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Issue 131

March 2023

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Welcome

HELLO and welcome to our March 2023 edition of YOUR ESSEX Local Guide. This month is always particularly busy with birthday's galore for my family plus Mothering Sunday. If you are doing something on that Sunday, hope you have a great day. It's been lovely seeing the flowers start to bloom and add a bit of colour to the gardens – despite the frost, snow, wind, rain and sun, sometimes all in the same day!

In February, we had a pair of tickets to see The Rocket Man Stage Show, and congratulations go to Hazel Douglas, Shoeburyness. This month, Gary Mac chatted to The Scottish Detective, David Swindle on his show, The Makings of a Murderer at the Cliffs Pavilion on 28th July. We have a pair of tickets to win on page 18. Good Luck to you all!

We bring you information on how an Essex charity helping the vulnerable and homeless has been affected by funding cuts on page 19, news from Southend Council on page 4 on the budgets and our usual updates and blogs from NEST in Essex (page 29) and Bar 'n' Bus (page 10).

I hope you enjoy our March issue. Have a great Mothering Sunday and see you next time. Please be sure to tell our local trades and businesses you saw their advertising within YOUR ESSEX Local Guide, thank you and please remember - Shop Local, Support Local.

Best Wishes.

Stacey Holt

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Why have a Will - you'll thank me when I'm gone!



BEAULIEU WILLS AND ESTATE PLANNING

Don't wait, Protect Your Estate

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Your funeral wishes can be detailed (and paid for) including what you would like to wear, songs to be played or things they want said about them. This could prevent grieving family members having to find funeral directors and guess about what you want.

A Will allows you to list how you would like your assets divided – jewellery, personal items, money, any donations you may wish to make, who looks after pets, how any property is divided so it is very clear what you would like to happen in the event of your death.

Lastly, a separate 'Letter of Wishes' can be completed which explains in simple terms exactly what you want to happen and where everything is kept i.e. pension documents, life assurance policies, savings documents and anything else pertinent.

A Will is a simple, straight forward, incredibly effective, and legal way of making sure your loved ones have one or two less things to worry about upon your death. Feel free to get in touch to get your wishes recorded in a Will.

Have a great month and best wishes.

Ian Nicholson



If you are interested in looking into a Will for yourself, feel free to contact me on info@bwep.uk or on **01277 562567**



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Positive Activities & Connections in Basildon

In the summer of 2020, Bar 'n' Bus were approached by Essex County for Voluntary Youth Services, a member of the Violence and Vulnerability Panel, to explore detached youth work in Basildon. Throughout the pandemic, the Bar 'n' Bus team had obtained key worker status and provided daily, street-based work youth work – being a safe and supportive presence for young people through lockdowns, and this approach enabled Bar 'n' Bus to grow their reach into Basildon.

Armand Kitoko was appointed as the full time youth development worker with the task of starting street-based detached youth work in the town, and building a wider youth work programme.

Two years on and Bar 'n' Bus team members now deliver supportive programmes and mentoring in partnership with all 5 secondary schools within Basildon, as well as delivering group work programmes of cooking and young women's self-defence. This is all in addition to the ongoing street-based youth work which started everything.

Street-based detached Youth Work is so called as it takes place outside of a centre, club or location that young people choose to be connected to. Like all youth work, detached youth work seeks to bring about informal and social education for young people based on the needs assessed by the detached youth worker. Detached Youth Workers meet young people in the place of their choosing, seeking to bring the youth work engagement to them. Since Detached Youth Workers are not operating from a building or activity over which they have power and control, young people are under no obligation to participate or follow any rules that the workers may feel they want to hold. Therefore, the relationship between youth worker and young people is entirely voluntary and everything is always up for negotiation.

This can mean that detached youth work is 'a long game'. Trust is built slowly in many cases and frequency of engagement can be very sporadic. A key focus for Bar 'n' Bus detached youth workers over the past 2 years has been listening to young people's views, concerns and hopes for their communities and seeking to develop a programme from there.

With the arrival of the Bar 'n' Bus' new youth work vehicle, the detached team has been able to offer young people a more stable, tangible engagement in the places they are choosing to meet. Working with the young people engaged on a detached session, the team have started to use the new vehicle as a regular drop-in space for young people in Leigh Chapel North and Pitsea. Each week, the vehicle is set up and provides a drop-in space for young people to come for a chat, a game and a hot chocolate. As with all Bar 'n' Bus youth work, relationship is key to this week. The team has seen much more stable and regular engagement with young people, and are now able to start working with them around specific topics such as healthy lifestyles, mental health, employment, support for education, and hopes for the future.

