

## **District Councillors Report January 2019**

### **ADVICE SHARED ABOUT DEALING WITH DOORSTEP TRADERS**

Advice is being issued to residents about how to deal with doorstep traders safely, and to prevent them from potentially falling victim to a scam. Tendring District Council (TDC) is sharing the advice from Essex Trading Standards in a bid to raise awareness.

The top tips include making sure that the rear of your house is securely locked before answering the front door, answering the door with the chain on, and being confident on the doorstep – most problems can be avoided by firmly closing the door.

A genuine caller will be happy to go away and return at a more convenient time at an agreed appointment, and nor will they demand payment up front or bully or scare you into making a decision. If you do look to go ahead with any work then collect three written quotes and verify name and address details of contractors before picking one, and choose traders from the Buy With Confidence Trading Standards-approved list – which can be found online at [www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk](http://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk)

Any money to pay traders should be kept in a bank, not at home, and cold callers should not be employed on the spot. For advice or to report suspicious activity people can call the Citizens' Advice Consumer Helpline on 03454 040506.

Lynda McWilliams, Cabinet Member responsible for Community Safety at TDC, said it was important to share this message with friends, family and neighbours.

"While some cold callers may be genuine, it is important that you take steps to protect yourself from being scammed," Cllr McWilliams said. "These useful tips from Essex County Council's Trading Standards team are a great way to safeguard yourself.

"It's also important that you look out for more vulnerable family members, friends and neighbours and make sure they are aware of this advice."

### **ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINT TO BE INSTALLED IN HARWICH**

A rapid charging point for electric vehicles is being installed in Harwich. Tendring District Council (TDC) is setting up the point in one of its parking spaces on Harwich Quay. Funding for the charging point, which can be used by electric vehicles, comes from a Highways England scheme to install the infrastructure around the strategic road network.

The point will be installed in one of the disabled bays to ensure it is fully accessible to all drivers. The parking area will retain blue badge holder-only parking. Fred Nicholls, TDC Cabinet Member responsible for Parking, announced the new point during a Cabinet meeting on Friday, December 14<sup>th</sup> 2018. "This will be a useful asset for businesses and encourage those with electric cars into Harwich," Cllr Nicholls said. "That makes it a win-win, as not only will it draw people to the town but also help to make the air cleaner in Harwich.

"The charging point could also be used by local residents, allowing them to power up their electric car before heading out on a journey along the A120."

## **ESSEX COUNCIL LEADERS' LETTER HIGHLIGHTS CONCERNS OVER LONDON HOMELESS BEING PLACED IN COUNTY**

A letter signed by every Essex council leader highlighting concerns about families being re-housed from London into the county has been sent to senior politicians in the capital. Agreed by the Essex Leaders and Chief Executives Group, the letter raises 11 issues which have been highlighted by housing officers across the county.

Issues include a lack of communication between London authorities and Essex councils informing them of people being moved into the area, families being placed in inadequate housing, and the impact on local services. It also warns of cases where families have been moved far away from support networks such as friends, family and jobs, meaning their situation can actually worsen.

The Essex Leaders and Chief Executives Group includes all 12 district and borough councils, Essex County Council, Southend and Thurrock unitary authorities and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner. The letter, which has been sent to the Mayor of London and the leaders and directly elected mayors of each of the London Boroughs, also details some positive steps to resolve the concerns raised and also invites politicians on both sides of the county divide to work together to lobby government on related national issues.

Neil Stock OBE, Leader of Tendring District Council and chairman of the Essex Leaders and Chief Executives Group, said the actions of some of the London Boroughs had been despicable.

He said: "We understand why people want to come to Essex, which is a fantastic place in which to live, work and visit, and we don't want to stop people moving to the county. However, this needs to be in the right way and because people want to move here, not because they are being forced to or financially encouraged to by their London council as way of removing a problem. So far efforts by individual Essex councils to draw this to the attention of London Boroughs and the Mayor of London have largely been ignored, which is why as a group of leaders we have taken the decision to send this letter. We now hope that those in power in London sit up and take notice, and work constructively with us to resolve these issues."

