PARISH OF SOUTHMINSTER MAGAZINE OF THE CHURCH OF ST LEONARD



NOVEMBER 2019

My Father is the gardener

John 15:1

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Brenda Sheppard (See Who's Who List.)

Reflections

"My Father is the gardener" John 15: 1

At the end of October we start to thin out the garden by taking back the trees and shrubs, cutting back the flowers and taking some of the bedding plants out to replenish the soil and make way for new plants. It has been amazing the amount of fruit that has grown in the Vicarage garden this year, cooking apples and pears have been good. As I walk the dogs along by the river there is an abundance of blackberries, of which the dogs are keen to remind me as they park themselves in front of the bush waiting to be fed some of the fruit! How awesome is our God to provide in such a way! It never ceases to amaze me how a few tiny seeds can multiply to provide such an abundant crop. We have picked around 30 pounds of beans this year (no jokes about being full of beans please!) and this from a packet of seed costing no more than 2 pounds.

When cutting back the shrubs we see how much growth has gone on this year as we cut back to produce more growth the following year; and as we pull some of the bedding plants to be recycled we remember the colour and enjoyment that they have given over these past few months, and how the wildlife has enjoyed their presence. Remembering is an important aspect of this time of the year, as we look back to past enjoyments in the presence of loved ones near and far, and of the joy that we have shared with them in 'sunnier' days. The Old Testament is full of reminders to 'remember the Lord

your God' and the good that He has led us in to, the deliverances He has made and the feeding that He has given; Good times to remember and to feed on in the darker days. How easy it is to forget... Psalm 103 says "Bless the Lord O my soul and forget not his benefits" all the good that He has done in the past need to be remembered.

The reason I write these thoughts for November is that we forget how much has gone on in the year and all that God has provided. Cutting back the shrubs reminds me of how much growth has taken place in this year and pulling the flowers reminds me of the variety of colourful things have occurred through the summer months, learning from each other, celebrating answered prayer, relaxing on holiday listening to the word of God from others who have themselves grown in their ministry. Which then brings me to a question: how much have I grown as a Christian in this past season? Have I grown enough to be noticeable to others and have I been a fragrance to others so that they can appreciate who I am in God? It is a great challenge to me, for we need time to grow and develop and mature in our faith. Lastly, is there enough growth for the Father to prune a little in order to produce more fruit? Only if a flower or shrub is pruned regularly, correctly and at the right time, can it grow and develop more flowers to delight us. The text in John 15 continues "This is to my Father's glory, that you bear much fruit, showing yourselves to be my disciples".

Our Father OUR gardener. $_{\scriptscriptstyle A}$ Peter

Operation Christmas Child 2019

Once again St Leonard's Church is a local centre. The Primary School is participating, and we are very thankful to the Parish Council for allowing the Parish Room in Queenborough Road to be the place to pick up flatpacks and leaflets – and return them when completed.

A great deal of information about packing your shoebox can be found on the Samaritan's Purse website, but make sure you are on the UK website rather than the American one! Do visit it, particularly if you are unfamiliar with what Operation Christmas Child is all about. The site has videos which feature some of the recipients of Christmas boxes which give an idea about how much they are appreciated. You can also find details about arranging an 'online' shoebox, which enables tracking so that you to get feedback on where in the world your gift goes. Some of the details have changed slightly from last year: for example the list of items you *shouldn't* pack for the children has grown somewhat.

The deadline for completed boxes to be handed in to the Parish Office is the 7th November. On Sunday 17th there will be a 'Shoebox Service' where all the boxes will be blessed before they begin their journeys to children in other parts of the world.

Norman

Thank you all who attended **Gillian Ward Russell's** Organ recital on 6th October. Gillian presented her programme in a most entertaining manner. We all had pictures/stories in our minds as she played her organ pieces. Hearing some of the well-known items will bring back memories of this evening in the future. **Thank you Gillian**.



Jacky Griffiths writes

Feeding the 5,000! We had quite a few more children joining us this month and they all enjoyed the many activities. For information, the rolls seen here contained pretzels and fizzy fishy sweets! The cake they made in September had been cooked and they all had a slice. To round off the meal they made fruit cocktails and they look very festive. They also investigated where in the world many food items are actually made and some were surprised they didn't come from a well-known supermarket! We all

enjoyed a meal together as usual and this time it was fish 'fishies' (not fingers!) followed by fruit pie and cream - all delicious.