A further key part of this work is increasing opportunities for young people. This includes looking at the services and activities available to young people within their area and either signposting young people to them or building something new. The team has found a real lack of affordable and accessible programmes for young

people and are therefore working with those young people to develop a programme of activity and opportunity. This could include arts work such as dance or music, sports programmes, activity clubs or short courses – it all depends on how the young people lead things.

This is a really exciting time for the project since the regular engagement and enthusiasm of young people gives unlimited possibilities for new things to get off the ground! The challenge on funding and volunteer capacity is always ongoing, but the team have some great plans in place and we are very excited to get new opportunities in place for the young people we are working with.



Pictures:
Bar 'n' Bus Mobile Unit.

Do you want to know more? As always, there are a number of ways that you could support this work. Perhaps you would like to explore volunteering for a youth work programme, or maybe you would like to consider regular donating to support the work. To find out more about how to get involved please visit www.barnbus.org.uk or drop us an email at hello@barnbus.org.uk

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Major Investment Into Adult Social Care & Children's Services Approved

The council's budget for 2023/24 has been approved. The agreed budget includes a range of revenue investments, most notably over £7m into adult social care and £2.5m into children's services, along with an overall capital investment programme of £169m for a range of important projects.

This includes new investment of £1m for playground refurbishment, £1m for sea wall refurbishment and access improvements, continued investment into the council's road and pavements programme, £17m investment into create more council housing and £1.5m towards tackling climate challenge.

Council tax will rise by 4.99%, made up of 2.99% for general use and a further 2% which will be used to deal with the ongoing pressures and demand in adult social care. The rise of £1.32 a week for a Band C home (99p for Band A, £1.16 for Band B and £1.49 for Band D).

Proposals to adjust the dimming schedule of streetlights were withdrawn prior to 14 February cabinet along with other amendments.

Cllr Stephen George, leader of the council, says: "This has been the toughest budget setting process for a decade and the scale of challenge that local councils face is huge."

"However, we have approved a robust, sustainable, and balanced budget that protects services for the most vulnerable and continues to invest in our wonderful city where it is appropriate and prudent to do so."

"Whilst the budget proposes savings in many areas, we are protecting and investing in services for the vulnerable and maintaining universal services that all our residents value and rely on."

"This includes significant revenue investment of over £10m into both children's and adult services and retaining an ambitious but realistic capital investment programme that will see £169m invested into key projects over the next five years."

"This has been the toughest budget setting process for a decade"





The Makings of a Murderer

Just announced, a treat for True-Crime fansis coming to the **Cliffs Pavilion** on **Friday 28th July**.

“I was a detective in the early 80s when things were totally different from what they are today”

The Makings of a Murderer investigates the UK's most notorious serial killers and is hosted by the detective who brought serial killer Peter Tobin to justice.

The chilling, thrilling, night sees The Scottish Detective, David Swindle, closely investigate the likes of Tobin, Jack the Ripper, Harold Shipman and Peter Sutcliffe plus 'Killer Couples' – Fred and Rose West and The Moors Murderers Ian Brady and Myra Hindley.

Theatregoers will be treated to the detective's perspective, including the early warning signs and the clues behind a serial killer.

Here Gary McElligott asks **David Swindle** what goes into The Makings of a Murderer!

How did you embark on your career in the Police Force?

“I was a senior science technician at the young age of 22 with no imminent further prospects so I joined the police hoping for a challenging and varied career. I certainly got that during my 34 years in the police – mostly within the CID. It was the best career move I ever made.”



Picture right:
David Swindle.

Was your ambition always to become a detective?

“YES! When I joined as a uniform officer my ambition was always to become a CID Officer and my ambitions were fulfilled when I started in the CID after three-and-a-half years in the police.”

I presume things have changed vastly in detective work over the years. What are your main recollections of the era when you first became a detective?

“I was a detective in the early 80s when things were totally different from what they are today. There was no DNA, no CCTV, no mobile phones and a totally different attitude and culture. Things were totally different in the police and society with different expectations. Oh how I think back to those days and wish there was DNA and other technology for some horrible cases which were not solved then and how it would be today.”

There seems to be a fascination in true-crime documentaries on TV currently. Is this something that has always existed, or is it a new phenomenon?

“There has always been a fascination for police policing and murders. However, over the years with the changes in technology and the public's thirst for information, the True-Crime phenomena has developed to what it is today. Rightly so, the public should be aware of what horrible killers did to victims. However, sometimes there is too much focus on the killers and the victims are forgotten.”



You are perhaps best-known as the detective that brought Peter Tobin to justice. When you first took on the case, could you have ever imagined the consequences of getting the call?

