectors including retail and hospitality.

The new team has representation from a number of organisations including the Town Council, Southend Council, Leigh Port Partnership, Leigh Society, Leigh Maritime Museum, local fishermen and businesses. The Cultural Engine will produce a simple economic plan by the end of January 2016, working alongside the team and other local representatives.

This is a great opportunity to clearly set out short and longer-term priorities for Leigh and strategy for taking them forward, focusing particularly on the coastal economy, presenting a clear case for future investment by Government, regional and European funding as well as other sources while encouraging private investment.

If you have a business in Leigh, run a local organisation or charity, or are a resident and interested in finding out more, then email giles@culturalengine.org.uk or cllrcarole.mulroney@leighonseatowncouncil.gov.uk and keep looking at the Town Council website for updates.



Royal British Legion

The British Legion was founded in 1921 to help needy ex-service men and their families in difficult times following the end of WW1, and the 1st Poppy Appeal (Then known as the Earl Haig Fund) was held the same year, raising a total of £106,000.

The Leigh Branch was formed in 1937, when local men objected to paying 6d bus fare to go to the Southend Branch. Sadly Southend Branch is no more, but Leigh continues to 'Fly the Flag', thanks to a succession of stalwart supporters down the years.

The Legion was granted its Royal status on its 50th Anniversary in 1971, when H.M. the Queen became Patron.

The Poppy Appeal runs from the end of October each year to the following September, and continues to raise record amounts, most of which is collected during 'Poppy Fortnight' in November. Last year the total raised in Leigh and Eastwood passed £25,000. The National total reached £49m, an incredible amount. The money raised is used on welfare of our Forces, especially ex-service personnel and their dependants, and towards the upkeep of the four Retirement and convalescent homes. It is not generally known that the Legion contributes to the running costs of Headley Court in Surrey, where badly injured Service are treated and rehabilitated.

Leigh Branch meetings are held on the 3rd Thursday of each month (not January) at the Moose Hall, Cranleigh Drive Leigh, at 8.00pm. Membership is open to all over 16, and new members (or visitors) are most welcome.



The Legion Standard being paraded by our affiliated Army Cadets at last year's Remembrance Service and Parade at St Clement's Church.



Our Branch Meeting to celebrate VE Day, (Leigh Times)

Trees

by Jennifer Simpson (volunteer archivist at Leigh Heritage Centre)

At the Heritage Assets Workshop in July participants were asked to help the council research, record and if we can protect our heritage. I asked if trees could be considered for inclusion in a list of things in Leigh worth conserving and giving special attention as part of Leigh's heritage. The answer from Cllr Carole Mulroney was yes so here is some information about some trees in Leigh.



The last of Lapwater

Lapwater Hall stood on the London Road near the turning down to Hadleigh Road. When it was sold by auction in 1927 it was described as an historic Georgian residence having old world gardens, tennis lawn and orchard the whole comprising an area of about one and a quarter acres.

There was probably an older house on the site, but no reference to one has been found. The house was rebuilt in 1751 and the story goes that the name comes from the fact that the owner refused to do the customary thing and give the builders beer to drink when the house was finished. He was so angry with them for asking, he told them they were "dogs" and if they wanted a drink they should go and lap water instead. These Leigh men got their own back by always referring to the house as Lapwater Hall. The new owner, Gilbert or Gabriel Craddock was also reputed to lead a double life as a highwayman, who drowned in a nearby pond and later was believed to haunt the house. The house became known as Leigh House in Victorian times, but then reverted again to Lapwater Hall when a later owner of The Blacke House (see next story) wanted to have a more pleasant name and changed the name Blacke House to Leigh House. This sort of thing makes life hard for local historians as the manor house in Leigh was called Leigh Hall. So we have a Leigh House in two different places and a Leigh Hall.

The house was demolished in 1947 and the site was used as an allotment for some years before a block of flats was built.

There are two very large oak trees on a little lane leading to garages just beside St Michaels School on Hadleigh Road and this would definitely have been within the land of the Hall. The lane is shown on some maps as leading to the Hall, although

the main entrance would have been on London Road.