## **MAYFLOWER 400 CELEBRATION PLANS REVEALED FOR HARWICH AS NATIONAL GROUP ANNOUNCES ARTS FUNDING**

A series of celebration events and a welcome centre are planned for Harwich as part of the Mayflower 400 commemorations in 2020. The Mayflower ship, from Harwich and captained by Harwich resident Christopher Jones, took the first settlers to America in 1620 in a voyage marked annually by Thanksgiving in the USA. A whole programme of events is being planned across 11 UK destinations, including Harwich, for 2020 to mark the 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Now TDC's Cabinet has been asked to approve a budget of £135,000 to support other Mayflower 400 projects in the area. These include £50,000 for a Welcome Centre to act as a hub for tourists visiting the area, £40,000 for a Heritage Trail to take visitors around the town and the key Mayflower sites, and £20,000 for a programme of events.

The Welcome Centre would be home to a whole raft of historical artefacts relating to Harwich and its links to the Mayflower story, and work is ongoing with partners including the Harwich Society and

the Guildhall Archivists on this strand of the project. Neil Stock, TDC Leader, said this is a significant moment in time to remember the key role that Harwich played in historical world events.

“This substantial investment in Harwich is about ensuring the town can capitalise on its heritage and history by welcoming visitors and tourists into the district to boost the local economy,” Cllr Stock said. It is hoped that external funding can also be sourced from partners and grant organisations to help support projects.

At a national Mayflower Compact event held in the Houses of Parliament on Wednesday, December 5th it was announced that the Art of the Possible cultural programme will benefit from £700,000 of Arts Council England National Lottery funding. The keynote speech was given by Michael Ellis MP, Minister for Arts, Heritage and Tourism.

The milestone in UK and US history is set to boost the UK economy and attract over 1.4 million visitors nationally during the Mayflower 400 commemoration year, yielding an anticipated economic impact in excess of £76million.

### **PLANNING INSPECTOR APPROVES COUNCILS’ APPROACH TO LOCAL PLAN WORK**

The Planning Inspector overseeing the examination of Braintree, Colchester and Tendring’s shared Local Plan has backed the suggested approach for taking the plans forward.

Following a public examination earlier this year, the Inspector approved the number of new homes required, but set out areas of work the three North Essex authorities (NEAs), supported by Essex County Council, needed to undertake to help make their plans to take forward the principles of Garden Communities in the areas sound.

After reviewing the Inspector’s feedback and various options of ways forward the authorities set out their approach to help taking the plans forward. This was primarily focused around the viability of infrastructure needed to support the proposed garden communities, and also undertaking a revised ‘sustainability appraisal’ looking at the impact of the proposals over other potential sites.

While in his response he was unable to express a view if the proposals would enable the plan to be found sound, he welcomed the council’s ‘constructive proposals for taking the examination forward’.

In his response, the Inspector said: “You say that the revised Sustainability Appraisal and the updated evidence base will enable the NEAs to decide whether they wish to pursue or amend the Plan strategy. This indicates that the NEAs are approaching the necessary further work on the Sustainability Appraisal and the evidence base with an appropriately open mind and without preconceptions as to the outcome.”

A spokesperson for the three North Essex councils said: “Throughout the Local Plan examination process we have had a constructive dialogue with the Planning Inspector to ensure due process is followed and we can move towards the adoption of a sound plan.

“The proposals are complex and look beyond the normal timescale for a Local Plan. It’s important that we allow time to ensure what comes back to the inspector is thorough and fully answers the issues he raised, but we welcome his support for the approach set out.

“Any Garden Community would be developed over several decades. They will only come to fruition when we have the commitments for the necessary social and physical infrastructure to ensure they are delivered in a way benefitting local people. This is what people and businesses rightly demand. We will now assess the evidence to see if it supports the viability of garden communities, and whether the best sites for development have been put forward.”