“I am proud of what I did with the Tobin case and forming Operation Anagram – which was an idea I had. I could never have anticipated how that would have developed when I first got involved as Senior Investigating Officer for the murder of Angelika Kluk in St Patrick Church Glasgow.”

How do you present your show, and is it easy to keep audiences engaged for two hours?

“Without giving too much away about the content and structure before people come along, it is me speaking supported by on-screen visual material and a stage like a CID Office. In the shows to date there certainly has been no attention lapses from audiences with a thirst for more information. There are lots of follow up questions coming to our various social media platforms, all of which we follow up with responses.”

How did you come to work with Entertainers to present the Makings of a Murderer theatre show?

“The director of Canvey Island-based Entertainers, James Taylor, contacted me towards the end of last year and we got our heads together as to how it would be structured with my criminal expertise knowledge and the theatrical expertise of Entertainers to pull together such an unusual, fast-moving show.”

As the tour has progressed, is it everything you anticipated? And what are the highs and lows of life on the road?

“Absolutely – it is exciting for me being able to travel throughout the UK speaking to audiences about what I love: namely the investigation of crime, murderers and the wider issues about crime, justice and victims.”

“So far it has all been about the highs of doing a huge tour around the UK and meeting such lovely people. I don’t envisage there will be any lows. I’m not getting any younger, but thrive on challenges as was always the case in my vast police career.”

Are you careful not to glamourise the serial killers you talk about in the production?

“Absolutely, glamourising murders is something I have always avoided doing when I am involved in TV documentaries and that is the same during the show. I mention that in my narrative.”

Do you keep yourself up-to-date on the technological advances?

“Since retiring (although I don’t like that phrase) from the police I have been involved in using my skills to help families of victims killed abroad and reviewing cases and appearing on TV documentaries. So, being active using my skills, I keep myself up to date with the latest developments in science, investigations and policing.”

Will there be tips on how to commit the “perfect murder” in the show?

“No! But it does get a mention by me, come to the show and find out.”

You speak at length about the media and their part in capturing killers. Do newspapers, TV and radio still have a role to play?

“Absolutely, the media, social media and general public are very important to the police when dealing with all types of investigations.”

“Without giving too much away about the content and structure before people come along, it is me speaking supported by on-screen visual material and a stage like a CID Office”

Picture top left: David Swindle in The Makings of a Murderer.

“I have worked on literally hundreds of murder cases, I never forget the horrors of what I have seen”

Picture top right:
David Swindle in *The Makings of a Murderer*.

Do you think the advent of social media has made the world a safer or scarier place?

“I use social media to reach potential witnesses in other countries and the UK and have various social media platforms, as do the police. So, you can see the huge benefits of social media. As with anything there are risks and dangers which need to be managed and mitigated.”

Do you have to be of a certain mentality to do the job of a police detective?

“There are so many traits needed for a good detective. Examples are: dedicated, don't accept the obvious, have an analytical mind, ability to communicate and cope with pressures of working long hours and challenges of such a role.”

How many murder scenes have you witnessed. And how do you ensure this does not affect your personal life?

“I have worked on literally hundreds of murder cases, I never forget the horrors of what I have seen but like every other challenging profession or job I coped and tried to get the right work



life balance – which is important in all jobs.”

Are you shocked by the killers' cruelty to their victims?

“Yes! I have always been shocked by the horrors of what I have seen during my police career.”

Thanks to TV crime dramas, being a detective appears to be a glamorous profession. Do you have any advice for anyone thinking of taking their first steps towards become one?

“The Police in general is not a glamorous role, but one of the most challenging and rewarding professions and the best career move I ever made. I would highly recommend it to anyone interested in joining.”

Do you think you can spot a potential serial killer just by looking at them? And are there clues to look for that might indicate that a friend or relative might secretly be a serial killer?

“Come along to *The Cliffs Pavilion* and see what you think when I speak.”

To book your seats for *The Makings of a Murderer* at the Cliffs Pavilion, Station Road, Westcliff SS0 7RA, on Friday, 28th July, please contact www.southendtheatres.org.uk 0343 310 0030. 18-plus advised.



If you would like to be in with a chance of winning a pair of tickets to see **The Makings of a Murderer** at the **Cliffs Pavilion** on **Friday 28th July at 7.30pm** then simply answer this question:

What was the name of the Operation that caught Peter Tobin?

