

Committee: Environment, Enforcement and Housing Committee	Date: 7 th March 2022
Subject: Chairs update	Wards Affected: All
	Public
	For Information

Community Safety

The Baker Partnership Hub

A long-standing ambition for community safety in Brentwood has now been realised with the new Community Safety partnership HUB which been established within the Town Hall.

The HUB has been named the Baker Partnership HUB in memory of Police Officer Tris Baker who was sadly died last year and was the Children & Young Persons Officer for Brentwood. Funding for the HUB was received from the Community Safety Partnership and Police Fire & Crime Commissioner to see the HUB ambition being realised which will mean that Essex Police will now be working alongside Council's community safety team and wider community safety partners such as Essex County Fire & Rescue Service, Essex Probation, NHW, Crime Stoppers, SEPP, and Youth Services as well as many more.

The HUB will seek to improve communication, collaboration and intelligence sharing for the benefit of the borough's residents, businesses, and visitors.

The official opening will be taking place on 16th March 2022 when the HUB will be opened by the Mayor of Brentwood and Chief Constable for Essex.

Community Safety- Engagement/Campaigns/Projects

Engagement

As part of the teams responsibilities, they also undertake a programme of engagement events throughout out the year. Pre pandemic this was around 70+ engagement events per annum. However, with the restrictions imposed upon us drastically reduced the events we were able to deliver. Nevertheless, despite the lockdowns and restrictions imposed, since April 2021 35 events have been delivered

utilising the community trailer, libraries, pop up stands, and other opportunities such as fetes, school fairs etc.



Campaigns

- Another area of focus for the team is linking in with local, regional, and national campaigns including:
- Ending Violence Against Women
- National Road Safety Week
- Project Edward – European Day without a road death



Projects

Through the CSP the team also work very closely with local schools and facilitate and Chair the Schools Liaison Meeting every month. This includes representatives from all local secondary schools as well as Essex Police, ECC (Essex County Council) Youth Service, and other community agencies. Through this group excellent relationships have been formed and go from strength to strength improving communication and collaboration. Through this group we discuss individual issues as well as support community safety project delivering. Projects delivered since April 2021 are:

- Mentoring Sessions for young people to help with communication, personal development and to work on behaviours, vulnerabilities, consequences and self esteem
- Outreach work in hotspot areas to engage with young people
- N-Act Theatre performances for all schools. 'Friend' is a play about gangs, county lines, knife crime and consequences
- 'Unacceptable' performance on peer-on-peer behaviour and awareness around sexism, sexual harassment and sexual violence isn't acceptable
- Crime awareness sessions delivered in schools around drugs, gangs and knife crime
- Boxing project established in the Brentwood Centre for young people

Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB)

ASB

Reports of Anti-Social Behaviour have continued at a high level despite the easing of COVID-19 restrictions. Since the beginning of the pandemic, residents' tolerance levels for one another have dramatically decreased and we are seeing a lot more neighbour disputes.

Stats for 2021

- 228 reports received
- 40 open cases
- 90 closed cases
- 3 NSPs served
- 146 Home visits (both daytime & evening)
- 1 (pending) injunction

Objectives

- Introduce a new Case Management System to improve reporting and response for residents.
- ASB Officer(s) to undertake B-Tech qualification.
- Work with partners to reduce overall ASB in Brentwood through the HUB and connections with local schools.
- Continue out of hours patrols of the ASB Hotspot areas.

Environmental/Patrols

- Daily patrols undertaken across the borough dealing with fly tipping, littering, abandoned vehicles, early presentation of waste and supporting the wider team where possible. This includes other teams across the Council such as such as Environmental Health, Planning Enforcement and Licensing.

