

TDC Update – Manningtree – January 2017

TENDRING COMMUNITY PRAISED FOR ITS SUPPORT

The Tendring Community was praised today for the way it rallied round to support those who were affected by the threats of a tidal surge and flooding in the area.

Around 250 residents and more than 50 pets took refuge in a rest centre set up in Tendring Education Centre in Jaywick Lane over two days.

They started to arrive from 9.30pm on Thursday and 17 spent the night there before others joined them on Friday.

Numbers peaked on Friday evening before people were given the option to return to the homes around 2am on Saturday morning.

About 40 – some with young children – decided to sleep it out until later in the day when it became light.

The rest centre was manned by staff from Tendring District Council, a social care team from Essex County Council, British Red Cross, paramedics, and other volunteers who all played their part.

Neil Stock, Leader of TDC, said it was a massive community effort and many others offered to help out if needed.

“It really tests the spirit of a community when an incident like this occurs and Tendring came through with flying colours,” he said.

“I can only thank every single person who helped out in any way and from the feedback we have received I know the residents of Jaywick and elsewhere who needed to take refuge were extremely grateful.

“It really was a team effort and along with our partners at Essex Police, Essex County Council, the Environment Agency and many others, everyone pulled together to ensure the safety of those at risk.”

TDC Chief Executive Ian Davidson said people came to the fore and showed true community leadership at a time when they were needed most.

“Our own staff were fantastic and I cannot praise them highly enough,” he added.

“It just shows how much they really do care about the residents that live in our District and that they are prepared to go the extra mile – and more – for them at a time like this.

“We were delighted that all our emergency planning preparation with all our partners paid off and we were able to swing into action very quickly and efficiently.

“This does not all come together by accident and a great deal of training and mock incidents are staged each year to ensure we are ready for when the worst happens.”

A team from Uttlesford District Council turned up on Friday night take over the rest centre reception desk to give TDC staff a break.

Mr Davidson said that he was at the rest centre when the Minister for Flooding Theresa Coffey visited along with the Chief Executive of the Environment Agency James Bevan.

“They were extremely impressed with what we offered the residents and they felt it was one of the best run centres they had experienced around the country.

“That is a tribute to every single person who played a part in looking after people who were very worried and scared for their homes and belongings – even though they were safe.”

Pets had been accommodated at the previous centre when there was a tidal surge in 2013 but they could not be allowed inside the building.

A lesson had been learnt from that experience and two rooms were set up for vaccinated and unvaccinated pets following an outbreak of parvo virus in Jaywick a week or so ago.

“I am also full of praise for all those outside of TDC staff who were at the centre such as nurses and health workers, social care teams from Essex County Council, British Red Cross teams and others who showed great compassion and understanding,” he said.

“Nothing was too much trouble and there was almost a wartime spirit prevailing and it was fantastic to see.

“Finally I would like to thank all those residents who decided to make use of the rest centre and for the way they dealt with the situation they found themselves in.

“They were an absolute pleasure to deal with throughout and did not stop thanking the teams for all their help and kindness.”

There were numerous donations – with free food supplied by Tesco – and those who run Tendring Education Centre were always on hand to tackle any issues.

“My staff have said that the education centre team worked tirelessly to ensure this rest centre was the very best it could be and brought in caterers to cook food and provide any assistance they could,” added Mr Davidson.

“I am sure there will be some I have omitted but I assure them that it is not intentional and I can only thank every individual who responded and joined this massive effort to help some of the most vulnerable members of our community.”

READY FOR THE BIG ENERGY SWITCH IN TENDRING?

Residents and businesses in Tendring could save more than £300 a year on their energy bills if they take part in an Essex wide switching scheme which launches on the 6th December.

Instead of changing providers as an individual there is the chance to be part of a group and reap greater rewards.

Once again this year Essex County Council (ECC) working in partnership with Tendring District Council (TDC) has set up a collective energy switching scheme.

Residents will have from December 6, 2016 through to February 14, 2017 to register their interest in switching their gas or electricity supplier through the scheme – without any obligation to do so.

It is a completely free, easy, safe and secure way to cut energy bills without wasting valuable time hunting for the best offer.

Anyone who pays an energy bill can take part. So, as well as homeowners this includes tenants and customers on pre-payment meters.

Small and medium sized businesses will also be assisted through bespoke energy purchasing advice.

Paul Honeywood, TDC's Cabinet Member for Housing, said the Council wants to help residents and businesses keep their energy costs as low as possible.

"The Essex Energy Switch forms a key part of doing this which is why we are supporting it," he said. "It is appreciated that paying less for energy will not necessarily result in a warmer or healthier home but there will also be the offer of advice on how to insulate your home and consume less energy.

"Anything to encourage people to review their energy suppliers is a bonus."

The auction takes place on February 14, 2017 and works by getting energy companies to bid against each other to offer the lowest rate for gas and electricity.

Then those taking part will receive an e-mail containing a new gas and electricity offer - valid for one month. The offer has been calculated using your individual existing energy usage and costs and only when the offer is received do you need to decide whether or not to accept.

Tendring had around 360 residents register an interest in the scheme that ran in February, of which 187 residents choose to switch to the tariff offered.

Tendring's switching rate of those having registered was 54 per cent against the national average of 11 per cent. **The average savings by those that switched was £328.29.**

It is estimated that over 49 per cent of those registering will not have considered changing tariff or supplier in over three years.