1. **Anagram** or 2. **Redwood**

To enter simply go to our website www.thisisyoursessex.com and click on the competitions page and then submit your details and answer, or post your entry including your address and telephone number to:

David Swindle Competition, Your Essex Local Guide, 32 Springfield Park Lane, Chelmsford, Essex CM2 6EH

Closing date for entries is 24th March 2023. Winner will be announced in next month's edition of *Your Essex Local Guide*.

Best of luck!

Essex Charity

Funding Issues



Sanctus
Rebuilding Lives 365

Sanctus is a Charity based in Chelmsford, that has been supporting local and Essex based homeless and vulnerable people for over 10 years from its 3-story building in Baddow Road. Up until November last year it was open 7 days a week 365 days a year.

Unfortunately, due to rising fuel prices, cost of living increases and a reduction in personal and corporate donations, the Trustees were forced to have to come to the decision to close the doors to service users at weekends. The hope is that the measure will be temporary, but it's meant they have had to redouble their efforts to reduce costs, and bring new revenue in.

So, what is it they do at Sanctus?

THE CAFÉ

On the ground floor of the building (which used to be a bank back in the day) is where the café is based and is set up like most cafés with a serving counter, tea and coffee facilities, and enough tables and chairs to seat around 60 people.

The Café provides hot drinks all day, serves a basic breakfast (cereals, toast etc) in the morning, and a different hot meal every day it's open, freshly prepared onsite by trained chefs and volunteers.

They also make sure that they serve the food to the service users at their table. It's amazing how much this does for their self-esteem and confidence.

The service uses are not charged a penny for this food, drink and shelter.



The café offers an environment for anyone to come into, where they can feel safe, secure, wanted, and also offers a sense of community for people who are often mostly on their own, or who live in environments that are not in any way friendly.

THE HUB

The Hub lies on the second and third floors and is where service users can come and use a variety of services tailored to help them get their lives back on track. This can be anything from helping with mental health issues, drug and alcohol addiction problems, domestic abuse, or helping any vulnerable person to overcome the myriad of problems they may be facing.

Although not offering accommodation within the building, they also find new flats/houses for homeless individuals and families. Often these will be single parents who have been battling domestic abuse. Outside agencies also use the hub to provide much needed services direct to the service users. Examples are pop up banks, health care checks, addiction clinics and a variety of mental health support services.

100% of Sanctus's funding comes from personal, local corporates and fundraising activities. They also submit regular bids to large charitable trusts – though these trusts have been inundated since Covid and Support for Ukraine, so success rates have fallen. There are some wonderful people in Essex who regularly support the charity, both financially and via volunteering. In fact, Sanctus couldn't survive without the fabulous generosity of these volunteers.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

There are several ways you can help Sanctus by donating money, time by volunteering or with items such as food, toiletries and tents. Following Sanctus on social media and sharing their posts to spread the word. Take a tour of Sanctus to see our work in person. Finally, if you have a business or work for a company that has a Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) policy then we would love to work with you.

Picture bottom left:
Sanctus Café.

Picture top right:
Sanctus staff.

Sanctus is a relatively unknown oasis of hope for the vulnerable of Essex. With any luck, and with the help and support of the people of Essex, they will soon be back supporting their service users 7 days a week. Website: www.sanctus-home.com
Facebook: www.facebook.com/SanctusCharity Email: info@sanctus-home.com Phone: 01245 257985

Your **Essex** Local Guide

LOCAL LEISURE GUIDE

Welcome to our March LOCAL LEISURE GUIDE

This month, we have a gorgeous recipe for a Cinnamon & Chocolate Soufflé on page 22.

Thank you to regular reader, Emily Rhodes for her family's attempt at the Prawn & Spinach Biryani in our January issue.



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to our local restaurants,
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QUIZ CORNER

GENERAL KNOWLEDGE

1. Who was the inaugural First Minister of the devolved Scottish Government?
2. What is the State Capital of New York?
3. Which actor connects Paddington, WIA and The Gold?
4. Approximately 78% of the air in the Earth's atmosphere is which gas?
5. According to the Acts of the Apostles, which Biblical figure replaced Judas Iscariot as one of the 12 Apostles?
6. Which organ contains the glomeruli?
7. What was the name of Charles Dickens unfinished novel?
8. How many teams in the English Football League?
9. What is Simply Red's only number 1 hit single?
10. Which star returns as Batman in the upcoming Flash film after decades away from the role?

MOVIES

1. What was the first feature length animated movie ever released?
2. For which movie did Tom Hanks score his first Academy Award nomination?
3. What's the name of the skyscraper in Die Hard?
4. What flavour of Pop Tarts does Buddy the Elf use in his spaghetti in Elf?
5. Who played park owner John Hammond in Jurassic Park?