Stats for 2021

- 48 out of hours patrols totalling 557 hours
- 362 PCNs issued
- 168 abandoned vehicles notices served (52 removed)
- 1980 site inspections borough wide
- 175 warnings letters for early presentation of waste

- 90 incorrect disposal of waste letters sent
- 27 section 46
- 38 PNC checks

Objectives

- To maintain a visible presence with Corporate Enforcement, NES, SEPP and Essex Police (including OOHs)
- To proactively use CCTV footage to continue to tackle ASB, nuisance and littering in the Town Centre
- Maintain the patrol schedule and feedback to relevant agencies
- Continue to develop promotional material to bring back better engagement with residents and visitors (ASB & Fly tipping)
- Identify further hotspots

CCTV

The CCTV control room continues to provide 24/7 monitoring, incident identification and assistance with criminal investigation. The control room continues to offer the evening and weekend emergency telephone reporting service.

Stats for 2021

- 451 control room assists in instances of crime and ASB
- 113 generated by operators
- 229 generated by Essex Police
- 93 generated by shopshafe or Council
- 221 exports of footage
- 98 instances of significant ASB
- 714 emergency calls out of hours

Achievements

- Installation now completed to reintroduce public area surveillance within Ingatestone parish, this will shortly be live in the control room.
- New CCTV camera installed in Bishops Hall Community Centre to help deter ASB and criminal activity.

- DPIA planned to examine instances of fly-tipping and potential measures to detect and prevent with Navestock parish.
- Project to implement new CCTV network at King Georges development to be live in March 2022.
- DPIA completed to examine whether CCTV is viable at Brentwood Rd / Halfway House. CSP contributed to the installation of CCTV.
- Increased proactive surveillance of areas affected by ASB. Targeting misuse of WHW car park, Crown St and High St. All reported for action to Essex Police or enforcement for the issue of FPN / warning letter.

Objectives

- Maintain increased vigilance of areas of high ASB
- Work with Essex Police and enforcement team to proactively reduce hotspots
- Continue to deliver and expand surveillance solutions to new and previously unmonitored areas affected by crime / ASB
- Undertaking a full review of the service, including policies, procedures, and reporting

Housing

Rent Overcharge Update

Following the report to Members at EEH on 13th December regarding the rent overcharge officers have worked to rectify the error.

A dedicated team of officers has been working on resolving the issue and making sure systems were in place to refund all those tenants affected. Final checks were made over the Christmas period and letters were issued to current tenants in January 2022. Only a handful of enquiries were received for minor clarification. The team have been liaising with Revs & Bens and the Regulator has been kept informed. We have been advised that due to the efforts made the Regulator for Social Housing will not be taking enforcement action against the Council.

Estates

The Estates Department has been involved with a lot of development within the last year and several elements of the proposed 'digital transformation' have already been implemented successfully. The team have several projects that they would like to deliver, and they want to further develop elements of the 'digital transformation' to ensure the main objectives are met within this year.

Achievements

- Implemented video training and grew the library of videos to assist in training or refreshing staff on best practice
- Reviewed 11,668 rent accounts
- Completed 203 Estates Inspections
- Successfully managed a fire at Drake House and created new action plans to deal with any potential emergencies that may arise in the future
- Completed the recruitment process for 2 x Administrators and 1 X Leasehold Officer, 1 x Housing Officer and 1 x Project Support Officer
- Discovered historical errors with the rent model which has impacted on tenants rent accounts and an entire rent model audit has been completed to enable us to apply new rent charges to 300+ accounts.
- Implemented a virtual viewing and lettings process – The vast majority of viewings are now completed digitally, which has given tenants and Officers more flexibility when viewing properties and resulted in substantial FTE savings
- Trained new Housing Officers to attend Court and brought all processing of general possession cases in-house, which means substantial legal fee savings.
- Recuparated £50k in service charges and major works debt
- Increased Leasehold Officers has meant leasehold services has begun chasing historical debt for major works which is the first time the service has been able to do this for 7 years
- The entire garage site stock has been reviewed and is being managed by the new Project Support Officer to identify sites for potential development or investment. This work is being done to assist the Strategic Development plan and creates an overview of stock condition and income data
- Sheltered staff have been provided some training on the use of Photobook and they will shortly be able to attend regular reviews on remedial works and welfare concerns between multiple departments
- More accurate service charge reporting has been created and now include the communal repairs and caretaking elements, giving tenants fairer and more transparent charging summary and saving us on costs incurred for the services we provide