When we recently measured the girth of these trees one had a 17 foot circumference and the other 16 feet. Using information on the website of the Woodland Trust to calculate their age we estimated that they were between 250 and 300 years old. So could have been planted as boundary trees in 1751.

The Blacke House and the Cedar Trees

John Loten, was the Collector of HM Customs in Leigh for 33 years. He lived at "Blacke House" later called Leigh House which stood to the north east of the churchyard across the entry to what is now Broadway West. It was a very old house, standing in about 4 acres of land and when Loten bought it in 1792 he added more rooms and extended the cellars. When work was being carried out a human skeleton was found under the cellar steps and this was thought to have been of a servant girl who had been murdered and was said to haunt the house.

In 1800 John Loten purchased a piece of ground, facing Chess Lane, from John Going, who was his relative and friend and also a member of the Customs and Quarantine Service. It is believed this is when the two huge cedar trees in what is now Library Gardens were planted to mark the boundary of the large gardens surrounding his house. He also planted ivy which covered the house and he is said to have planted some of the same ivy which at one time covered the church.

One of the cedars was blown down in the great storm of 1987 and a slice of trunk is in the Heritage Centre, showing all the rings, proving its long life. There is still one enormous tree left in between the buildings at the eastern edge of Library Gardens.

The Loten family continued at Blacke House until the 1850s. The son of John the Customs Officer (who died in 1815) was Captain John Loten and he married Mary Going in 1811. Their children were Mary Ann Loten born in 1812, John Going Loten born in 1814 and Heber Going Loten born in 1824. It is interesting that these two families originated from Holland. Going comes from Van Gowen. Mary Ann was the last of the Lotens to live in Leigh as both John and Heber emigrated to Australia.

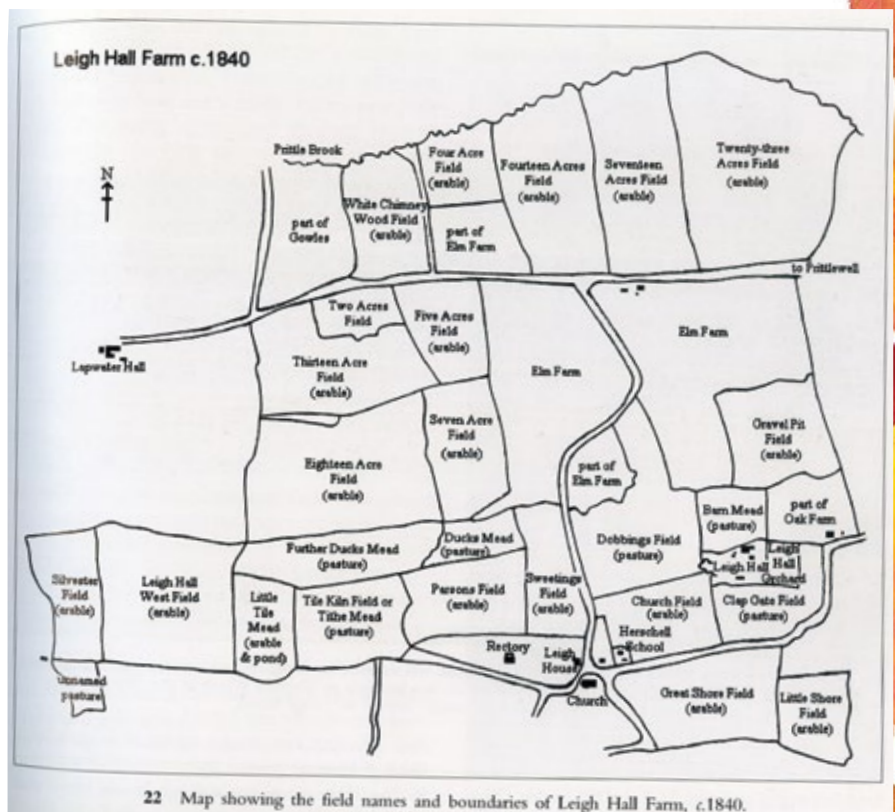
The Mulberry Trees

On Belton Way there is an old Mulberry tree and every August those in the know feed off the wonderfully tasty berries, their tell-tale stained fingers give them away. Previously this land was an orchard and when the new bridge was built as part of the new road to the west scheme and this part of Belton Way laid out the tree narrowly escaped the bulldozers. Happily the road to the west never happened and there was a large public outcry led in part by protesters. Some of whom eventually formed the Leigh Society and opened the Heritage Centre in the 1970s in the midst of what remained of the Old Town.

