

**MESSAGE FROM PETER THOMPSON,
 MANAGING DIRECTOR**

It is always good to see the successes of the people we support and our staff in the newsletters. It shows how we continuously improve as an organisation, and it's great to see people enjoying their involvement with Southend Care.

We are pleased to welcome Charlene Adutwim as our new Director of Operations, who will lead our operational services in the changing times ahead.

We now know that Southend will become part of a new local authority area from 2028, and we look forward to the opportunities that this will bring for us to develop our services to more people.



On 6 March 2026, we marked Employee Appreciation Day by recognising the incredible dedication and commitment shown by our staff across all services.

Liz Farrell, Director of Corporate Services, Clare Petchey & Dianne Palmer (HR Advisors) took time out of their busy working day to visit each service personally. This was an opportunity to say a personal thank you to colleagues for their ongoing contribution to the organisation but, more importantly, to acknowledge the exceptional care, compassion, and support they provide to our customers every single day.

These visits were a reminder of the vital role every team member plays in making a difference. The warmth, professionalism, and kindness demonstrated across our services don't go unnoticed, and this day was a small way of showing how much it is valued.

As a token of our appreciation, staff were invited to either a water bottle or coffee cup and received a voucher for a drink and cake at our in-house Barista Meadows Café, a pen, and a thank you card. We recognise how important it is to take the time to say thank you and to celebrate the efforts of our teams. Thank you for everything you do.



If you would like to know more about any of our services or for latest news, recruitment or information please take a look at our website www.southendcare.co.uk



Brook Meadows House

CHRISTMAS AT BROOK MEADOWS HOUSE **DECEMBER 2025**

A huge thank you goes to all of the staff who worked so hard to make Christmas 2025 such a special and memorable time for all of our residents. Special recognition goes to the staff members who organised and performed in the Christmas pantomime. Their effort, creativity, and willingness to get involved brought so much laughter and entertainment to residents and staff alike. The panto was a real highlight of the festive celebrations and was enjoyed by everyone who attended. Thank you to every member of the team for your hard work and for making Christmas 2025 so special for everyone at our service.



SOUTHEND UNITED AT BROOK MEADOWS HOUSE **SINCE JANUARY 2026**

In January, we were delighted to welcome Southend United F.C. to our service on Thursday mornings to deliver their fun and fitness sessions. The sessions were very well received by all residents and quickly became something everyone looked forward to each week. The activities encouraged residents to stay active, socialise, and take part in light exercise in a fun and supportive environment. Thank you to the team from Southend United!



Brook Meadows House

MUSIC AND MEDALS AT BROOK MEADOWS HOUSE

FEBRUARY 2026

In February, we celebrated Valentine's Day with a wonderful morning of music and entertainment provided by The Quiet Man. The morning brought lots of smiles and laughter and was a lovely way for everyone to celebrate the occasion together.



We also held our very own Winter Olympics, which was a huge success with all residents taking part in the fun. The event included an exciting opening ceremony, a variety of games and challenges, and of course a medal presentation at the end to celebrate everyone's efforts and achievements. This was a memorable event for everyone involved.

ELVIS AT BROOK MEADOWS HOUSE

MARCH 2026

In March we welcomed Elvis to the building for an afternoon of singing and dancing. We also celebrated all things London town with cockney music, quizzes and food tasting.



This is a very small snapshot of activities that took place in Brook Meadows House. If you would like to read about and see more, please visit our Facebook page [Facebook](#), or scan the QR code below. Please Follow Us!



Viking

KEEPING UP TO DATE WITH VIKING

Viking House has been very busy over the past few months creating enjoyable activities and memorable experiences for our service users. There has been a real focus on making the environment both welcoming and engaging, with everyone getting involved in a variety of projects and events.

With the warmer weather approaching, we have spent lots of time in the garden preparing our outside space for the Summer months ahead. Service users have enjoyed helping with tidying, planting, and getting the garden ready so that it can be enjoyed by everyone during the brighter days. It has been wonderful to see everyone taking pride in the outdoor area and working together as a team.

Inside Viking House, we recently had the hallway redecorated, giving the space a fresh new look. The groups have since been busy creating colourful artwork and displays to brighten the newly painted walls. Service users have shown great creativity and enthusiasm!



We have also enjoyed several special activities and celebrations. A highlight was a visit from a Ukulele choir, who spent the afternoon entertaining everyone with music and singing. The performance created a lovely atmosphere, with many service users joining in, singing along, and thoroughly enjoying the experience.

