

Cllr Maggie Sutton, Portfolio Holder for Communities

Report to Full Council – 14th July 2026

Communities & Partnerships Team

Manager: Mark Fretwell (A.D Housing & Communities) covering for
Carla Claydon (Community Partnership Manager)

Officers: Sue Hayden (SH), Andy Schmiedecke (AS), Kerry Vinton (KV), Fleur Brookes (FB), Angie Greneski (AG), John Starr (JS) and Tanveer Dhillon (TD)

Health & Wellbeing Board - (SH)

Meeting took place on 29th April with very good attendance from statutory partners and voluntary sector. Main items discussed were Local Government Reorganisations and implications for UDC and partners. ICB update and health and social care 10-year plan. Local Plan, regarding health implications. Funding is provided by Essex County Council's Public Health for the benefit of the Uttlesford residents. £30,000 for 2026/27 will be targeted for the following three programmes:

Start Well (healthy - weight program) – (JS)

The Start Well Group met on 14th April 2026 and reviewed previous actions, discussed childhood obesity, healthy eating, school funding challenges, family food education, partnership opportunities, the Healthy Youth Zones pilot, engagement activities and related programmes.

Agreed to progress the Stansted Healthy Youth Zones pilot, strengthen partnership working with TouchPoint, share good practice from Great Dunmow Primary School, and identified a range of follow-up actions ahead of the next meeting.

Live Well (smoking cessation) – (AS)

Next Livewell Group is scheduled to meet on 28th July.

Information from professionals in the Live Well group was fed back and assisted the Data task group.

Maldon CVS who were funded through the health and wellbeing board gave a presentation about the farmers suicide prevention project.

The next Live Well Group will have a guest speaker from one of the projects that are being funded through one of our grants and group members will provide their organisations updates.

Age Well (dementia programs) – (KV)

Dementia Awareness Week 18th - 24th May 2026, UDC Dementia Friendly Community hosted their awareness event on 6th May at Bailey Lodge, Saffron Walden, with a huge number of partner agencies attending and lots of visitors, and a great success.

UDC Dementia Friendly Community meets again on 29th June 2026.

Carers Week 8th -14th June 2026 – Attended Essex Carers Conference, Colchester Football Stadium 9th June 2026. Heard about lots of research the Anglia Ruskin and some heartfelt case studies/lived experiences of families trying to navigate the care system.

UDC Help Hub 16th June 2026 – Great networking opportunity with lots of local partners.

Age Well Group meeting on 16th July 2026, Saffron Walden Museum. Key agenda items are Dig-It, Home Instead, Strength & Balance Provision and Saffron Walden Museum Dementia Friendly Projects.

Members of the team supported Climate Change colleagues at two events across the BIG Green Festival – World Bike Day on Market Square 28th May and the Community Bike event on the Safron Walden Common Sunday 7th June.

Employee health & wellbeing – (SH)

Uttlesford District Council has significantly strengthened its approach to employee health and wellbeing through the development of a comprehensive programme of preventative initiatives. Led by the Council's Health and Wellbeing Officer, the programme has been informed by workforce health data, employee feedback and strong partnerships with Essex Working Well and other external organisations.

Key achievements include workplace health checks, smoking cessation support, staff wellbeing surveys, menopause awareness and support, physical activity programmes, social engagement initiatives and the establishment of a network of Workplace Wellbeing Champions. These initiatives have enabled the Council to identify health risks within its workforce, improve access to support, encourage healthier lifestyles and foster a more connected and inclusive workplace culture.

The impact of the programme has been recognised both internally and externally. Health checks have prompted positive behaviour change among employees, specialist training has enhanced support for smoking cessation and menopause, and staff-led initiatives have increased engagement and social connectedness across the organisation. The Council has also introduced new policies, strengthened partnerships with its leisure provider, expanded wellbeing resources and embedded health promotion into everyday working practices. Collectively, this work contributed to Uttlesford District Council achieving the highest level of Essex Working Well Workplace Wellbeing Accreditation and becoming the first organisation to receive Smokefree Employer status through Essex Working Well.

Ukrainian Update - (SH)

Group meeting once a month with grant aided service providers to discuss projects, issues and any support requirement. Good attendance and partnership working. Grant applications received and considered for relocation and integration activities.

We are in regular contact with the service providers and those eligible for the scheme and our overseas arrivals residents to ensure that we are supporting them.

Previously, UDC has funded Uttlesford Citizen Advice to provide a dedicated support worker for the Ukrainian community, which is now being funded through Essex County Council. Since, 2023 Uttlesford District Council provided grants to individuals to assist with relocations costing up to a value of £1,500 and integrated support up to a value of £500. To date, over £50,000 has been claimed back from Essex County Council in supporting this cohort.

