# Southend Association of Voluntary Services

## Newsletter Issue 4 2016/17



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## **Editorial**



Welcome to our Spring newsletter - as I write the sun is shining and although the world is enduring tough times we have reason to be optimistic in Southend. I have just read through our newsletter and am struck with how much positivity there is around; from the experiences of our volunteers to the hard work of our staff here at SAVS - and this I know is replicated across the **Voluntary and Community** Sector in Southend.

This month we are celebrating ten years of our fantastic Turning Tides project. You will see on pages 8-10 how much they have achieved over the years and you will probably notice how much they have had to flex and change the services they deliver in order to keep doing what they do, which is in essence to support the most vulnerable people in Southend, whether this

is children, older people, single parents, people with health problems, victims of scams, etc. All credit goes to the team lead by Anthony Quinn for all their hard work, tenacity and commitment over the ten years. We are very proud of them.

You may have noticed a big change at SAVS with the closure of our Charity Shop. We were sad to say goodbye to the lovely volunteers and staff, Paul and Christine who have worked extremely hard to give us a shop to be proud of.

We will shortly be welcoming A Better Start to our ground floor to give them a base at the heart of the community. Please see pages 16 and 17 for an update on our work with A Better Start and take a look at the website, www. abetterstartsouthend.co.uk for more information about the whole project.

Finally, we have lots coming up at SAVS over the next few months, from our thematic meetings for Carers, mental health, dementia, this is part of our new look thematics which will focus on groups of people we work with in the voluntary sector including carers, children & young people, older people,

mental health and diversity which will include BME and LGBT communities we will also be continuing with our fundraisers and volunteer managers thematics.

As well as the thematics we have our extensive training programme all the details for this can be found on our website at www.savs-southend.org/training

Alison Semmence Chief Executive

Get in touch

Phone **01702 356000** 

Email info@ savs-southend. co.uk

Follow us on twitter @savs\_southend

## **Volunteer Centre**

We have had some fantastic highly skilled volunteers come through our Volunteer Centre over the last few months and we know how important it is that they are placed in the right voluntary role.

The first step is to meet and talk to them about the roles we currently have available that match their skills or interests.

Southend Older People's Assembly are just one Organisation who has benefitted from such a match when Roger came to see us at the Volunteer Centre and he has been working with them to help build a new Website for their Organisation. Roger also volunteers for SAVS doing the Volunteer Centre's Social Media. for Triple T's helping at a Childrens club and he volunteers at HARP too!

Sometimes a prospective volunteer might have an unusual skill which doesn't match with anything obvious on our database. If that is the case, we might send an email out to all the Organisations who are registered with the Volunteer Centre, with a little piece about what the volunteer is offering and asking Organisations to come back to us if they think they might have a

suitable role. We can then help them register that role with the Volunteer Centre and put them in touch with the prospective volunteer. It is great when a plan comes together and we have had some wonderful results in this way. For most people making an enquiry we recommend that they start small, with one volunteer role, and see how it goes in order to avoid taking on more than they can handle.

However some prospective volunteers really do have many talents as well as the ability to multi-task and they go on to volunteer for a variety of different Organisations. We also encourage our skilled volunteers to consider volunteer roles that they may not have thought of, like becoming a School

Governor or a Trustee.

Here at SAVS we run
Trustee Information
Sessions which are
ideal for anyone who
would like to find out
more about what's
involved in becoming a
Trustee. Equally, if your
Organisation needs a new
Trustee, please do let us
know by emailing vb@
savs-southend.co.uk

Spring is upon us! We know that because we are starting to get enquiries from volunteers looking for one off events and activities where they can volunteer. If your Organisation is holding an event over the summer please do let us know if you would like our help recruiting volunteers – please give us as much notice as you can!



Spring has sprung in the Volunteer Centre

# Time Banking gets out and about

The Time Bank Team have been busy getting the word out there about how easy it is to get involved with Timebanking. Emily has been to talk to the Southend Evangelical Church Lunch Club and the students at South Essex College.

Interest is growing as more people realise what a lovely project Timebanking is and how much potential it has for bringing people together to help each other. The Time Bank is made up of people who all wish to offer their skills to help others. For every hour they help someone, they earn one Time Bank credit, they can either use that credit to ask someone to do something for them or they can donate their credits into a community pot for those people who need them. People like Dot.

