

News

IN BRIEF

Appeal to smokers and ex-smokers

CURRENT and ex-smokers in Chelmsford are being urged to come forward for lung cancer screening.

Health leaders are warning that early symptoms are often mistaken for less serious conditions.

Lung cancer screening can detect cancer and other lung conditions before any noticeable symptoms appear. This early detection allows people to begin treatment sooner, leading to better long-term health outcomes and potentially saving lives.

The free NHS Lung Cancer Screening is available to smokers and ex-smokers aged between 55 and 74.

So far, more than 281 cases of cancer have been identified through the programme across mid and south Essex. More than 75 per cent were found at an early stage (1 or 2).

In the coming weeks, eligible residents of Chelmsford who are listed as current or former smokers on their GP records will receive an invitation to take part.

Dr Malcolm Lawson, consultant respiratory physician and clinical lead for lung cancer for the East of England, said: "Lung cancer has been a difficult cancer to diagnose in the past.

"This is because many people aren't aware of all the symptoms that could be signs of lung cancer. "We know that early treatment greatly improves the chances of living a longer, healthier life."

Eligible residents will first have a telephone consultation with a specialist check nurse.

For more information, call 0300 300 1557 or visit <https://eoe lungcancer.screening.nhs.uk>.

Temporary banking hub

CASH Access UK, the organisation set up to protect access to cash across the UK, has opened a temporary home for a banking hub in Maldon.

The hub is in the Maldon District Council offices, which are situated in Princes Road.

Customers of all major banks can visit the hub any weekday between 9am-5pm to carry out regular cash transactions as well as checking balances or paying bills, plus a community banker service.

In Maldon the banks will visit on the following days: Monday, Lloyds; Tuesday, Santander; Wednesday, NatWest; Thursday, Barclays; Friday, Halifax.



The cast from Chelmsford County High School who performed in the musical showcase

PHOTOS: ESSEX COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

Students raise £3k for Belinda memorial fund with musical showcase

A SPECTACULAR musical showcase, staged by students from Chelmsford County High School for Girls has raised £3,000 for a fund set up in memory of Essex singer-songwriter Belinda Starling.

The show, which received a rapturous reception, was organised by students Ava Lambert, Katherine Carver and Ella Hale.

They decided that funds raised by the event would go to the Belinda Starling Memorial Fund, after searching for a cause that supports and inspires young people.

The fund, managed by Essex Community Foundation (ECF), honours the memory of Belinda Starling, a gifted singer-songwriter and author from Essex, who died in 2006, aged just 34, from complications after routine surgery.

The fund, set up by Belinda's family, gives grants to help young people pursue their ambitions and reach their full potential in music and the arts.



Ava Lambert said: "We wanted to support something that truly reflects what the showcase was all about, young people being given the chance to express themselves and grow through the arts."

"Belinda's story really resonated with us, so we are delighted to have supported the fund in her memory," Stephen Lawlor, head teacher at Chelmsford County High School, said: "I have worked at CCHS for 15 years and I have never been so proud of our students. To put together a tremendous show for such a significant charity, the Belinda Starling Memorial Fund, speaks powerfully about the genu-



Talented young musicians from Chelmsford County High School performed throughout the event

ine good that young people achieve their dreams and ambitions."

"The fact that the project was student-led inspired, student-performed was utterly inspiring. So many students across different year groups were involved and the joy their performances brought to the audience was clear to see and hear."

Jo Macaulay, from Essex Community Foundation, said: "How fortunate we were to have witnessed the amazing talents of these young people. Events like this do far more than entertain, they bring people together, celebrate creativity and remind us of the power of community. Every ticket purchased and every donation given helps to keep Belinda's memory alive and helps

more young people achieve their dreams and ambitions."

Belinda's parents, David and Judy Starling, who were in the audience for the musical showcase, said: "Belinda would have enjoyed every minute of the evening, most likely singing along and tapping her toes."

"She would have been so honoured and grateful to everyone who has made donations in her memory, so that other young people can experience and excel in music and the arts, which were her passion."

"We are so grateful for such an amazing tribute and for a truly memorable evening."

For more information about ECF and the Belinda Starling Memorial Fund visit essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk or call Jo Macaulay on 01245 355947.



Organisers Katherine Carver, Ella Hale and Ava Lambert