Community Grants – (AS)

Held a panel of cross part members to review the one-off community grants. These grants are up to the value of £3,000. There was £83,000 allocated for the grants and we received 35 applications totalling £96,689.57 out of the 35 applications only 3 were refused.

The panel awarded some of the applicants slightly less than they requested, awarding a total of £82,536.76.

Report has gone through CMT and ICB and will be presented at the next Cabinet meeting on 16th July. Following cabinet there is a 5 working day cooling off period. Providing there aren't any challenges, final decisions can be sent out to the applicants on Monday 27th July.

Armed Forces Covenant – (KV)

Army Community Engagement meeting – Carver Barracks 5th May, updated on LGR, ECC Elections and the proposed Freedom Parade. Next meeting is 22nd July 2026

Healthwatch Essex Armed Forces Working Group - lots of good practice shared with Essex wide partners. Attended the Healthwatch Essex showcase evening at Hylands House 11th June 2026. At my request Healthwatch Essex will be bringing their AF Veterans pop-up to the SW Community Day on Saturday 27th June 2026.

Armed Forces Day Flag Raising – 22nd June 2026 – attended by the Head of Establishment, Carver Barracks and colleagues, veterans and members of the Gurkhas veteran's community.

33Regiment Freedom Parade SAG – 22nd June 2026 – Parade Sunday 26th July 2026.

Chair's Armed Forces Cadet - has been launched for the 2nd year, closing date for expressions of interest is 8th July 2026. Selection process will be completed the follow week with Cllrs Donald and McBirnie. The successful Cadet will be invited, along with their parents to the council offices to accept the award.

Violence Against Women & Girls - White Ribbon accreditation (KV)

Contacted Essex County Council's (ECC) Equality, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Network for good practice around White Ribbon and following up offers from ECC & Southend to share their action plans and approach to achieving the accreditation and set up a team's meeting with Dr Katrina Wicks (Southend) 6th July.

The intention of pursuing White Ribbon accreditation is to demonstrate the Council's commitment to preventing violence against women and girls by promoting a culture of respect, challenging harmful attitudes and behaviours, and encouraging staff, members and partners to act as allies. The accreditation process will support the development of a clear action plan, helping to embed awareness, prevention and positive cultural change across the organisation and wider community.

A report covering domestic abuse activities and progress and incorporating the intent to gain White Ribbon accreditation, will be presented to CMT in July.

Safeguarding update – (FB)

Safeguarding training attendance Key Performance Information data has been submitted to the relevant department and is being monitored by Senior Management Team.

The themes emerging from safeguarding concerns raised include dementia, suicide and mental health issues. We continue to support tenants alongside the housing team.

Fleur continues to visit all the team meetings across the Council to talk to teams about safeguarding, domestic abuse procedure and answer any questions.

Domestic Abuse (FB)

Uttlesford's network of safe, trusted places for people experiencing domestic abuse has grown again, with Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council accredited as a J9 Safe Space.

The J9 initiative equips organisations to offer a safe and discreet environment where anyone affected by domestic abuse can access information, support and a private telephone to contact specialist services.

Stansted Mountfitchet Parish Council joins a growing list of accredited venues across the district, including Great Dunmow Town Council, Pam's Place in Thaxted, Thaxted Parish Council, Newport Pharmacy, and Uttlesford Foodbank. Together, these organisations form a community-wide network committed to responding with empathy, discretion and practical guidance to keep residents safe from harm.

Community Safety (AG)

Safer Streets Great Dunmow - is on-going – Great Dunmow Town Council are looking into CCTV and additional cameras for the scout hut. Further discussions are ongoing between GDTC. Arranging interviews for the CSP funded street warden in partnership with Great Dunmow Town Council.

Safer Streets Saffron Walden - the survey has closed and has highlighted some areas for addressing, this includes CCTV at Swan Meadow Car Park in Saffron Walden. Working alongside the Essex Police Community Safety Partnership (CSP) analyst and await their report – due at the end of July. From here will submit a funding bid to the Police Fire Crime Commissioner in partnership with Saffron Walden Town Council and the CSP.

The Online Safety Forum - has been successfully implemented and the first project from this group has been carried out- with 1,500 Fraud and Scam advice booklets being distributed at Neighbourhood roadshows and ECFRS Safe and Well visits.

The Rural and Farm Forum has also been successfully implemented and aims to focus on rural issues- especially among the farming community. There is discussion amongst the group attendees to look at a future Safer Streets bid and discussions with the PFCC Office and UDC Community Safety Officer are ongoing.

These forums feed into the higher level JAG meetings held 6 -8 weekly - next meeting on 9th July.

Restorative Justice - department arranged for to attend to our housing teams/environmental health teams and raise awareness of this service. The Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex funds this service in Essex and in line with our Community Safety and Tenancy Engagement responsibilities we should be referring cases at the earliest opportunity, documenting when it is used or offered.