Although we now know that it was the Romans who introduced the Mulberry to Britain, King James 1st gave instructions to landowners in the early 1600s to plant the trees at the rate of six shillings per thousand. His idea was to breed the silk worms which lived on Mulberry trees and produced the cocoons that silk comes from, thus making silk that was produced here rather than having to be imported from France. However his plan misfired because he got the wrong sort of Mulberry trees – black instead of white. It is not suggested that our tree is as old as the ones the King had planted and it would be interesting to know when it was planted. A lady called Annie Read remembers another Mulberry tree being in The Gardens on Leigh Hill in the Edwardian era.



3. Map of Leigh in 1845.



22 Map showing the field names and boundaries of Leigh Hall Farm, c.1840.



Members taking part in the Southend 10k last year

If Carlsberg did running clubs...

Leigh on Sea Striders was founded in 2002 by Mark Dobson and Jason Pye. They wanted to establish a friendly, informal club that welcomed and served all abilities of runner from the very beginner to the elite athlete. As well as being very successful, the club prides itself on being a sociable and fun group to belong to.

Recent successes include both the men's and ladies teams finishing as champions in the Mid Essex Cross Country league. This was also the sixth year running that the ladies won. The club also has great individual athletes and were incredibly proud of club member Elisabet Barnes this year when she not only took part in but won the Marathon des Sables, a 156 mile five-day race across the Sahara Desert, known as "the toughest footrace on earth".

In 2009 the club hosted the inaugural Leigh on Sea 10k, which had 350 entrants. This event has grown in popularity and this year 600 participants are expected. This race has received numerous plaudits and was named the 2013 Essex Road Race of the year.

The club is committed to raising money for its chosen charities and has so far raised over £100,000 for both local and national causes through numerous annual events and the 10k race. The next event planned is a 102 mile trek of the South Downs Way in May 2016.

The club also has a thriving social side with events taking place throughout the year, which contributes to team ethic of the club.

The club now has almost 300 affiliated members, and even though membership has grown and success has been abundant, the club maintains its values and ethos of being the friendly welcoming club it was back in the very beginning.



Andrea Hughes, Paul Heard, Elliot Cone and Pete Karaiskos having some fun during the recent Essex Way Relay.

**For more details please go to
www.losstriders.org
 or follow them on Twitter @LoSS_running.**

Contact Details:

Jo-Anne Hall T: 07968 093798

Jo-hall@hotmail.co.uk

Leigh Ramblers Football Club

Mark Holmes, Leigh Ramblers Secretary, Ecfa youth Representative

Leigh Ramblers seniors were established in 1902 and the youth section in 1985 so we have been around a long time providing football in and around the community.

The club have gone from strength to strength, and have now over 50 teams playing football, which is over 500 players girls, boys, and adults. Our ages range from u7 to over 35.

We have 4 girls teams playing locally at Belfair's recreation ground, and have many more girls just training, this is arranged by Howard Mackler who oversees the girls.

The Mini soccer teams currently 19 training at Eastwoodbury Lane Centre, 3G pitch Saturday mornings. A fantastic venue where we can train all year round in most weather conditions.

We also have training for u6 years at PlayFootball venue at Chase School, Saturday mornings at 10am, aiming to move these players into the new teams each season.

We also have started an extra training group on Tuesdays 5pm to help those who might need that bit extra.