Next Messy Church is on Monday, 4th
November.

C2 Safeguarding Training in the Church of England

On Saturday 28th September 7 people from St. Leonard's Church and Steeple Church joined others in the Deanery at the Langford and Ulting Village Hall for a mornings training on safeguarding adults and children who may be put into a vulnerable situation either inside or outside the church. The morning was introduced by our Vicar Peter Begley in his capacity of Area Dean.

This training is suitable for those who have safeguarding leadership responsibilities or are responsible for leading activities involving children and/or adults who may be vulnerable. There are many forms of vulnerable situations including: Abuse, neglect, slavery, domestic, financial, emotional, sexual, internet, physical, discriminatory and many others.

The morning was a mixture of teaching from the front and group participation. This training is valuable to all church members as it is everybody's responsibility to keep children and vulnerable adults safe in the church situation. Although a lot of it seems to be common sense it is good to learn about boundaries which need to be in place when helping people, when to listen and to find out concerns, and exploring the background to situations instead of presuming and maybe drawing wrong conclusions.

Our safeguarding officer in St. Leonard's is Jacky Griffiths but if Jacky isn't available and a concern is urgent or someone is in danger, we were given a number to call for the Chelmsford Diocese safeguarding officer.

A worthwhile teaching morning and very well lead by the ladies involved.

My New Gate

I have a new garden gate! It is made of wrought iron, black and shiny and bought to keep the grandchildren in and the cats out who use my lawn as a giant litter tray! Unfortunately, I went into the garden the next day after the gate installation and a cat peeped around the corner of the house with, I'm sure, was a smirk on its face as if to say where there's a will there's a way!

While my gate was being installed, I thought about the significance of gates! Gates are used for going out and coming in. They are for keeping people or animals in or out! They are added protection for people's property too.

In the Old Testament the gates of ancient cities were massive and heavy. They were open during the day but closed at night and barred for safety measures to keep out enemy attacks. In Nehemiah 7 v 1-3 it tells us that gate-keepers were also watchmen on the walls protecting the cities from enemy attack and were usually ministering priests from the tribe of Levi.

There is said to be 98 verses in the Bible about gates. Often the Word of God was proclaimed at the gates in the wall between the inner and outer courts of the temple (Jeremiah 7:1-11)) imploring people to reform their ways before they were fit to enter God's courts.

Gates are also seen as symbolic entrances into a new world. Revelation 21 talks of the time when God will come to live with us in the Holy City, the New Jerusalem coming down out of Heaven shining with the glory of God. It will have a great high wall with twelve gates which are twelve pearls, each gate made of a single pearl.

On no day will the gates be shut but nothing impure will ever enter through them but only those names written in the book of life. We often talk about the pearly gates and St. Peter saying who can enter. Why St. Peter? It is written in Matthew 16 v 18-19 that Jesus told Peter that he was the rock on which he would build his church and that He would give Peter the keys of the kingdom of heaven.

In John chapter 10 Jesus speaks of Himself as being the good shepherd and a gate for the sheep. He used those figures of speech knowing that a good shepherd would lay down his life for his sheep and Jesus was willing to lay down his life for all of us. He says that whoever enters through him (the gate to salvation) and has accepted Him as Lord and Saviour will be saved. Jesus is the entry point into the presence of God.

Our souls and bodies also have gates. If we open the gateway through sinful ways the enemy can come in and spoil our lives and our relationship with God and with others. John 14:6 tells us that Jesus is the way the truth and the life, no one comes to the Father except through Him. He is the only gate that leads to life (Matthew 7:13)

Thinking back to my new shiny gate, it looks good, but does it serve its purpose, is it keeping in or out that which we hoped for? Obviously not as the cats are obviously learning to limbo dance

His gates

underneath it! Jesus on the other hand is a secure gate, He lets in all those who turn to Him and he cares for us and gives us a new eternal life with Him.

