

ECC Report November 2018

Meet the Adopters: National Adoption Week 2018

Last month Essex County Council launched a campaign to raise awareness with regards to adoption. A “meet the Adopters” week was organised between 15th and 22nd October, to coincide with National Adoption Week. The aim was not just to bust any myths about the “perfect adopter” but also to tell the stories behind the adoptions, introduce the adopters, and showcase the variety of people who have adopted.

Essex Adoption Service is currently looking for homes for 22 children and welcomes interest from individuals, same sex couples, heterosexual couples, any religious background and ethnicity and applicants old or young (over 21).

Julia, 45, adopted a girl through Essex Adoption and she wants to share the message that a variety of people can adopt; “It can be for everyone and it will change your life for the better”. When she attended an adoption information evening there were people from all kinds of backgrounds and in various types of relationship – they were all welcomed as potential new adoptive parents.

Last year 84 children were placed in loving, permanent homes across Essex and although the types of families varied immensely the adopters all had the same qualities and attributes that make a great adopter.

Jenny, 53, adopted two boys through Essex Adoption, and talks about the process to approval with praise: “You need to go into it realising you won’t be perfect and you don’t have to be perfect, but you do need to have life skills and good parenting skills. You need to be willing to learn and to grow.”

The adoption process can be an emotional one and needs to be a joint decision from all family members, including children already living in the family. On average it takes just under a year from application to placement but can happen quicker than this.

“I would 100% recommend adoption” says Samantha, 35, who adopted a baby girl. “Usually around her birthday or Christmas we get all emotional and I look at her and think what would have happened if we hadn’t got her. The emotional side makes it worth it a million times over.”

The training and support provided by Essex Adoption is aimed at supporting all adoptive parents through the process and on their parenting journey. Ian, 36 adopted a baby and speaks incredibly positively about the process. “It is absolutely worth it; if all parents went through the training that adoptive parents went through, the world

would be a better place.”

Essex County Councillor Cllr Dick Madden, Cabinet Member for Children and Families said: “I have nothing but praise and admiration for our Essex Adopters past and present. They have helped change hundreds of children’s lives for the better. This National Adoption Week I would like to say a huge thank you to them all for improving the lives of Essex children.”

If you want to consider being part of Essex’s adoption community then Essex Adoption Service runs monthly information events for interested people to find out more. Visit www.essexadoptionandfostering.co.uk/adoption/ or call 0800 801 530 for more information or to book on to an event.

Council’s flagship property development unveiled

A number of photographs can be found at the bottom of this release.

Essex County Council’s flagship property development was officially unveiled at the end of October..

Goldlay Square, a 32 unit development in Chelmsford, is part of a wider £42 million project to help tackle Essex’s housing shortage.

The development was the site of ECC’s former library headquarters before it became surplus to requirements in 2015. It is now an exceptional residential development that offers much needed housing. The development has recently been shortlisted in the ‘Inside Housing Development Awards 2018’ for the ‘Best Development (under 70 units) Award’.

Comprising of 23 apartments for private sale and 9 affordable units, the site consists of three buildings which face onto a central garden area incorporating artwork from renowned artist Les Bicknell.

Cabinet member for Economic Development at ECC, Cllr Gagan Mohindra said that the completion of Goldlay Square represents a real milestone in the Council’s mission to tackle the county’s housing shortage.

It is an exceptional development, built on surplus brownfield land at the heart of the city. With the launch of these homes, Essex Housing not only have created much needed housing, but also transformed a previously underutilised site

Essex Housing was set up to help tackle the housing shortage by redeveloping surplus buildings and land at risk of lying empty and drifting into disrepair. The council recognises the importance housing plays in enabling a broad range of positive outcomes for the residents of Essex.

Working with local councils and other public sector bodies like the NHS, ECC is spending £42 million to speed up the supply of much-needed housing.

The innovative approach by Essex Housing is attracting significant interest nationally. It is already bringing forward a total of 605 homes on a range of sites across the county, 266 of which already have planning permission secured.

The in house developer has recently started work on [26 new homes](#) at Moulsham Lodge in Chelmsford and has just completed 6 affordable units which will be sold to a registered provider, in Norton Road, Brentwood.

Meanwhile, feasibility studies are complete or underway for another 27 potential development sites which will be announced in the near future.

Details of the properties can be found here www.goldlaysquare.co.uk

Attachments

- [Cllr Gagan Mohindra GS2.jpg](#)
- [Cllr Gagan Mohindra GS3.jpg](#)
- [Goldlay Square 2.jpg](#)
- [Goldlay Square.jpg](#)
- [GS show home 2.jpg](#)
- [GS Show home 3.jpg](#)
- [GS show home1.jpg](#)
- [GS1.jpg](#)
- [Gwyn Owen Head of Essex Housing 1.jpg](#)
- [Gwyn Owen Head of Essex Housing 2.jpg](#)
- [IMG_7546.JPG](#)

Essex surface dressing programme complete for this year

Over 250 miles of Essex roads have been improved this summer with surface dressing techniques which prevent potholes forming.