Junior teams currently 20 train in various locations due to the amount of teams but generally at Belfair's rec, a wide standard of playing abilities. We try to find a team for everyone who comes to us, but it's not always possible, we do fill teams up quickly.

Leigh Ramblers have two current under 15 teams who play in the Southend and District Junior Sunday league, one team is in the premier division and the other plays in division c. Both teams started at u7 level with us and many of those players are still with us.

Our senior sides include 2 teams playing in the Olympian League, 1 team in the Mid Essex League and two vets teams (over 35) playing at Belfair's Saturday afternoons 2pm generally.

Our club has been awarded the Community club of the year in Essex this year the second time we have won this award, great news for us,

meaning we do everything that is expected of us and more in the community. This would include that every manager has done a FA level 1 course, DBS check along with Emergency aid and child welfare course.

As always parents become the managers and take on this responsibility, a big commitment but rewarding, we are always looking for new ideas and people to join us, keeping us at the forefront of youth football in Essex

New players or parents interested in getting involved can email the secretary Mark Holmes
holmes_mark@sky.com

We have a Facebook page leigh ramblers also a twitter feed and two websites, www.leighramblers.co.uk for youth and www.leighramblersfc.co.uk for seniors



It's Christmas Day Every Day for Churches across Leigh on Sea

Christmas for our Churches is a busy time of year, with services, concerts, carol singing, community events, children's parties, youth events, afternoon teas and festive lunches. It is also a time of gift giving. However, what they do at Christmas, they do all year round.

Whereas gathering for weekly – all are welcome – church services each Sunday is important; the local Church is so much more than a Sunday supplement to the thousands of church-goers across Leigh on Sea who show the church is alive and well, serving the people of our community throughout the week too.

Helping The Homeless & Those In Food Poverty

Churches help with the collection and distribution of food through the Southend Foodbank which has a distribution point at West Leigh Baptist Church. Across our town there are those that are struggling to feed themselves and their families. Redundancy, illness, benefit delay, domestic violence, debt, family breakdown and paying for the additional costs of heating during winter are just some of the reasons why people go hungry. The Foodbank welcomes donations from people via local churches and through Tesco and Waitrose collection points. Vouchers are then issued to exchange for a foodbox containing a minimum of three days nutritionally balanced, non-perishable food.

For more details www.southend.foodbank.org.uk

www.facebook.com/groups/southchurchfoodbank



Churches Winter Night Shelters (in partnership with HARP and Southend Council)

In the late summer of 2011, Southend Council approached the churches in Southend to see if any church buildings could be made available to accommodate some of Southend's rough sleepers. Over the 2011/12 winter, three churches were able to provide a shelter one night a week each and helped over 100 guests with an evening meal, a warm bed, and breakfast.

For the last three winters, seven churches have been able to cover one night a week each. They provided meals and shelter for 155 guests in 2012 - 13, 137 guests in 2013 - 14, and 125 guests in 2014 - 15. This winter, 23rd November to 18th March, will again be covered by volunteers in 7 churches that will be hosting a shelter one night a week each. HARP refer 20 guest each night to the shelters, and potential guests should go to HARP's Bradbury Centre (in York Road) before 2pm (Monday - Friday only).

Donations are always very welcome and will be used to buy food, personal necessities and clothes and to pay for the additional gas and electricity that



they will be using over the winter. Volunteers are also needed in all the churches to work evening, overnight, or breakfast shifts.

For more information, to make a donation or to volunteer, please contact John Simmons (Shelter Co-Ordinator) on john.simmons@lovesouthend.org or 07866 740065.

Serving The Homeless

Serving The Homeless, is an interdenominational charity run by a number of local churches. Money is targeted to help projects run locally by HARP and Southend YMCA to provide provision for young people who became homeless through no fault of their own in Leigh and Southend.