Crucial Crew Project - led the annual project 15th-18th July which reached more than 750 young people and delivered on 6 key safety topics. There is a competition for the young people to enter, and a prize will be presented with the portfolio holder Cllr Sutton. Closing date is Friday 3rd July 2026.

Youth Projects (JS/TD)

Uttlesford Youth Voice Sessions - continue to take place on Tuesdays every other week at the UDC Council Officers. This is co-ordinated by Tanveer & John Starr. Young Members recently attended the Saffron Walden Community Bike Ride running a Games Stall and raising money for charity. The group are now exploring/discussing the proposed Social Media Ban for under 16s. Young attendees have decided to change the name of this group to Uttlesford Youth Council.

Link to more information - [Uttlesford Youth Voices - Uttlesford District Council](#)

Mural Project - in the Fairycroft Car Park, Tanveer & John are exploring the possibility of a, Saffron Walden. This site is a well know ASB Hotspot and the project would look to engage local young people and work with them on design ideas.

Youth Partnership Meeting - John Starr chaired the recent supported by Tanveer and the group will look to identify and provide learning opportunities for local youth clubs/groups.

Anti-social behaviour – (TD)

Continuing to deal with a varied ASB Caseload including Tenant and Non-Tenant related matters. ASB Officer works closely with UDC Housing Officers and with other internal teams including Housing Options, Planning Enforcement and Environmental Health as well as external partners including Essex Police Neighbourhood Teams. The ASB Service continues to receive strong feedback through our ASB Satisfaction survey which is displayed at the bottom of our UDC ASB Webpage (currently 80%, against national average of 60.1%).

ASB Forum (Youth) & (Adult) - Chairing ASB Forum (Youth) & (Adult) working closely with key partners including schools to monitor and reduce offending in ASB Hotspots. This recently included working with Huws Gray to secure a site being accessed by young people and maintaining strong working relationships with Housing Associations and Social Services to problem solve wider ASB Incidents.

Airport / Parking - Linking in with the Airport, UDC Legal Team and Essex Police to look at the feasibility of implementing a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) to tackle Airport related Fly Parking.

ASB Awareness Week - taking place from 29th June – 5th July. Several ASB Surgeries have been organised across the district including in Saffron Walden, Elseham and an online surgery.

Link to more info – [ASB Awareness Week: 29th June – 5th July - Uttlesford District Council](#)

During this week Tanveer and Police will also be conducting some joint walkabout in local ASB Hotspots and engaging with residents in these areas.

Crucial Crew - An ASB set was recently delivered to all local year 6 students who attended Crucial Crew 2026, Tanveer attended all UDC Tenant Community Roadshows and Tanveer will be supporting the UDC Tenants Panel with their ASB Project.

1LIFE recently organized a meeting to raise concerns about ongoing ASB/Crime which their staff are experiencing on their site and the adjacent One Minet Skate Park. Tanveer, John attended. During the meeting, the lack of reporting of Crime/ASB was raised as UDC had only one recorded incident at this site in the last six months and Police had only 4. 1LIFE and the Town Council have been linked in with a Design Out Crime Officer (DOCO) from Essex Police who attended the site on 1st July 2026 to explore what additional measures can be implemented to reduce offending here. 1LIFE have also been encouraged to submit actual Police/ASB Reports through the appropriate channels. This visit from the DOCO coincides with the Town Council's current refurbishment of the Skate Park.

Police Hub at London Rd

UDC had confirmation that the Crime Commissioner has now signed the documents, and progressing through the final legal sign off. It's been quite complex, as we have renegotiated the lease on The Lodge for a further term, along with the office in the main reception (room used as a locker room) and Room 116 on 1st floor which will become the Hub.

- Agreement that all three will have co-terminus start and end dates.
- Once UDC has confirmation from our Solicitors, we can work out the logistics of moving the teams in, IT fit out etc, which will be led by the facilities team through Paul Danskin (Head of Estates), as the need to consider fire evacuation and agree to any alterations with Communities and Essex Police.
- UDC facilities are planning to replace the radiators in the room before the move, rather than needing you to vacate to complete the works.
- Arranging signage and some internal and external comms to facilitate the transition.

Expected occupation will commence at the **end of July**.

The Crime and Policing Act 2026 (CPA)

Received Royal Assent on April 29th and it came into force on June 29th, 2026.

Arranging external training for key staff to ensure we're aware of the changes and how to implement the powers, including:

- What actions landlords can take under the new legislation
- Partnership working with the police and other agencies
- Supporting domestic abuse victims
- Victim-centred approaches to ASB case handling
- Preparing frontline teams for the changes ahead.

There have been factsheets issued by Government see link: [Crime and Policing Act 2026: factsheets - GOV.UK](#)

Housing News

The next edition of 'Housing News' will go out at the end of August. Two pages have been allocated to the Communities and Partnerships team, to showcase all the great and valuable work within the local community.