Surface dressing techniques future proof the road surface to prevent potholes forming but can only be done in warm, dry weather.

This summer over 250 miles of road have been covered in 3,652 tonnes of binder and then 38,000 tonnes of stone chippings, which are rolled in to form a new top layer. The technique can be viewed at www.essex.gov.uk/surfacing .

Councillor Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader, Essex County Council and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, said that with this work, other surfacing techniques and regular pothole-fixing crews, the number of potholes on Essex main roads has come down from 988 in June to 407. That's a major improvement for the safety and comfort of drivers and riders on faster roads where most of the traffic is. The Council will now work to keep that figure low, while shifting crews' efforts to fixing more potholes on local roads, whether in villages or town estates.

Councillor Bentley added that he is not content with progress so far, but would like to accelerate the work, and that he was very pleased to report successful trials with different pothole-repair machines have been undertaken.

Once all the trials will have been completed a decision will be taken on how to best combine the various repair techniques to get the most potholes fixed providing best value for money for Essex residents.

Note:

1. Works continue into the autumn for Resurfacing, where the top layers of the road are planed off and replaced with entirely new material; and Microsurfacing which adds a thinner new surface on top of the existing road. The right technique is carefully chosen according to each road condition.
2. Pothole-fixing crews are currently patching over 1,000 potholes every month in Essex.
3. Video with Councillor Bentley explaining the value of Surface Dressing is available

- Wickford Cllr Bentley with Multihog machine.jpg [Wickford Cllr Bentley with Multihog machine.jpg](#)

Assisted Living Scheme in Walton

It was a great pleasure to have been invited and attended the first anniversary of the second Assisted Living Scheme in Tendring, namely Beaumont House in Walton-on-the-Naze

I was also delighted to have deputised for the Chairman of Essex County Council Cllr John Aldridge, to officially open Rosebank House in Dovercourt.

What Ashley House, together with their partners have achieved is phenomenal, firstly with regards to tackling the ever growing burden on the Adult Social Care budget, and secondly by enabling the older members of our communities different levels of care to choose something that suits their needs, that does not cost them an arm and a leg, and most importantly gives them the opportunity to still living their lives with their loved ones, even when only one of them needs care.

The environment they have managed to create within these schemes is second to none, there is a real vibrancy, a great sense of community, incredibly comfortable and well laid out rooms, where residents can choose the level of involvement in the activities provided.

Last week at Beaumont House I was very fortunate to see just how well residents had settled in, and obviously enjoying themselves; you could also very clearly see the relation they all had with the very happy staff who look after them.

Mistley Quayside Fence latest

At the beginning of October the Court of Appeal rejected the attempt by TW Logistics to overturn the decision of the High Court to uphold the registration of Mistley Quay as a Village Green by Essex County Council, almost three years ago.

The battle to preserve the long standing rights of local residents to use the Quay in the manner in which they have done for centuries has now lasted for more than 10 years since TW Logistics erected a fence along the edge of the Quay. The rights of local residents have been confirmed by an Inspector, who carried out an 8-day Public Inquiry by Essex County Council, who registered the Quay as a Village Green, by the High Court and now, following the Appeal, by the Court of Appeal.

Simon Bullimore the Chairman of Free the Quay which represents the interests of local residents said: "This is a significant victory for the people of Mistley, who have been determined not to allow the aggressive actions of TW Logistics in the erection of the fence and the conduct of the long drawn out proceedings to deter them from fighting for the recognition of their rights to use the Quay."

Ian Tucker, who as a Mistley resident made the Application for the registration of the Village Green, said: "No one would have thought that a simple Application to register a Village Green followed by a Public Inquiry would end up in the Court of Appeal. We have been very fortunate to have had the encouraging support of Nigel Farthing and Richard Eaton of Birketts LLP throughout the proceedings which has been invaluable in achieving this successful result."

Nancy Bell, who lives MistleyQuay said: "This is such good news. I hope that TW Logistics will now recognise that their attempts to frustrate the long-standing rights of access to Mistley Quay should come to an end. The time has come for them to accept the Village Green."

The decision of the Court of Appeal will not result in the immediate removal of the fence along the edge of the Quay. David McKay, proprietor with Sherri Singleton, of the Thorn Hotel said: "It would be a welcome gesture on the part of TW Logistics if

they were to accept the decision and take the fence down. We have repeatedly invited them to discuss with us some other form of safety barrier and we remain willing to do so. If they persevere in maintaining the existing fence as an obstruction on the Village Green we will take all appropriate steps to remove it.”

A celebration of the Victory will be held on the Quay on Sunday 14th October with refreshments and music to which all the many supporters of the Free the Quay over the last 10 years will be most welcome.

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For an explanation of the legal issues involved in the Court of Appeal Hearing see:
<https://www.birketts.co.uk/insights/latest-news/mistley-quay>