**Call Linda 01702 558217,
or Jo 01702 474062**

Suspended Meals and Coffees and Oasis The Coffee House

Oasis on the Leigh Road, Leigh on Sea run by Leigh Road Baptist is part of an ever-growing network of coffee shops and cafes that run a 'Suspended Coffee/M meal' scheme. This allows customers to buy a meal/coffee for someone experiencing food poverty in the Southend-on-Sea area. Vouchers and gifts are issued to a range of local charities, such as foodbanks and those who work with homeless and vulnerably housed people. These vouchers can be redeemed in Oasis. Oasis also donate to churches that provide meals for homeless people, as well as offering free meals at their discretion to people they meet that need them.

**Oasis Coffee House,
189 Leigh Road**

**[www.fb.com/
OasisTheCoffeeHouse](http://www.fb.com/OasisTheCoffeeHouse)**

Relieving The Pressure Of Those With Debt

King's Money Advice Centre (KMAC)

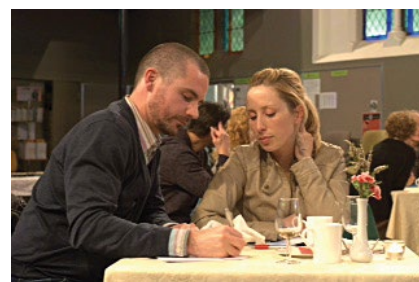
KMAC provide local debt advice and management and are regulated by FCA to give debt advice face to face. Gavin Dixon of KMAC and King's Church said; "KMAC is borne out of a care we have for those whose lives are being troubled by debt. We look to help those in financial difficulties by putting together debt management plans, which include a budget for the client to live on and repayment proposals to give to creditors – what's more its total free!"

**[www.kmacsouthend.wix.com/
kmacsouthend](http://www.kmacsouthend.wix.com/kmacsouthend)
01702 522197**

CAP Money Course

The CAP Money Course is free and will teach you budgeting skills and a simple, cash-based system that works. In just a few weeks, you will get to grips with your finances so you can budget, save and prevent debt.

Whether you feel pretty organised or it's like a lucky dip when you withdraw cash from your account, the CAP Money Course will help you take complete control of your finances.
www.capuk.org/



Supporting Married And Family Life

Marriage Courses

Many churches as well as being a much loved location to conduct Wedding Ceremonies are also very much involved with supporting and encouraging strong and healthy marriages and family life. An example of this is the Marriage Course to be held at Oasis The Coffee House in January. This seven session course is for couples who are engaged, recently married or have been married for some time. Set in a fantastic atmosphere you will be served with a candlelit meal, at a romantic table for two and then listen to practical talks that are informative and fun, and designed to spark conversation.

There is never any group work and you will never be asked to share anything about your relationship with anyone other than your partner.

For more info or to sign up to this or the next course visit www.lrbc.org.uk or call 01702 478698

Connect with your local church – A big welcome awaits you

To keep up to date of the work and activities of the Church in Leigh on Sea please like their facebook page www.fb.com/bigwelcome