Dot is 85 and has been given a tablet that she doesn't know how to use. Dot sometimes feels lonely and trapped in her tiny flat in Southend. Dot asked us to help her find someone with an interest in history as she wanted to use her tablet to search her family tree. We sent a shout out to Time Bank members and J responded. We put Dot in touch with J and the rest is...well...history!

J got in touch to tell us about their experience with Dot "I met Dot yesterday, we had a good natter and I will certainly keep in touch. Hopefully during the next few weeks she and I can make a real friendship. I can help with her tablet, we will get that up and going, she needs an email address, etc., thank you for introducing the pair of us...... "

Time Banking is completely flexible – you just tell us what skills you are prepared to offer and then its down to you to choose who you would like to help. All Time Bank members are referenced and insured. It really is that easy.

For groups its great news too, because not only can you ask for help in all kinds of ways... someone to come along and play an instrument perhaps or help with the garden... but also you can bank the hours you meet as a group already!

So you don't even have to do anything else if you don't want to. Whether you are a book club, a choir, a knitting group or a running club – we love you all and we need you to join the Southend Time Bank so that together we can help make Southend a kinder place – one hour at a time.

Just go to www.tinyurl.com/southend-timebank or call Emily for further information.





## Meet the Funder

On the 7 February SAVS held a Meet the Funder session, eight funders attended with six giving 20 minute presentations to attendees. Members were invited to attend presentations and/or book short one to one slots with each of the funders.

100 people attended representing 74 different organisations from Southend. This was almost double the number of people and organisations who attended the event in 2016. 94% of those who attended and completed a feedback survey said they would be making an application to one of the funders present on the day, 87% said the one to one sessions were useful, with 62.5% planning to request £1,000 - £50,000.

Positive feedback was received from the funders attending with Sally Page, Grants Officer from Heritage Lottery feeding back; 'We felt the day went well and seemed very well attended; we might even need more chairs in the presentation room next time! In particular, it was good that some people attended the talks whilst others still stayed at the tables, meaning the room didn't just empty when the talks started, which does sometimes happen.

Also, it was great to have time and space for lunch, again very rare at funding fairs! Overall it felt like a productive day with some interesting project ideas discussed.'

Comments after the event included;

- Event was very good and a great opportunity.
- A very helpful morning for me and thanks to SAVS for organising - I brought my colleague with me who was able to cover the presentations therefore we gained as much as we could from the morning we were there.
- Good ideas from the funders they were very friendly and helpful.

We will hold another event in 2018, and consider inviting additional funders such as Children in Need and Essex Community Foundation.

Whilst the Meet the Funder day cannot guarantee funding for those attending, it builds the confidence of those attending to do so and supports them in realising the opportunities available. It is also a great way for SAVS to profile the work it does to support groups. In the coming months we will ask those who attended to inform us if they are successful in the funding applications, and have already been working with many to review their applications to the funders they met there.



Gina and Annette from Transpire were ready to conquer the Meet the Funder Day

## Sean's Story

The Supported Volunteering Project is a Big Lottery funded project which supports people who have experienced mental ill health into volunteering. Project Coordinator Rachel Rooks has been working with Sean Sonnet since 2015, here is his story;

I heard about Rachel and SAVS through another service user at SEPT mental health services. I was very low at the time – the lowest I had ever felt with my depression. I hadn't had paid employment for over six years and depression was hanging over me like 'the black dog' of Winston Churchill.



I loved my job, and was employed by News International working in print for The Sun newspaper, until I was

made redundant in 2004. I then took on some odd jobs here and there until I finally stopped working in 2010. I missed the feeling of being useful, valued and my mates from The Sun. My depression was escalating and now I was having panic attacks too. When it became too much for me to cope with, I looked for support and found it.

Rachel supported by helping me understand that I could still be valued and needed, only this time I would be volunteering. I found my feet doing this at a snooker club that supports men living with Alzheimer's. Once a week I would go along and play snooker, chat and laugh with the men. I felt respected and wanted there and my self-confidence soon started to improve.

Before long, Rachel was offering me 'one off' volunteering opportunities at local events doing marshalling or the box office. I've since done events for Southend Carnival, Southend Carers, Headway Essex and Metal Village Green. I like doing the 'one offs' Its not a massive commitment, I meet new people and I always have a laugh and make new friends.