FOOD & DRINK

1. Which fish is the main ingredient of Scotch Woodcock?
2. What gives Windsor Red cheese its colour and flavour?
3. What ingredient is included in food in Florentine style?
4. What is the main ingredient of black pudding?
5. What is the main flavour of aioli?

“Get Your Thinking Cap On”

- ANSWERS**
- GENERAL KNOWLEDGE**
1. Donald Dewar
 2. Albany
 3. Hugh Bonneville
 4. Mithras
 5. Mathias
 6. Kidney
 7. The Mystery of Edwin Drood
 8. 72
 9. Fairground
 10. Michael Keaton
- MOVIES**
1. Snow White & 7 Dwarfs
 2. Big
 3. Nakatomi Plaza
 4. Chocolate
 5. Richard Attenborough
- FOOD & DRINK**
1. Anchovy
 2. Red Wine
 3. Spinach
 4. Blood
 5. Garlic

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Dish of the Month



Cinnamon & Chocolate Soufflé



The cinnamon twist to a traditional chocolate soufflé adds a subtle difference to a pudding favourite. Serves 4.

INGREDIENTS

5 Eggs, separated into yolks and whites

75g Plain Chocolate

300ml Milk

1 tbsp Milk

50g Butter

40g Plain Flour

2 tbsps of Caster Sugar

½ tsp Cinnamon Powder

Melted Butter and Caster Sugar
for coating soufflé dish

METHOD

1. Preheat oven to 200°C.

2. Grease 4 individual ramekins with melted butter and dust with sugar.

3. Put 1 tbsp of milk and the chocolate in a heat-proof bowl and melt over hot boiling water. Set aside.

4. Melt butter in a saucepan over gentle heat, then add the flour all at once; mix well and remove from the heat.

5. Add milk into flour mixture a little at a time, stirring constantly until the mixture forms a creamy paste.

6. Add melted chocolate, cinnamon and egg yolks. Mix well and set aside.

7. Whisk the egg whites and add sugar, 1 tbsp at a time. Keep whisking until egg whites stiffen.

8. Slowly add egg whites into chocolate mixture. Pour into soufflé dish and bake for 20 minutes. Serve immediately.

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The Biggest (and oldest!) Estate Agent Con!

This really gets under my skin - I've ranted about this for hours, I've posted videos explaining about it, I've told everyone I ever met about it and yet, I still hear the same thing happening... daily. Grrrr!

So, what is the con? Well... it's made up of two parts. One is what I like to call 'instruction for reduction'

Estate Agents are 9/10 times targeted. These targets are often based on how many properties they 'list' or 'get on the market', meaning they are set a target which they must hit or face the axe, that's the reality.

This causes bad habits for some agents, for the sake of their own mortgage and family, and they go to any length possible to win the business of a prospective client over the competition so they can survive in their role for another month.

Often, you will hear them overvalue a property (who doesn't want to hear their home is worth more right?) and they will then undercut all the other agents on fee (who doesn't want a lower fee?), and then, once the owner is wowed by that, they then tie the owner into a long contract! This could be anything from 6+ weeks - I've even heard of 24 weeks recently!

The other part is the contracts themselves. I'm hearing more and more agents are now offering lower term contracts, anything from 0 weeks - 4 weeks is coming up more and more (about time!!!). However, the crafty ones are hiding a secret in the small print, which is often either smaller text/font on the contract or hidden amongst a huge number of terms and conditions (which nobody wants to read) so the clients get handed this, they see the level of

reading and often scan through and then sign it, missing the important part. The notice periods.

If you are unhappy with that agent, you often will need to give a notice period. This is the period of time, after cancelling the contract, in which you cannot market with other agents until this has expired. Therefore, you are 'stuck'. Now, if you are unhappy with the agent enough to give notice, you don't want to be stuck for longer, as they will likely get as many people through your door as possible in a last-ditched attempt to get a buyer. Often the people coming through are the poorest-quality buyers in a last attempt at saving a commission.

These notice periods vary. One local agent told a seller they have "no tie in" only to have a nice 28-day notice period hidden in the small print... crafty.

Both of these tactics are going around more now, especially in a tougher, more competitive market so watch out! Don't fall victim to this, and make sure you read every single word in the contract before signing. You are in control and can dictate what you sign.

If the agent is confident in their valuation, their service, and what they are telling you, they will agree to a zero-week contract with no notice period attached. This puts you in control and shows the agent is not worried about your leaving. However, if the agent will not agree to this, well, it raises more questions than it provides answers.

Until next month, have a great March all!

Nick Cheshire

“You are in control and can dictate what you sign”



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Picture:
Nick Cheshire.

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