- Created a fortnightly review of remedial works using Photobook's 'Report it!' system and this is now being used by 3 service areas to improve prioritisation of works, inter-departmental communication, and audit of repair works
- Multiple safeguarding referrals have improved relations and communications with Social Services and has led to a re-draft of our 'Hoarding Policy'

Objectives

- Create forms to capture essential data using the House mark criterion in readiness for the Social Housing White Paper
- Rota 'all' inspections for Officers and identify services that could benefit from this workflow system
- Create a full KPI suite for leasehold services
- Implement the new web-based MRI rent collection software to replace the Orchard GUI software
- Work with other departments to identify if they could benefit from the use of Photobooks features
- STAR survey information to be adapted and collected on-site
- Complete Tenant Review

Repairs

- The repairs team have faced some challenging times over the past 12 months but working alongside our repairs and maintenance providers Axis, they have overcome these minor setbacks and continued to deliver an effective service.
- January 2022 saw the Axis team and the Repairs team move upstairs into the main BBC office. This has allowed a more open, accessible, and transparent collaboration working and has vastly benefitted the relationship between Axis and the wider Housing Team.
- Delays has unfortunately been experienced due to materials and resources as a direct impact from both Covid and Brexit but we continue to manage this and keep residents informed where necessary.

Achievements

- Started 2 major works projects for Communal Heating replacement at Oldfields / Victoria and St Georges court.
- Finished the full renewal of the sewerage treatment plants at Snakes Hill
- Major works for Fire Safety completed at Drake House
- Boosted water sets replaced at Masefield Court, Mayflower House, Gibraltar House.
- Balcony replacements at Colet and Whittington Road are progressing well.
- FRA works on Gibraltar house, Mayflower House and Masefield Court, Juniper Court and Tower Court have been completed.
- 100 Domestic Boilers have been replaced
- Over 70% of stock condition surveys have been completed
- Completed all Communal Water Hygiene test and inspections have been completed and a full ongoing programme is now in place.
- FRA actions due by March 2022 have been completed within time.
- The Gas servicing programme has remained stable with only a handful of residents refusing access which have quickly been resolved through joint repairs / Estates working
- Keystone has continued to be developed and we are now able to receive LGSR and EICR certificates digitally from Axis.
- Photobook inspections have been expanded for more repair processes.

Objectives

- To reimplement decent homes planned works
- To complete larger scale compliance planned works programmes
- To review repairs processes and ensure they are up to date in line with new policies.
- Focus on compliance to ensure all processes, paperwork and operational activities are compliant and maintained accordingly.

Housing Needs

The new affordable housing development at Whittington Mews was completed at the end of January 2022. This development provides 2 three bedroom adapted homes and 1 two-bedroom home. These properties have been prioritised for applicants that have medical needs for an adapted home.

There has been an increased focus to ensure that all rough sleepers are provided with emergency accommodation and are supported to receive vaccinations to protect them from covid under the Protect and vaccinate Scheme. As a result, 6 applicants were prevented from rough sleeping by providing them with emergency accommodation. To support this work 4 additional crash pads were set up to provide furnished accommodation to reduce the need for bed & breakfast accommodation.

- 2 fixed term Housing Administrator posts recruited
- 1 temporary Agency Housing Advice & Homeless Prevention Officer recruited
- Pending recruitment of a part time Housing Advice & Homeless Prevention Officer
- Home visits and property viewings being carried out in person
- Increased Policies & procedures implemented
- Final stages of testing for the new Locata/CBL website
- More webinar training for Officers
- Ongoing Regular case reviews with Officers
- Hybrid approach to managing the homeless service
- Introduced new Housing Allocations Policy
- Completed the registration project for the housing register & transfer registers