I loved volunteering for the Alzhiemers Society and although I'd learnt so much about the illness and the men I play snooker with, I knew it wasn't enough to fill the void of not working. A year after volunteering started, I knew my next step was to look for a job.

In August 2016 I started work at a big supermarket, who wear a lime green uniform, you know the one! I'm a cleaner, I work in a team with other cleaners and can honestly say I'm so happy to be back at work. I had loads of doubts at first; What about my physical health? I'm diabetic, overweight and have high blood pressure?

Volunteering and working helped me lose weight and reduce the blood pressure – I now walk probably 2-3 miles everyday cleaning! And I was worried about coming off benefits, how can I afford it, what if I become ill and lose my job?



Sean in his uniform outside Asda

The transition from benefits to paid work was easy! I talked to the jobcentre and they helped me understand how they could support me in this and what could happen if I did become too ill again to work.

The worries were endless, but the pay off of working was so worth it.

Volunteering and paid work has helped lift my mental health. I still get low and feel like I want to shut down, but when I do I have friends whom I work with that help me come back up. I'm needed and that feels great.

My personal life has improved too – my homelife has changed, I'm happier and more motivated than ever to try everything and anything!

Volunteering was my first big step to getting back to how I wanted to feel. It has helped me feel good enough to seek out a job, it has reminded me that I am useful for something and has given me my mojo back.

I'm still volunteering at the snooker club and can't wait to get back to helping at the one off events again.

Cheers SAVS for helping

me get to where I needed to go.

To find out more about receiving extra support into volunteering, give Rachel Rooks a call on 01702 356021 or email svproject@savs-southend. co.uk

50 people a year are supported through the project

Three people
have successfully
used
volunteering as a
pathway to gain
paid employment

## Donations flooding in for Turning Tides



Turning Tides received a cheque on behalf of the Triple T's youth clubs at a gifting ceremony held at the Holiday Inn Airport Hotel recently.

£300 was kindly donated by the London Southend Airport Community Team. The money will go towards activities for the children aged 8-12 years of age who attend either the Unitarian, Woodgrange or Balmoral club.



In November the Folk Like Us Project was one on the three beneficiaries of the Waitrose Community Matters Green Token scheme where £1000 is handed out each month.

Turning Tides Manager, Anthony Quinn and Folk Like Us Steering Group Volunteer, Jackie Wainwright were delighted to receive the cheque for £237 – the money raised went towards a festive buffet at the Folk Like Us Christmas Connect event.

Thank you to Waitrose Southend for their generous support of the Folk Like Us project.

## **New wheels for Turning Tides**

SAVS have recently being able to purchase a new van to support the day to day work of the charity. This has been made possible by some kind supporters.

We would like to say a big thank you to ROSCA Trust, Sainsbury's Southend and an anonymous donor for their kind donations allowing us to update from the ten year old van that had served us so well.

The van will allow the team to transport Folk Like Us members, transport equipment for the Triple T clubs and much much more!



Turning Tides new 2017 Van

## **Turning Tides Team turns ten**

This month sees the
Turning Tides Team turn
ten! The project was
named and launched in
April 2007 as part of the
three year Neighbourhood
Management funding
provided by central

government. In those days
Turning Tides had eight
staff members including
five wardens in their bright
red uniforms patrolling
the streets in the most
disadvantaged wards of
Southend, six days a week!

to improve services.
Turning Tides established
the yearly Stay Safe event
held in Southchurch Park
each year.

Turning Tides

To YEAR ANNIVERSARY

Est. 2007

Helping to give residents a voice and improve their quality of life, working to improve the environment and working with partner agencies

With the funding stream ending in March 2010 it was deemed the wardens played an important role in the town and Southend Council agreed a further years funding to keep the team in place and to provide SAVS with some time to identify what parts of the role they would seek to secure future funding



for and evolve the project further.

In 2011 the important step was taken as SAVS were successful in securing a range of funding streams allowing Turning Tides to deliver more focussed work in the community. This saw Turning Tides delivering 'Make Your Mark' a project identifying Active Citizens, training and building an Active Citizen Network.