Easter was another exciting occasion at Viking House, celebrated with a fun Easter Egg hunt.



We have also welcomed new members to the Viking team. John recently joined us as a new Support Worker and has already settled in well with both staff and service users. More recently, we welcomed Charlene as our new Director of Operations. We would like to say a big thank you to a couple of our service users Billie and Jamie who kindly helped with the interview process. It is fair to say that Charlene was definitely their favourite, and they were delighted to be involved in such an important part of welcoming new team members to Viking House.

SRS

THANK YOU HELEN

Helen Willmot retired this month after dedicating more than 30 years of service to supporting the community at Southend Care. Her retirement marks the end of an incredible career that touched the lives of so many over the years.

Fondly known by everyone as “The Matron,” Helen became a well-respected and much-loved member of the Southend Care family. She was known not only for her professionalism and dedication, but also for the warmth, kindness, and reassurance she brought to those around her every day.

Helen’s service and support consistently went above and beyond for all those she cared for. She showed extraordinary compassion, patience, and understanding, always putting the needs of others first and ensuring that everyone felt valued, supported, and cared for.

Her huge heart, caring nature, and unwavering commitment made a lasting difference to countless people within the community.

Helen will be greatly missed by the whole team, but her legacy, hard work, and the positive impact she has had over the past three decades will always be remembered.

We would like to thank Helen for her many years of outstanding service and wish her a very happy and well-deserved retirement.



Making It Work

CELEBRATING SUCCESS

Ian has celebrated 30 years continuous service with Iceland.

Ian is supported by Making It Work and we were lucky enough to be invited to his award ceremony to thank him for his hard work and dedication.



JENNY'S JOURNEY CONTINUES

Jenny has now taken the next exciting step in her journey, moving on from Barista Meadows in Brook Meadow House to Life Streams Coffee Shop where she'll continue to grow and develop her skills. Jenny started training at Barista Meadows in 2025 when the coffee bar first opened. She's being supported by us every step of the way, with travel training to help her reach her new workplace and job coaching as she gets used to a different style coffee machine and till system.

Wishing Jenny the very best of luck in this new chapter—we're all rooting for you!

BARISTA MEADOWS NEWS

Georgina is thriving in her role in managing Barista Meadows and has now taken on two new trainees, Crystal and Robert, with support from Making It Work. Both individuals are working towards securing paid employment and are being supported by Georgina, who is providing coaching in barista and café skills as part of their development through Making it Work.

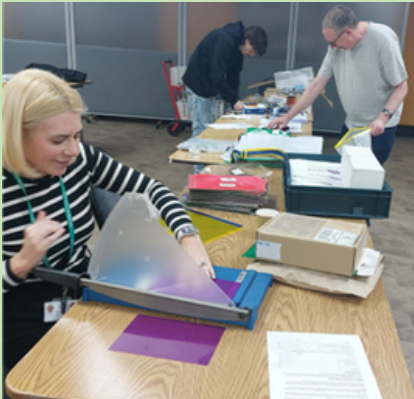
It is encouraging to see their confidence and experience continuing to grow as they progress towards the next stage of employment. This reflects a positive outcome for all involved in supporting their journey.



**CONTACT THE TEAM—MAKINGITWORK@SOUTHENDCARE.CO.UK
01702 212754 OR 01702 215182**

Making It Work

ELECTION INCLUSIVITY



Adults with learning disabilities have the same rights to participate in elections as anyone else, yet barriers still exist that can make this difficult. True election inclusivity means ensuring that everyone can understand, access, and take part in the democratic process with confidence. Creating inclusive elections benefits everyone. When barriers are removed and participation is widened, democracy becomes stronger, fairer, and more representative of the society it serves.

As part of the Promote the Vote initiative, Southend City Council ring-fenced two paid positions for adults with learning disabilities to support the preparation of promotional election material. Making it Work partnered with the Council to recruit for these roles and provide job coaching support.

Alan and Daniel have since progressed into ongoing, ad hoc employment with the electoral campaign team. In their roles, they are responsible for creating Accessibility Packs, which will be made available to voters on election day.



A NEW ROLE FOR DEE

The team have recently supported Dee into her new role as café assistant at The Novel Coffee Shop.

Dee left her long term paid employment as a domestic assistant and was particularly interested in working in the Novel coffee shop.

She is now thriving in her role where she has been described as a joy to work with making everyone smile and laugh.



