



Report to South Woodham Ferrers Town Council For Events Community & Leisure Committee Meeting on 3rd February 2026

Since our last Report for the meeting held on 4th November 2025 there have been the following significant developments:

As reported in our previous report many thanks to SWF Town Council's Finance and Grants Committee for approving a grant to enable us to run two Mental Health Toolkit: Essentials (MHTK) workshops to the local community. These award-winning half-day sessions guide participants through the Mental Health Continuum – the spectrum we all move along and introduce the Emotional Needs & Resources approach. The MHTK key topics include: sleep and depression; security and trauma; how to meet emotional needs; and how to use innate resources to support wellbeing. Designed for everyone (families, friends, colleagues), the MHTK aims to create emotionally healthy environments and reduce stigma around mental health. The first session was held successfully on 26th January, when there were 11 attendees plus the presenter. There were also 3 apologies near the day for various unexpected reasons. The other session will take place on Wednesday 11th February morning and anything the Town Council is able to do to help promote this one, as did for the previous one, will be hugely appreciated. Also any Councillors or staff will be very welcome to attend.

The proposal for another research project to be undertaken in conjunction with Warwick Medical School's MA Pathways to the Public Health Workplace Placement scheme has been successful. It is expected to be: "To: Research to identify how Essex Integrated Care System (EICS) should standardise its approach to Integrated Neighbourhood Teams (INTs), starting with the SWF, Dengie & Maldon Central INT. "Neighbourhood Health" is a key aspect of the NHS 10-year Plan. What does this mean to local people/organisations and what is important to them when services are being designed? Priority to be given to individuals with more complex needs ie those with frailty or at the end of their lives, because data shows this is where most impact for local populations can be made." The work is expected to start in February and finish in May this year. The student who delivered the Accessibility report in 2025 has graduated with her MA and was top of her class.

Our Chair has been invited to join the Steering Group for the new ARU Medical School's Community Health Research Centre and we hope this will lead to some more research work being undertaken about SWF and area's health and welfare.

Our Chair has constantly been questioning the Mid and South Essex Foundation Trust and the Mid & South Essex Integrated Care Board about how they are reacting to the Care Quality Commission's report identifying serious faults in their services and inadequate leadership of our three local hospitals trust. The more recent tragic events in Broomfield A&E on the evening of Friday 16 January have also been in mind. At the time of typing we still await a suitable reply. An independent hospital is investigating the A&E incident. NHS England launched a Quality Summit on 12 December to ensure action is taken to address the concerns raised and such meetings continue regularly.

The joint Patient Group at Crouch Vale met at the end of November. They discussed how the screen in the waiting area could give more helpful information. The Practices are concerned about the number of patients failing to attend appointments and it was agreed that it would be useful to show the figures on the screen, emphasising the effects on the service caused by "no shows". Also highlighted were some more local activities such as the exercise sessions provided at the Village Hall. The Group was also shown data relating to the take up by practice populations of the various cancer screening services. Kingsway and Greenwood showed the highest take up of bowel screening compared with the Dengie Practices. However, they did not fare as well as the Dengie on breast screening. This may reflect the inability of Crouch Vale to arrange the mobile screening service which always used to be available at the Town Centre practices. An increase in nursing staff may help to increase take up. The two SWF Practices organised a visit from a representative of the Alzheimer's Society on December 10th. She was in the vestibule area of Crouch Vale and interacted with a number of patients, some of whom had come especially to see her. The vaccination programme was completed. However, people are encouraged to have the pneumococcal vaccine which is available for babies, adults over 65 and people with certain chronic conditions. Appointments for this can be made in the usual way.

Congratulations to Windle Court which is rated as Good all-round in the new CQC inspection report published on 26 January 2026.

The NHS continues to be under great pressure with another cold snap and rise in Norovirus. Hospitals are pushing towards the busiest levels for this time of year since before Covid.

Developments continue towards the reorganisation of Mid & South Essex (MSE) Integrated Care Board (ICB) into the Essex ICB to take effect in April 2026. Senior staff of these have to be often reminded that the local populations need to be kept in the picture. Our Chair attends meetings of the Essex Joint Committee (which is preparing for the launch of the Essex Integrated Care Board in 1st April 2026) and hopes by 2 February to have the written answer given to his question about the future for Alliances, Integrated Neighbourhood Teams and Primary Care Networks which will be key to the delivery of Neighbourhood Health plans.

The public inquiry into the mental health services in Essex continues.

The Group continues to represent SWF in Livewell Chelmsford and Culture Chelmsford, particularly with its priority of the link between culture and health. SWF Creatives is in partnership with Culture Chelmsford for three projects being delivered over 18 months, funded by Arts Council England, being Concrete Canvas, Chelmsford Museum Collectives and a Gaming Festival.

Our Chair continues his involvement in meetings across the NHS which directly impact on our local NHS. Our weekly newsletters continue to be e-circulated to over 300 subscribers. Our contribution to the monthly Issues of Focus is established as a regular item. Our weekly article is published on our website, the Town's social media and is included in our weekly newsletter.

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