Also funding from Children in Need was secured for three years allowing the team to build on the important work carried out with the young people in central Southend. The Triple T clubs were established with the aim to raise aspirations and confidence in children aged 8-13yrs living in disadvantaged areas. The programme continues to operate with a second round of funding from Children in Need secured in 2015, so far 280 children have been

supported across the six years the project has run.

Towards the of the year we saw the beginning of the Personalised Travel Planning project that would be delivered each year until March 2016 funded by the Local Sustainable Transport Fund. Turning Tides staff and volunteers visited over 13,000 households over the life of the projects promoting sustainable travel and creating travel information and supporting community events e.g. try a train day, try a bus day etc...

In 2014 the same model of engagement was used to deliver 'Talking Health' a project delivered in targeted areas to engage with residents around the way they used health services and how they accessed information.

In 2014/15 we delivered a project working to support people with hoarding tendencies. The project

aimed to help residents battling the disorder to set goals and recognise behaviour triggers and help them live a better quality of life.

SAVS have delivered a variety of home visit projects through Turning Tides such as Home Fire Safety visits in partnership with Essex Fire and Rescue Service, a team of trained volunteers installing smoke detectors and giving safety advice to over 65 and vulnerable residents in Southend.

Warm Home Visits were delivered to vulnerable residents in partnership with the NHS South East Essex delivering much needed assistance through out the winters and referring residents with long term issues to relevant agencies.

The home visit role model was funded in 2013 by the Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex as a tool to help bring

dwelling burglary down in the town. The volunteer team of ten visited around 1500 homes providing advice and carrying out security surveys.

In 2015 the partnership working on Safe as Houses grew and Trading Standards and the Scam Hub came on board to supply responder lists to our trained volunteer team. The team make doorstop visits once the residents have been informed by letter we are working in the area. The aim is to raise awareness of scams amongst the elderly community and

build resilience against mass marketing scam mail targeted at over 65's.

Approximately 480 residents in Southend are on the list that is shared by criminals who then target them to deceive them for financial gain. The project continues into its fifth year providing vital support to the community and identifying vulnerable residents for long term help.

Across the years Turning Tides has been involved in Community First Panels working with local organisations and community members to bring much needed activity into the most disadvantaged wards of Southend. In 2014/15 we delivered a project working to support people with hoarding tendencies. The project helped residents battling the disorder to set goals and recognise triggers and help them live a better quality of life.

The project continues to evolve and meet the communities' needs and it continues to work with residents striving to create safer and stronger communities.



**Current Turning Tides staff team** 

## **Meeting Real Life Superheroes**



Roger presenting the new website he designed for Southend Older People's Assembly

My journey into the rewarding world of volunteering began in early January 2017 when I met with Emily at SAVS to learn about the process and to discuss which types of organisations I would like to get involved in. Having not volunteered before, Emily's warm and friendly advice enabled me to highlight 3 opportunities that suited my skills, interests and availability.

I have been lucky enough to be part of the reception team at SAVS for almost two months now. The amazing work that Emily, Lynne and Judy do helps people find organisations to volunteer for, take care of the SAVS team and guides people in need to the right charities. Along with the rest of the team, they help offer an essential central hub of information and support to the charities and organisations in Southend.

I have also started volunteering for a charity called Southend Older People's Assembly. This wonderful organisation helps to give people over the age of 55 a louder voice within the community and acts as a platform for engagement. The committee works tirelessly

to ensure that issues relating to older people are resolved and everyone is heard. I have had the pleasure of working closely with Lynda and the rest of the committee to create a new interactive website. We have designed it to be a central point of information on meetings, events and important news within the area for the older generation. It also includes all information about Southend OPA and how to join. We held a workshop recently to finalise the website and are all very excited to be launching within the next month.

My final volunteering

role is with Turning Tides, where I attend and help out at a Thursday Kids Club. Based within the Balmoral Estate, it provides fun and structured activities for children from less fortunate backgrounds. Aged between 8 and 12, the 20 or so children are absolute gems and a delight to be around. So far we have had safety demonstrations from the police, had a tasty pancake day, painted jars and my team even won a castle building contest! The time and work put into the

clubs by Hayley and Laura is incredible. They are not only excellent role models to the children but help to build confidence and inspire creativity. Seeing how much fun the children have and how much of a difference the team are making makes any time I spend there a pleasure. If only there were more Hayley and Laura's so more children could benefit.