Objectives

- To deliver a full Homelessness visiting service to reduce fraudulent claims
- To go live with Rent Sense following Temporary Accommodation Officer training
- Update Website to reduce approaches by changing Housing Advice request approach
- Update Website to allow applicants to upload documents which will reduce assessment times on applications
- Further Digitalise existing tasks
- To update all Tasks on locata as per Audit request

Sheltered Housing & Community Alarms

The Alarms team are continuing to manage the process with Lifeline 24 to transfer our Community Alarms Service over to Lifeline 24. Currently, we have successfully transitioned over 240 alarms users over to Lifeline 24. We recognised that some of

our customers will need more tailored support to enable them to transfer over, and Officers are completing home visits to aid and support to these customers.

The Project team continue to work closely together and have weekly progress meetings to ensure we remain on target to complete the project by the end of the financial year.

Achievements

- All compliance safety checks continue to be carried out throughout all sheltered schemes
- Home visits set up to support our alarms users to set up and test new equipment with Lifeline 24. Ongoing regular welfare contact calls for our most vulnerable residents
- Quick response provided to customers experiencing alarms equipment issues
- Face to face viewings for all In House Sheltered housing viewings

Objectives

- Resident consultation on what social events or community clubs they would like to see in their schemes
- Re-introduce weekly drop-in sessions for residents for one 2 one meetings with Housing Support Officers
- Re-introduce regular tenant group monthly meetings
- To explore more ways to enable greater engagement with residents
- To successfully complete the transfer of our alarm's customers to Lifeline 24 by the end of the financial year.

Axis Contract

A full Member briefing took place on Monday 10th January on the Axis Repairs & Maintenance Contract. It was well attended, and a recording was provided to any Members who were unable to attend. Below are the links once more to the recording and other helpful video:

[https://brentwoodbbc-my.sharepoint.com/:v:/r/personal/tracey_lilley_brentwood_gov_uk/Documents/Recordings/All%20Member%20Briefing%20\(Housing%20Updates%20and%20Axis%20Contract\)-20220110_180624-Meeting%20Recording.mp4?csf=1&web=1&e=uQu1yw](https://brentwoodbbc-my.sharepoint.com/:v:/r/personal/tracey_lilley_brentwood_gov_uk/Documents/Recordings/All%20Member%20Briefing%20(Housing%20Updates%20and%20Axis%20Contract)-20220110_180624-Meeting%20Recording.mp4?csf=1&web=1&e=uQu1yw)

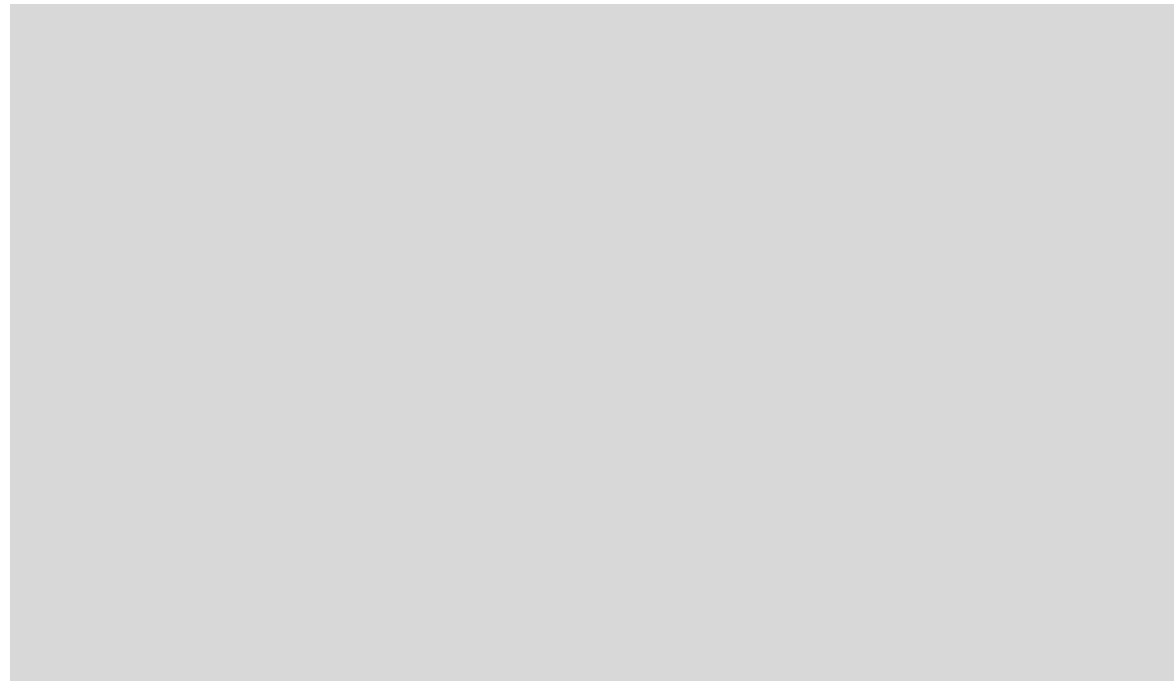
[Boiler | Instructional video](#)