Enter His gates
with thanksgiving
and His courts with
praise.
Psalm 100 v 4

Brenda Sheppard



Monday 4th November Remember Me starts at 3.45 pm

Age range aimed especially for children at Primary School with Parent or Carer

A family afternoon of fun and messiness

Next one:

Monday 2nd December Snowy Christmas

ROTA REPLY SLIP YOUR AVAILABILITY FOR 2 MONTHS

Please cross out the dates when you are **not** available and return this slip to **Paul Lucas** by 10th November

January 2020	5	12	19	26
February 2020	2	9	16	25
Name				

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT IF YOU ARE UNABLE TO FULFIL YOUR DUTY YOU SHOULD CHANGE WITH SOMEONE AND INFORM THE WARDENS OF THE ARRANGEMENT.

We thank our wonderful team of flower arrangers for amazing displays throughout the church for Harvest.





If you would like to sponsor altar flowers in memory of a loved one or a special occasion please give details and a donation to Kathy Pegg or to a churchwarden, preferably 2 weeks in advance.



PRAY FOR SOUTHMINSTER:

w/b	3 November	Central - South
w/b	10 November	South - West
w/b	17 November	Central - West
w/b	24 November	North - East



Date 3 November **Fourth Sunday before Advent** 08.00 Holy Communion (BCP) Col: Green Leader/President/Preacher Rev'd Peter 2 Thessalonians Ch I Paul Lucas Luke 19: 1 - 10 Celebrant Sidesman/ Communion Asst. Paul Lucas 10.45 Holy Communion Leader/Preacher Rev'd Peter 2 Thessalonians Ch I Linda Payne Luke 19:1-10 Linda Payne Kath Dunstan Intercessions Communion Assistants Mike Bikhazi & Paul Lucas Prayer Ministry Team Brenda Sheppard & Christine Lucas Audio-Visual Operator Christine Morgan Sidesperson Paul Lucas & David Johnson Refreshments **Bob Perry & Viv Perry Transport** Christine Morgan 16.00 Memorial Service Everyone is welcome, especially if you have lost a loved one recently or a while ago. Date 10 November Third Sunday before Advent 08.00 Holy Communion (BCP) Col: Red Leader/President/Preacher Rev'd Ken Dunstan 2 Thessalonians 2: I-5, I3 - end Sheila Nicholson Luke 20 : 27 - 38 Celebrant Sidesman/ Communion Asst. Paul Lucas REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY 10.00 Remembrance Service Leader/preacher Rev'd Peter/ Norman Pratt

2 Thessalonians 2 : I-5, I3- end t.b.a.
Luke 20 : 27 - 38 t.b.a.
Intercessions Rev'd Peter

Prayer Ministry Team

Christine Lucas & Viv Perry

Lynda Hedges & John Hedges

Linda Payne & Rosemary Cooper

Transport Bob Perry

Date 17 November Second Sunday before Advent

08.00 Holy Communion (BCP) Col: Green

Leader/President/Preacher Rev'd Peter
2 Thessalonians 3: 6-13 Anne Wodhams

Luke 21:5-19 Celebrant

Communion Asst. / Sidesman Pete Adams & Anne Wodhams

10.45 Holy Communion and Installation of Rev'd Peter as Vicar with Blessing of the Shoeboxes before they are sent away.

Leader Rev'd Peter

Visiting Archdeacon - preacher The Ven Elizabeth Snowden

2 Thessalonians 3: 6-13 Christine Morgan Luke 21: 5 - 19 Christine Morgan Intercessions Jacky Griffiths

Communion Assistants Sylvia Adams & Fiona Begley Prayer Ministry Team Viv Perry & Brenda Sheppard

Audio-Visual Operator Christine Lucas

Sidesperson Gwyneth Iffland & Rosemary Cooper

Refreshments Sally Culff & Maureen Smith

Transport Christine Morgan

Date 24 November Sunday next before Advent Col: Green

08.00 Holy Communion (BCP)

Leader/President/Preacher Rev'd Peter

Colossians I: II - 20 Kathy Pegg

Luke 23 : 33 - 43 Celebrant

Communion Asst. / Sidesman Pete Adams & Kathy Pegg

10.45 Morning Worship Christ the King

Leader/Preacher Rev'd Peter
Colossians I: II - 20 Christine Lucas
Luke 23: 33 - 43 Christine Lucas
Intercessions Jenny Pratt