When I began this experience I was hoping to share my skills and make a difference, in my own small

way, to local charities. I had not expected to have such overwhelming admiration and respect for the real life superheroes who relentlessly work to keep local charities alive and continually support our local community.

My time volunteering so far has been truly humbling. I hope to volunteer long into the future and make a difference like the amazing people I have met so far.

Roger Savage

## A Day in the Life - Hayley Duff

Today is my first day back after a week of annual leave (long sigh). I know I will have loads to catch up on so I start my day a little earlier.

I currently work across two projects; The Triple T's which stands for Turning Tides Team and a new project called A Better Start.

Triple T's are weekly youth clubs which have been set up through funding from Children in Need. They are for children aged 8-13 living within the Kursaal and Victoria wards of the town. They run on a Monday, Tuesday and Thursday evening and are

geared around building aspirations and confidence in young people.

A Better Start is a £40 million lottery funded research project to improve the lives of families and children who are 0-4 and live in Southend. I am working on a pilot project to engage with parents who live in the Better Start wards across the town. My lovely new colleague Georgia and I have been tasked with engaging parents and listening to their views and experiences of services, setting up parent forums in each ward, planning and helping to deliver Parent Champion training

which will give parents the chance to go on and shape the way services are delivered in Southend.

#### 10:30am

I start my day by going through the emails and messages that have built up over the week and get back to anyone who is waiting on a response. There is a mixture of emails, one from Metro Bank regarding an upcoming visit to the club, Family Action wanting to refer a child to the youth clubs, the Forum library about the upcoming workshops for the children and Chatsworth House regarding our visit with the children in August and so on.

For the past 5 years we have been lucky enough to take 20 youngsters from the youth clubs who may not necessary have the opportunity to go on holiday, on a week-long residential to the Peak District. Part of my role is to plan and book the activities for the week. find 3 suitable (willing) volunteers who feel brave enough to take this many kids on holiday! liaise with the lodges where we will be staying and the coach company, produce a holiday pack for parents and go through this with them, find out any further information that we may need to know about each child's health/dietary needs etc.

#### 11:00am

After I have finished my emails and checked my diary to see if I have any up and coming meetings to attend or people to visit, I start preparing for the club session tonight. I print off a register and text all parents and volunteer to remind them about the session. I gather any equipment needed for tonight's session; make sure I have the essentials e.g. Emergency contact box, first aid kit etc. and load this all up in the van



One of the three Triple T Clubs

ready to go.

#### 1:00pm

I have a quick sneaky peak at my Better Start emails and reply to these. Have a quick check of my diary to see where I need to be tomorrow.

#### 1:40pm

I take a call from Sharon at Tesco's and we discuss different ways they can support the children's clubs. Sharon is one of many people I liaise with from local businesses/ service providers in the town to see if or how they can support the youth clubs as one of the challenges of my job is to come up with fun, creative ideas that the children will enjoy at the clubs each week, (with a little help from the kids ideas as well).

#### 2:10pm

I finish the new programmes I have been working on for weeks. I have to design colourful programmes for each of the clubs which my trusted and reliable colleague Laura will deliver to around 60 households in the town. I also have to recruit, manage and support around 12 volunteers (who all do an amazing job it has to be said). I take a couple of calls from various people, turn off the computer and organise my desk for tomorrow.

#### 3:50pm

I say goodbye to my colleagues and head over to the club to get everything set up ready.

Tonight I will be attempting to make pancakes at the club (well cheating slightly with a little help from my microwave and ready made pancakes). Sainsbury's in Hamlet Court Road

have kindly donated the ingredients and lots of healthy toppings for all three club sessions this week. (I'm starting to think this will be a tough week eating all these pancakes!)

I have called this session "You Decide" because as well as making pancakes the children will also get to decide where they would like to go on a day trip. Back in December the children took part in some fundraising and managed to raise a whopping £600 to go towards an outing of their choice. The Southend Rotary Club have also kindly offered to match fund what the children raised so now we have £1200 to split between the 3 youth clubs. (Happy days!)

#### 4:15pm

I open up the hall to get the place warmed up

and set up ready for the evening as I know it will be manic once the kids arrive. I have learnt over the years that the more prep you do the better, when it comes to the kids clubs. (Fail to plan, plan to fail!).