To find out more and register for the Essex Energy Switch go to www.essex.gov.uk/energyswitch

Residents who rely on oil for heating can also make potential savings through a local collective oil buying scheme. More details can be found at https://www.essexrcc.org.uk/oilbuying_scheme.aspx

MORE TIME GIVEN TO APPLY FOR FREE PARKING PERMIT

Residents across Tendring will have more time to apply for their popular free parking permit this year.

An early decision was made to continue with the scheme in a bid to reduce the rush and the high number of calls taken over a short period of time in 2016.

Tendring District Council (TDC) has agreed to go ahead under the same terms and conditions with applications and renewals available from (January 10).

Last year's virtual permits will not run out until March 31 and the time limit will be extended for existing holders until they have completed the task.

Application forms have also been changed to reflect feedback received from residents in an effort to make them easier.

Nick Turner, TDC's Cabinet Member for Commercialisation, said he is pleased that the initiative is continuing as it has proved popular with both residents and businesses.

"It has been very much appreciated and we want to ensure that the process is as hassle free as possible for everyone," he said.

"The permits are available to all Council Tax paying households and they can contact the Council if they need help to apply.

"More time is being allowed this year which should make things smoother and applicants should have already received an email reminder or text message."

Cllr Turner added that residents are asked to be patient, renew or apply online if possible and be prepared to leave a message if they are having any difficulty and an officer will contact them.

"Please remember that applications and renewals do not need to be made until the end of March so there is no great rush," he said.

New applicants need to be aware they will need to have their Council Tax number for the application to be successful.

AWARD-WINNING PARTNERSHIP CLEANS UP FOR THE THIRD YEAR IN A ROW

An anti-litter campaign spanning Essex, Kent and Suffolk has resulted in a reduction of litter for the third year in a row.

The Love Essex campaign, run by the Cleaner Essex Group, made up of Essex local authorities and local business partners, aims to remind people that **littering is a criminal offence which comes with a fixed penalty notice from £75 and a maximum fine upon conviction in court of £2,500.**

In the areas monitored, and independently verified by Keep Britain Tidy, figures showed an average drop in litter of 43 per cent.

This year's campaign 'Don't toss it - #BinIt' appeared on bus shelters, petrol pumps and refuse vehicles across Essex, including Tendring.

The message has been reiterated in and around 86 McDonald's and 15 KFC restaurants in Essex, Kent and Suffolk helping to reduce branded fast food litter by 63 per cent.

More so than ever before, social media played a major part in helping the Cleaner Essex Group spread the campaign's messages to 2.4 million social media accounts.

Michael Talbot, Tendring District Council's Cabinet Member for Environment, said: "There is no excuse for people who throw litter. Their unsociable actions spoil our beautiful county and costs around £17 million across Essex which could be better spent on other frontline services.

"We know that we have to keep using different methods of communication as well as enforcement to hammer home the message."

Cherry Lewis-Taylor, McDonald's franchisee, added: "I believe that working together and campaigning against littering at our restaurant locations helps remind people to dispose of their litter responsibly.

"Between McDonald's and KFC's participating restaurants and drive-thrus, we have reached millions of customers. Adding this to the number of people who saw the other campaign material, including social media, it is likely that the Don't toss it... #BinIt message will have been seen at least 6 million times."

Huw James, Director of Kefco, the KFC Franchisee in Essex who is also passionate about preventing littering commented: "I am proud that we at KFC can work with Councils and other business partners to actively promote that people should do the right thing and bin their litter.

"As a business, we are committed to looking at ways we can help reduce the amount of litter that ends up on our streets."

If anyone witnesses any fly tipping occurring please contact TDC's Waste Management Team on 01255 686768.

NOTES:

- Research suggests that people care about how they are perceived by others and do not want to be thought of as 'disgusting' or 'lazy'. (Source: Keep Britain Tidy)
- Motorists admit to throwing rubbish out of their car window because they believe they are anonymous in their car. (Source: Keep Britain Tidy)
- Littering is a criminal offence under the Section 87 Environmental Act 1990
- "2.4 million social media accounts" – Source: Out of home media advertising calculated by using a measurement tool called 'Route'
- "6 million times" – figures calculated on social media, web site and outdoor media sites + restaurant customers
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BOOK DISTRIBUTION COMPANY GETS ALL-CLEAR FOR EXPANSION

A distribution company has been given the green light for extra car parking at its site to help accommodate new staff.

The Book Service in Frating is taking on around 100 new employees as part of an expansion.

It put in for planning permission to Tendring District Council (TDC) for an additional 39 spaces with the jobs to come on line next year across distribution, customer services, credit services and technology.

The Book Service has operated from Frating for over 20 years and distributes books published by the Penguin Random House Group.

The group has recently cut down from three distributions centres to two with a base in Rugby to close down.

The new parking bays will all be created to the north-west of the site in Colchester Road and the main considerations were the visual impact and the impact on highways.

TDC decided that because the land is well set back from the street scene as well as being screened by mature vegetation it would be acceptable.

Essex County Council, as the highways authority, were consulted over the scheme and had no objection and there were no letters of representation.

Great Bentley Parish Council decided not to object or comment on the proposal.

A TDC spokesman said: "In the absence of any material harm resulting from this development it has been approved."

The company said that it is looking to increase car sharing but the additional bays will ensure they have a robust facility.

Dates for this year's Tendring Highways Panel meetings are:-

- Thursday 23 March
- Thursday 8 June
- Thursday 14 September
- Thursday 7 December

All meetings are held in the Council Chamber at Weeley, commencing at 5pm.

Alan Coley & Carlo Guglielmi