Prayer Ministry Team Fiona Begley & Jacky Griffiths

Audio-Visual Operator Mike Bikhazi

Sidesperson Sylvia Adams & Mo Shakspeare

Refreshments Christine Lucas & Sandra Billinghurst

Transport Paul Lucas

19.00 Informal Worship

NOVEMBER SERVICES AT STEEPLE

Sunday 3rd 9.15 am Morning Prayer

Sunday 10th 10.30 am Remembrance Service

Sunday 17th 9.15 am Morning Prayer

and 10.45 Installation of Vicar at St Leonard's

Sunday 24th 9.15 am Holy Communion

MORE SOUTHMINSTER INFORMATION

DON'T FORGET QUIZ NIGHT SATURDAY 9TH NOVEMBER AT 7PM IN CHURCH

Christmas Tree Festival

As usual, there will be lots of trees, sponsored by groups or individuals.

Look out for posters which will provide full details.

Saturday / Sunday 14th /15th Dec.

AND IN A NEIGHBOURING PARISH: ALTHORNE

Saturday 2nd November

Flower arranging Demonstration
By Shaun Keeble
2pm in the Church Hall

£7.50

Includes tea & toasted teacake
In aid of church repair fund

Saturday 23rd November CHRISTMAS BAZAAR 11am - 3 pm

Variety of stalls as usual including tea and cakes

In the Church Hall Proceeds to church repair fund

REGULAR MIDWEEK ACTIVITIES

PCC meetings and related committee meetings are usually on Monday evenings.

The **Music Group** meets in church on Fridays at 7.45 pm & occasional Tuesdays. See Hazel Richards for details. **Bellringers** meet occasionally in the tower but we don't have our own regular team now.

Henry Club - Church Cleaning Team - meets twice a month at 9.30 am (normally on Fridays)

The November dates are 8th and 22nd.

CHURCH GROUNDS WORKING PARTY

Details of these will be in the weekly notices.

Midweek Morning Prayer services (Mon., Wed. and Fri.)

8:00 am (about half an hour) in the chapel.

Tuesdays 8.30 am "Just Prayer" also in the chapel.

HOME GROUPS

Normally they are Mondays at 10 am and Thursdays at 7.45 pm for 8 pm

Young people and children are always welcome, especially at 10.45 services,

Messy Church is once a month on Mondays. See page 10.

Families are encouraged to attend the

FAMILY CELEBRATION SERVICES

(The next one will be on 8th December and it will also be the TOY SERVICE See p 22)

Weekly bulletins and church notice boards list any other events in the Church.

Information for these should go to Christine Morgan.

What's On in the Local Area: November 2019

Arrangements in St Nicholas, Tillingham

Sunday 3rd	10.00 am	Family Worship ((Laity)
Wednesday 6th	9.15 am	Morning Prayers	(Laity)
Sunday 10th	9.30 am 10.45 am	Holy Communion Remembrance Se on Village	rvice
Wednesday 13th	9.15 am	Morning Prayers	(Laity)
Sunday 17th	10.00 am	Family Service (L	aity)
Wednesday 20th	9.15 am	Morning Prayers	(Laity)
Sunday 24th	10.00 am	Parish Holy Comr	nunion
Wednesday 27th	9.15 am	Morning Prayers	(Laity)

November Services at St James, Dengie

November 3rd	8.00 am	BCP Holy Communion (Rev. Steven)
		and Remembering the Departed
November 10th	3.00 pm	Evensong Rev. Steven Poss
November 17th	3.00 pm	BCP Holy Communion Rev. S. Poss
November 24th	3.00 pm	Evensong (Laity)

and on at

DEANERY CONFIRMATION SERVICE 24TH NOVEMBER AT 4.00 PM BRADWELL ST THOMAS' CHURCH

Stow Maries World War One Aerodrome Reflections of a Retired Trustee Saturday 16th November at 7pm West Newlands Farm Barn, St Lawrence

Home -made Chilli Supper (Vegetarian and non-vegetarian catered for)
Please book tickets early - Bring your own Drinks
Tickets £10 available from Jane Pudney 01621 772345

COMMUNITY EVENTS

Southminster W.I.

We normally meet at Southminster Memorial Hall

Tuesday 5th November: Jane & Janet

Seasonal Floral Arrangements

Competition: Floral Corsage

THE COMMUNITY LUNCH CLUB

In THE MEMORIAL HALL Every Monday except the first Monday of each month and Bank Holidays Please book in by noon on the previous Friday by phoning Kath Savage: 07434915467

The **SOUTHMINSTER CHATTERBOX**

meets in the
Memorial Hall
on Thursday mornings
from 10 am until noon.
The Bereavement Group is
there on 1st & 3rd Thursdays
There are also
Weight Management Sessions.