The latest letter from the Inspector is available on the Braintree District Council website, which is the host authority for the joint Local Plan work, here: <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/lpexamination>

### **SWIM SAFE SESSIONS TO BE EXTENDED IN TENDRING NEXT SUMMER**

An initiative teaching young people how to keep safe in the sea is being rolled out to three locations in Tendring next summer. Swim Safe, a practical outdoor water safety programme developed by Swim England and the RNLI, was successfully held in Dovercourt last summer teaching hundreds of children water awareness among the waves.

Now it has been confirmed the initiative will be held in Dovercourt, Walton and Clacton next summer, providing free sessions to around 2,000 youngsters aged between 7-14.

The extension has been secured by the newly formed Tendring Water Safety Forum, set up in the wake of the tragic death of 15-year-old Ben Quartermaine in the sea off Clacton in July 2018

Made up of a number of agencies, including Tendring District Council (TDC), the Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI), Maritime and Coastguard Agency, Essex Police, Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, the Royal Life Saving Society, Harwich Haven Authority and Brightlingsea Harbour Authority, the forum is in the process of putting together a range of initiatives to improve water safety for young people in Tendring.

A Swim Safe session lasts an hour. Young people spend time learning about the differences between swimming in a pool and in the sea, what the safety flags mean and how to get help if it is needed, before heading into the water to practise safety skills. There will be a programme of sessions for both schools and the public.

Mick Skeels, TDC Cabinet Member for Leisure and Tourism, revealed the news at the Cabinet meeting on Friday, December 14<sup>th</sup> 2018. “I am delighted that we will be able to extend this successful initiative and help to teach around 2,000 of our youngsters how to stay safe on our beautiful coastline,” Cllr Skeels said. “I am also pleased at how well the Water Safety Forum is working, bringing together a range of partners all with something to add to the topic, and I look forward to seeing what other initiatives come from it.”

Graeme Richardson, a member of the Tendring Water Safety Forum and Area Lifesaving Manager for the RNLI, added how important it was to give young people this information.

“The sea can be a very beautiful place, especially over the summer, but it is all too easy to forget just how dangerous it can also be,” Mr Richardson said. “There are a number of different things to think about when on the beach or swimming in the sea such as tide times and wave patterns, and these Swim Safe sessions are just one way in which we can remind our young people to stay safe and treat the sea with respect.”

The scheme in Dovercourt is being funded by the Harwich Haven Authority, while for Clacton and Walton funding has been applied for. Swim Safe sessions are held at a number of coastal and inland locations across the UK. More information, including how to register your child's place, will be available early in 2019 through the website at <https://swimsafe.org.uk>

### **TENDRING TO REMEMBER HOLOCAUST VICTIMS**

A ceremony will take place on Clacton seafront later this month paying tribute to victims of the Holocaust. As part of national events Tendring District Council (TDC) Chairman Mark Platt will join members of the Colchester and District Jewish Community at the Sunken Rose Garden on Marine Parade West. The ceremony will take place on Friday, January 25 at 11am and will mark Holocaust Memorial Day, commemorated every year since 2001.

In 2007 TDC planted a commemorative white rose bush at the seafront site and the following year a specially-commissioned plaque was set in the ground next to the bush.

The service will be led by Roy Fox, Chairman of the Colchester Synagogue. Residents are invited by Cllr Platt to join him at the ceremony for quiet reflection.

"This event gives us the opportunity to remember all those who lived through, and those who did not, the horrific events of the Holocaust," he said. "We usually have people from a number of religious groups come along to pay their respects, and we hope that will happen again this year."

TDC will have a poster display remembering the Holocaust in the foyer of Clacton Town Hall from Monday, January 21 for one week. The Government established Holocaust Memorial Day in 2000, with the first activities were held the following year. It aims to promote awareness of how people and communities were persecuted under racial and social policy because they were different.