#### 5:30pm

I welcome the children in and chat with parents whilst the volunteers are keeping an eye on the children in the hall and getting them settled in. Tonight we have 17 children and three Club Buddies (young helpers) joining us so the atmosphere is lively to say the least!

One of the children has brought in a robot toy which he creatively made from boxes and Lego at home and is very excited to show me this. Once everyone is here I get the kids to sit round in a circle

on the cushions which I have set out on the floor ready. I ask him if he would like to show everyone the robot and explain how he made it. He does this with great pride and the children ask if we can have a show and tell session where they each get to bring a favourite toy/game in to show everyone.

I explain what's going to happen during the session. We then get chatting about the money they raised and the possible places we could visit. The children are in good spirits and are already sharing ideas about where we should go. I give each of the children a sheet of paper and pen and ask them to find a quiet space in the room so they can think about where they want to go. On the paper it asks them to write down where they would like to go, why they think the group would enjoy the place they have chosen and how much they think it might cost for the whole group.

We come back together as a group to look over the ideas; the children are very excited today and it takes for ever to get them all to listen! I let them read out their ideas and it quickly becomes apparent that the kids really want to go to Base Jump which is a trampolining centre in



A Better Start parent coffee morning

Rayleigh. I tell the kids that I will look into this to find out what the cost will be. They also mention Harry Potter World this is rather pricey and a little out of our budget so I tell the kids that I will write a letter to them and we will see.

After this we set the room out for a game of hover ball (indoor football), some of the girls practice gymnastics and my Club Buddies help me with pancakes and drinks for all.

#### 7:00pm

Parents are starting to turn up and it is time for the kids to go home so I make sure they are all picked up safely and we say our goodbyes. The volunteers help me to clear away and put the room back



Triple T's in Christmas present costumes ready for bag pack fundraiser



Triple T's build castles out of just about anything

together and we chat about any issues/ideas arising from the club session. I say thank you to them for all their help and we look forward to doing it all again next week!

#### 7:40pm

Arrived home, tweet out a couple of photos from the club session so the world and his dog know what we have been doing at the club tonight.

Finally flop onto the sofa and think what a day! But feel I am making a bit of a difference for youngsters in Southend (and breathe!!!!).

### A Better Start





Parents in the six wards (Kursaal, Victoria, Milton, Westborough, Shoeburyness and West Shoebury) will be trained to become Parent Champions, this is so that they can help to be the voice of parents around them and get across to professionals what is needed, or those services going well for children between the ages of 0-4 years old.

They will do this by setting up Parent Forums, attending Board and Panel meetings and keeping a co-produced relationship where possible.

We are currently putting parents through our Parent Champion Training; the first group have just completed their training on the 28th March. It consisted of one session a week for four weeks where we try to prepare them for what is to come. We cover topics such as Confidence, Communication, Safeguarding, Meetings, Mapping and Data protection; we then finish off our training with a five minute presentation from each of our Champions on a Topic of their choice. Through this they can show off their newly built confidence and learn a little more on how to speak to a listening crowd.

Parents received certificates from The Deputy Mayor of Southend, Cllr Fay Evans.

One of the new Parent Champions, Ileana Tait, commented 'The Parent Champions training course was amazing, definitely delivered way beyond my highest expectations. It was very well organised, with plenty of interesting course content and delivered by outstanding staff. I feel privileged to be part of such a unique, exciting



Parent champions fully involved in the session

project. Look forward to the next steps and have no doubt that it will be a great success.'

Another parent champion Melanie Harris said 'I can't wait to get involved in the community and start helping those around us and also it's really great to have more of an insight in to what I can do personally and how I can get involved, its really nice to know my opinion counts!'

And her partner Jack Styles went on to say' I look forward to getting more dad's involved and inspiring more dad's to fight for what they believe in i.e. toddler groups! But my main objective is for families to be more involved! I am feeling more confident after this course with the communication side of things, in helping to support the community and everyone else!'

Our next set of Training for the Kursaal Ward will begin in May, we then move on to Shoebury in July. We are hoping that this training will help to prepare our parents on what to expect when heading into a board meeting.



**Melanie Harris** 



**Jack Styles** 

Ileana Tait





Rachael Gardner



**Rachel Palmer** 



Taiwo Adenodi Parent Champions receiving certificates from The Deputy Mayor of Southend, Cllr Fay Evans