follow them on twitter @abigwelcome or visit their website www.bigwelcome.org.uk

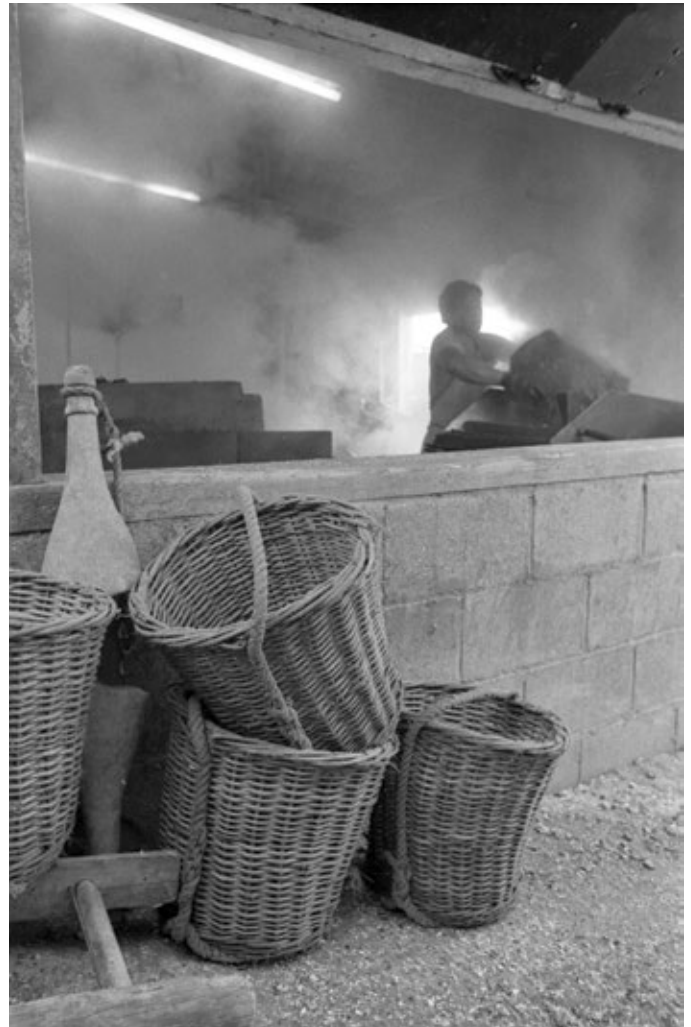
Belfairs Academy Artist in Residence



John Adams started as Artist in Residence at Belfairs Academy in September and is already making an impact.



Indian Summer (box assemblage)



Cockle baskets Leigh on Sea (photograph)

John has been teaching art and photography for over forty years – ten of those at Belfairs – and has seen some amazing developments in the teaching of the subject over the years. He tells us that when he started teaching it was at the time of raising the school leaving age to 16 so that says a lot!

Alongside his teaching and middle management experiences, he has also been a practising artist and photographer having exhibitions in a wide variety of places at home and abroad.

Being Artist in Residence

means that John has the opportunity to work on different projects with different groups of students across the school and to work on displays around the building alongside developing his own work. Artist in Residencies can take many forms and at Belfairs he is developing a programme which takes into account his own work as an artist and the work being done in the school.

John has exhibited his own work around the Academy as a starting point for discussion with the students, and to act as a springboard for their work.

He is working with selected groups during the day, and also runs a club which aims at allowing students to explore some of their own ideas.

Students have explored making photograms and witnessed how images used to be made with hand-made photographic paper in the same way that Fox Talbot made his images in 1834.

Belfairs is really excited about the potential of having an Artist in Residence, and have already planned many events for the future – first and foremost, exhibiting students work alongside John's work.

Starting School

It's surely one of those experiences that we probably remember for the rest of our lives. Our first day of secondary school. So when I had the opportunity this year to talk to two pupils who were about to move from primary to secondary this September I was keen to catch up with them and hear about their experience.



Congratulations must go to both the schools and the staff involved, especially for their warmth and understanding, clearly a lot of work now goes in to ensuring as positive transition as possible. And I'm particularly grateful to Missy Ward and Freddie Symmons for their tolerance of my questioning them at the end of a school day when they'd far rather be back home doing their homework...some things never change do they?!

Tips and Advice from two young people who know:

Days seem to pass much more quickly at secondary school

Don't be late or last in the queue for break or lunch because you can be sure your favourite food and drinks go fast

The same applies to getting your uniforms, get there early or you may have to wait for your size to be re-ordered.

It became evident very early on how positive this big change had been for them.

Meeting them a month later, I quickly learned how much preparatory work now goes into this, making it as smooth and stress-free a transition as possible. During the final 2 years of Primary school there is now considerable interaction between pupil and parent in visiting future schools as well as teachers visiting pupils in their primary schools, not to mention the invitations to joint events. All those fears of my own generation have all but been eradicated for this current generation. This is not to deny that the anxiety of making new friends or getting lost in a much larger school no longer feature but these links have radically reduced this.

It's reassuring to learn that parents and carers still capture that precious first day, new uniform photograph and that those long lists for the purchase of kits for sport, technology and stationery still contribute in these landmark steps of preparations for this journey.

How or who wakes you up, whether it be alarm clock or mum and who you've planned to go to school with on the first day have all been thought through in advance.