Memorial Hall Wishing Well Club

Tuesday 12th November 1 pm - 3 pm Light lunch, games & good company

Little Lions Baby & Toddler Group meets at the Memorial Hall Every Wednesday during term-time 10 am - noon Singing, craft, refreshments



£2 for adult and up to 2 children; 50p per extra child

Come and play, stay and chat; all parents & carers are welcomed

Kathy Pegg writes:

Joining the dots and answered prayer

- **Dot 1**. My husband, Dan, has had a friend since Primary School. Steve and Dan kept in touch as they both started work, married and had children.
- **Dot 2**. As families we were all regular visitors to each other's homes as our children grew up and we reached middle age. But sadly life events overtook us all and we lost touch for about 20 years.
- **Dot 3**. Suddenly, about three years ago, Steve's daughter Kerensa, got in touch with us. She had remembered from her childhood that I had a strong faith and went to church. Her life was in turmoil, she was a Christian herself and was looking and praying for Christian support outside her own church and God prompted her to contact me.
- **Dot 4**. Paul Haworth was preaching that Sunday and his sermon covered exactly what the Lord wanted Kerensa to hear. It blessed Kerensa and from then on we were in regular contact.
- **Dot 5**. After about a year Kerensa told us that Steve had just been diagnosed with stomach cancer and was awaiting details of his treatment and ultimate prognosis, but he didn't want anyone to know. Kerensa had asked us not to contact Steve as he would then know she'd broken his confidence. We couldn't contact Steve but I started praying.
- **Dot 6** A short time later our daughter saw a post on social media about Dan's old school where someone asked if anyone remembered Dan Pegg. Our daughter commented that this was her Dad and this quickly led to a renewed contact between Dan and Steve and it was as if no time at all had passed in their friendship.
- **Dot 7**. Their close friendship and trust led Steve to confide to Dan about his cancer. He said he'd been told his cancer was

in-operable and terminal, the prognosis was bleak. There was nothing they could do for him except palliative care. Dan suggested that he could ask me and that me and my prayer partners would pray for him. Steve, although cynical, appreciated the thought.

- **Dot 8**. Steve had been told that the palliative medication would only be effective for a very limited time, probably until February 2018 and then there was nothing that could be done. In the meantime Dan was meeting Steve regularly and one day, during the school holidays, he took Steve for a road trip down memory lane to their old school. The school caretaker just happened to see the two old men wandering around the car park and invited them in and let them look around the classrooms etc it brought back so many happy memories for them both. It was a real blessing.
- **Dot 9**. Steve had his next scan and to the consultant and his team's amazement it showed that the tumour had shrunk slightly and they could now risk surgery. This encouraged Steve to actually ask for our continued prayers.
- **Dot 10**. They operated in July 2018 and removed part of Steve's liver and most of his stomach. He had several months of recuperation with, of course, continued prayer.
- **Dot 11**. The last scan in September 2019 showed that all the cancer had been removed and prognosis for his future is positive. Steve said to Dan 'this is incredible, its like a miracle' and Dan said 'Actually, this is the power of prayer'. God has in plan all things for our good. We can all be used to his purpose to bless each other, we just need to do our bit in faith without necessarily knowing why and then one day we can look and see the whole picture because we have joined the dots.

Thank you to all those who lifted Steve up in prayer; our prayers have been answered.

Amos Day 2019

We, Kath and Ken Dunstan, have been involved with Garth Hewitt and the Amos Trust for around four decades. He has visited us at Southminster twice during that time - providing much appreciated concerts.

Each year, Amos Day in late September celebrates the work of the Trust during the previous twelve months. Garth, a Canon of St George's Cathedral in Jerusalem, is a singer/songwriter/campaigner who founded the Trust as "a small, creative human rights organisation, committed to challenging injustice, building hope, and creating positive change." The Trust's shorter motto is "justice and hope for the forgotten". Under their new Director the Rev'd Chris Rose, the Trust focusses on three areas: "Street Justice", "Palestine Justice" and "Climate Justice".