[Thermostat | Instructional video](#)



[Brentwood Borough Council | Contract Update](#)



[Brentwood Borough Council | Contract Update](#)

Social Value Programme

- Axis has continued to work closely in partnership with the Community Services team to deliver its social value programme under 3 priority areas: Employment, Education and Training, Community Projects, and Fundraising and Sponsorship. Initiatives include:
- Apprenticeships/ work placements – Admin and carpentry work placements and a local Apprentice Multitrader
- Employment of a local resident in Administrator and Multitrader role
- School/college engagement – Life soft skills and career readiness at Shenfield High School to year 7 and waste and recycling workshops at Long Ridings Primary School and Kelvedon Hatch Primary School
- Resident training days – Planned for April, using a void property to teach DIY skills such as replacement of locks and fuses.
- Volunteering and Community Events – joining with the Community Connect trailer, installation of chat benches and Samaritan signage at the multi storey car park (pre covid), installation of outdoor tap at Chichester House, support for Let's Create arts resources packs for children to access for learning during lockdown and attendance at Family Fun Days.
- Sustainability initiatives – delivering Winter Warmth Packs to vulnerable residents in partnership with Brentwood CVS, sustainability workshops for residents, an Axis representative is on board of trustees for BEBA (Brentwood Environment Business Partnership).
- Annual £20,000 contribution to the Brentwood Community Fund and sponsorship of Stars of Brentwood Awards 2021
- Delivery of support through Axis Foundation and Travis Perkins Community Fund, including the purchase of a concrete base and new storage unit for

REACH Hippotherapy, and a purchase of a new oven and extractor hood for Hutton Community Centre. Axis also contributed to the Daily Bread Café for arts materials for its mental health support group and recently donated £1,200 to T.E.A.MS Essex, (multiple sclerosis support charity), to purchase essential equipment and a massage bed. The team is currently looking to purchase a new electric cooker for St George's Court.

- The focus for this year will be to deliver a series of resident training workshops, promote career roles into construction for females, increase volunteering at sheltered schemes and work closely with the Council to support its sustainability pledges.
- A presentation by Axis' Community Investment Manager can be brought to a future committee on delivery of the programme, if required.

Petition on Kimpton Road

Petition for Trees to be Re-instated on Kimpton Avenue

At the Council Meeting held on 8th December 2021 Cllr Fulcher of Brentwood North Ward handed in a petition on behalf of her residents to the Council to request that the trees that had been previously removed from Kimpton Avenue Brentwood be reinstated. As the land which these trees had been removed from is owned by Essex County Council and is the responsibility of their Highway Service it will be the responsibility of this group to replace them and they have the authority to do so. As such the petition has been passed onto the Essex Highways service to consider and asked for this team to respond to the request directly to Cllr Fulcher and the local County Ward member Cllr Aspinell. We have also requested that ECC Highways communicate their decision to us as the local authority.