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Project 49

DIVERSE CONVERSATIONS AT PROJECT 49

Through an ongoing partnership with Essex University, trainee clinical psychology students regularly visit us. One returned to complete her doctorate, researching how people with learning disabilities can be included in conversations about the climate crisis. It is hoped this will help explore ways that our service users and others can access and engage with the debate in a way that they understand.



SPEAKING OUT AT PROJECT 49

During our History group, a number of our service users put their hand to public speaking for the first time. They chose their own subject, did their own research and then made a presentation in front of the group. This was super brave, as many people find speaking in public a really nervous thing to do! The participants were presented with one of our Skills Builder Award Certificates.

READ ALL ABOUT IT!

For over 2 years, our Publishing Group have been producing a monthly in-house newspaper called 'The Big Cheese'. Last month, for the first time, our paper became available to read through your email inbox. If you would like to receive this amazing monthly publication for yourself, simply send your email to joannehammond@southendcare.co.uk and we'll email the pdf version to you on the first Tuesday of every month!



Project 49



PROJECT 49 JOINED SURFERS AGAINST SEWAGE

This year we've joined with Surfers Against Sewage to assist them in their 'Million Mile Clean' project, a national initiative that has been set up to help protect our local beaches.

This is part of an ongoing campaign to protest against illegal sewage dumping on our doorstep. We all want to enjoy clean beaches, so we're supporting 'Surfers Against Sewage' in their efforts.

RAISING AWARENESS OF BREAST CANCER

We had a visit recently from the Lady McAdden Breast Cancer Trust about their work raising awareness of breast cancer. The event was open to anyone, male and female, and was organised by our Employment group. We listened to a talk in the morning and then the Lady McAdden volunteers were available to talk over coffee and cake for the rest of the morning.



INTRODUCING... JAMIE THE SCARECROW

We're pleased to announce the arrival of "Jamie the Scarecrow," our newest team member down at the allotment. Already settling in wonderfully, he's doing a great job keeping watch over the plots and adding a bit of character to the space. He's also very much looking forward to the warmer summer weather. Long, sunny days should suit him perfectly.

This is a very small snapshot of activities that took place at Project 49. If you would like to read about and see more, please visit our Facebook page [Facebook](#), or scan the QR code below.

Please Follow Us!



Employee of the Season



WINNER

Heather Glover
West Street

Her nomination said that she goes above and beyond to enrich the lives of the tenants at West Street, she arranges activities and theme nights. Examples included setting up fortnightly themed nights which included home cooked meals, with tables set to look like a restaurant and after the meal tenants play bingo and board games together. Every Christmas she hosts a themed party, 2024 was a Gingerbread theme afternoon tea and 2025 was Narnia, whereby the patio doors were turned into a wardrobe, we can't wait to see what this years theme will be.

RUNNER UP

Ellie Roper
Brook Meadows House

Her nominations told how she always goes above and beyond, consistently demonstrating exceptional dedication and professionalism. Ellie always approaches residents with patience and compassion even in challenging situations and is always ready to help a resident or colleague when needed.

RUNNER UP

Laura Rice
Making It Work

Laura's nomination said that she consistently goes above and beyond in her support for Service Users and their families. She undertakes additional duties in her role as a Menopause Champion and Mental Health First Aider and most recently has taken the lead at Barista Meadows Café whereby she supports staff training and ensures continuity of service.

The following people also received nominations this month:

Robert Gould – Support Worker – Longmans Extra Care Scheme, Analise Staines – Support Worker – Longmans Extra Care Scheme, Bernice Hooper – Support Worker – Longmans Extra Care Scheme, Kim Harvey – Support Worker – Longmans Extra Care Scheme, Michelle Coe – Service Lead – West Street, Adriana Faria – Support Worker – West Street, Sabrina Patterson – Support Worker – West Street, Emma Dumble – Support Worker – Westwood, Kay-Ann Anderson – Support Worker – Floating Support, The Floating Support and Outreach Team, Christopher Ottaway – Support Worker – Project 49, Sarah Hamilton – Senior Support Worker – Project 49, Gary Bartlett – Support Worker – Project 49, John Campbell – Support Worker – Viking House, Samantha Radley – Support Worker – Viking House, Monica Rayment – Support Worker – Viking House, Andrew Turner – Maintenance – Brook Meadows House, Julian Frost – Maintenance – Brook Meadows House, Sharnie Hamilton – Senior Carer – Brook Meadows House, Kay Saccoh – Community Carer – CIS, Natasha Richardson – Community Carer – CIS

**OUR SUMMER EMPLOYEE
 OF THE SEASON IS NOW OPEN!**