Making new friends becomes so much easier when teachers create situations where pupils have to mix with pupils they don't know in Drama, for example, and requesting them to share a quiz sheet with someone new too. Some may meet up with friends they've only known through online games.

I learned that both my interviewees found it easy to navigate their new school, and make new friends and how easy it is to join the activities and clubs on offer to them. They have thoroughly enjoyed their experience thus far despite the big changes they have had to accommodate.



West Leigh School



Visiting the Stone Age

Our Year 3 children have settled into the Juniors really well and have been enjoying their Stone Age topic. At the start of term we had a visit from Freshwater Theatre Company to experience the "Age of Early Man" first-hand. The timemaster Vickie took the children back in time through the three Stone Ages. The children learnt how man changed from hunting and gathering food to becoming farmers and building settlements. They also visited the Bronze Age and Ice Age. This helped to build excitement in the children for their new topic.

Colchester Castle

Our Year 4 children enjoyed a wonderful trip to Colchester Castle as part of their Romans topic. The castle is the largest Norman keep in Europe and is bursting with tales of the past. The trip was split across two days with two classes on each visit. During their time at the castle they explored the museum artefacts and loved getting dressed up as Roman soldiers and Celtic warriors. One of the highlights for the classes was visiting an ancient prison. The children journeyed 2000 years back in time, going deep into the Roman vaults under the castle to hear the story of the Roman invasion and Boudicca's revolt.

Our tour guide was fantastic and really helped bring the story to life, holding the children's attention through the storytelling. Shortly after, the children had to show how well they could work as a team when they were challenged to build a Celtic roundhouse and Roman villa. There was also the opportunity to handle artefacts and develop archaeological skills, interpreting evidence and communicating findings. As usual, West Leigh Junior School demonstrated excellent behaviour and the Year 4 teachers returned home feeling proud.

Team Challenge

This term we have introduced a new activity which ran on the last day of half term. All children across the year groups mixed together and worked in their houses on a poetry challenge. The aim of the morning was to encourage children to work with different children and different year groups. Working together, the groups wrote a poem about teamwork which was then presented to the rest of the group. The staff handed out points to the children who showed great teamwork and poetry skills. The children looked like they had great fun and it was a successful morning. We are busy planning another challenge day.



Sing Together



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Helping the environment of Leigh

Throughout the year the Town Council's Environment and Leisure Committee tries very hard to make sure it helps to make the environment of Leigh more pleasant for our residents and visitors.

In the last year we have taken the lead on dogs' mess (no pun intended). It is a blight on our streets and walking areas.

In September we teamed up with the Borough Council and Medi Vet to hold a 'Dog Awareness Day' on Two Tree Island where there is a particular problem. This was primarily to encourage people to use poo bags, but also to make them aware of the health dangers of letting dogs do it where they like.

We gained a lot of support from the dog walkers themselves who, quite rightly, don't want to be tarred with the same brush as those less caring about their environment and health.

If there is a problem of dogs' mess in your road we have posters at the community centre that you can put up on your gate/fence to highlight the issue (please note you must not erect these on street furniture such as lamp posts).

On general litter we have held a 'litter pick' in London Road Cemetery - a place that deserves to be kept clean and tidy.

As far as domestic waste is concerned we have had some problems with people putting out their bags in the wrong places at the wrong time and with the wrong contents. It would help the cleanliness of our streets if everyone made sure the bags did not contain food which attracts the foxes and cuts down the excessive number of black sacks which should not be used for pink sack waste.

It really doesn't make sense to use black bags all the time - the pink bags come free whereas YOU have to buy the black ones yourself and black bags go to landfill which costs money, money that comes out of our Council tax.

These are all issues which have an effect on our health and wellbeing so the Town Council will continue to pursue solutions we can all work with.

Carole Mulroney, Chairman,
Environment and Leisure Committee

BAG IT AND BIN IT

**Don't let Dog Mess
foul up Leigh.
The Dog may be relieved,
But WE'RE NOT!**



**Report dog fouling 01702 215006
or www.southend.gov.uk**