This year's special guests were Gilberto and Damaris from CEPAD, the council of protestant churches of Nicaragua. Originally founded in 1972 after a major earthquake destroyed much of the Capital, the rescue has developed into development. In 2005 Amos sponsored the Avocado Tree School in a deprived area in Central America's second poorest country. Now Amos has entered a new five-year partnership to build climate justice in Teustepe, (where climate change has caused severe drought) building micro-dams and nurseries, and providing water, improved diet, employment and hope. Gilberto told the story of the elephant and the hen. In order to give the hen a rest from incubating eggs, the elephant sat on them. Amos helps people find their own best way forward without imposing British solutions.



justice and hope for the forgotten

Street justice work focusses on young women, particularly at risk of assault, rape or kidnap into prostitution or modern slavery. We learned about Karunalaya in Chennai, India, where whole families have lived on the streets for generations and are at risk of babies being kidnapped, quite apart from the danger of traffic. Amos' street child partners have developed highly focussed, local responses to reach children on the streets and to provide them with the opportunities and psychosocial support they need to leave the street and be reintegrated into their families.

Palestine justice focusses on the continuing tragedy of the Israeli government and military's policies in the West Bank and Gaza that include illegal settlements, house demolition and the threat of (also illegal) annexation of parts of the West Bank. In particular, Amos works with Christian and Jewish peace-makers such as the Holy Land Trust and the Israel Coalition Against House Demolitions. We focussed this year on Gaza, where a severe Israeli-Egyptian blockade has been in force for 12 years "for security reasons". We saw a film, "Gaza" that enabled us to hear the voices of ordinary Gazans rather than the politicians. Amos supports the Christian-run Al Ahli Hospital.

Laced with worship and prayer, it was a good and inspiring day. .

For more information, visit https://www.amostrust.org

Toy Service for Women's Refuge at Safer Places Sunday, 8th December

Please bring your donations either to this Service or to the church from 24th November. If you have difficulty bringing them to the church, please let me know, and I will arrange to

collect them

Please note that gifts for children must not be violence based in any way. no guns, and brand new please leave any labels/tags on as the Refuge is subject to health and safety protection rules.



The ladies appreciate new pamper gifts as they often arrive at the Refuge with nothing at all and without toiletries etc. Please leave everything unwrapped but Christmas paper can be included.

Safer Places, which covers a large area of Essex, always appreciate our regular support. Thank you in advance for your donations.

Jacky Griffiths

ALSO FOR YOUR DECEMBER DIARIES

Light up a Life Service: Wednesday 4th Dec. at 7 pm

for Farleigh Hospice in church

SOCS Autumn Concert: Saturday 7th Dec. in church A medley from *Les Miserables* and seasonal songs. with wine and mince pies. (Look out for posters.)

StL

WHAT'S WHAT

Mission Statement

"To be a people offering praise and worship to God and serving him by being the Good News by our words and actions"

Web Site www.stleonardsouthminster.org.uk

Contact: vicar@stleonardsouthminster.org.uk

Sunday Services - normal pattern (See pages 12-13 for details)

8:00 am Holy Communion (Book of Common Prayer 1662)

10:45 am Holy Communion or Morning Worship

(Prayer ministry for any needs is available during/after 10.45 services Light refreshments are served after the 10.45 services.

Informal Worship will be at 7pm on Sunday 24th November

Children and Young people are always welcomed especially for the Family Celebration Services

MESSY CHURCH is held monthly on Mondays at 3.45 pm in church. The next one will be on **Monday 4th November**

'LITTLE LIONS' on Wednesday mornings during term-time only is for babies/toddlers & their carers. See p.17

Morning Prayer (Mon., Wed. and Fri.) 8:00 am (about 30 mins.) and Tuesdays at 8.30am (Just Prayer) in the chapel

THIS MONTH at St Leonard's

Sunday services follow the normal pattern, with special ones:

3rd November at 16.00 Memorial Service

10th November at 10.00 Remembrance Service

17th November at 10.45 Shoebox Sunday and special visit from Archdeacon Elizabeth Snowden

Pray for Southminster (six regions on six-week rota) See p.11

HOME GROUPS: See page 15 and weekly bulletins for details

United Service for Elderly at Southminster Residential Home 4pm Thursday 18th November