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 **Diary of the Pandemic Year project seeks women’s stories**

AN ONLINE Diary of the Pandemic Year project is seeking up to 25 women to share their lockdown experiences and work with Essex author, Syd Moore, as part of the *Snapping the Stiletto: Campaigning for Equality* initiative.

In association with the *British Science Festival*, the chosen women will take part in online workshops with renowned author and bestselling novelist, Syd Moore, to write a 500-word story and record their experiences of the past year and a half.

The women’s stories will then be uploaded to a *Snapping the Stiletto* listening bench at the *British Science Festival* - which takes place from Tuesday 7 – Saturday 11 September 2021 at Anglia Ruskin University in Chelmsford - for the public to enjoy as well as being available on the *Snapping the Stiletto* website as part of an online exhibition.

The first online introduction workshop is to take place on Wednesday 28 July from 6:30pm – 9:30pm with the second occurring on Saturday 31 July from 11:00am – 1:00pm. Women who are interested in taking part and wish to provide their story for the online Pandemic Diary should sign-up by *Thursday 21 July* by emailing sts@essex.gov.uk.

*Snapping the Stiletto: Campaigning for Equality* is a National Lottery Heritage Fund project that celebrates Essex women of all ages and ethnicities, and which works with underrepresented community groups throughout the county.

Councillor Graham Butland, Essex County Council Councillor for Devolution, the Arts, Heritage and Culture, said: “The Diary of the Pandemic Year project is a wonderful way to ensure that the experiences of the county’s women during the COVID-19 pandemic are forever available.

“The pandemic has meant that many people within our communities have faced a number of personal and professional challenges during the past 15 months. The chosen women can share their story - be it a moment, a feeling, a new talent or a hobby they have picked up over the past year. The opportunity to bring these to light demonstrates that this is an extremely worthwhile project and one which I would encourage all Essex women to become involved with.”

Author Syd Moore added: “This year has been a year unlike any other with the pandemic hitting everyone hard, however, women have suffered disproportionately. It's so important that ordinary people's stories are not forgotten amidst the headlines that have horrified and captured the nation.

“I am thrilled to be working with *Snapping the Stiletto* and the *British Science Festival* on this landmark project and look forward to exploring what ‘A Diary of the Pandemic Year’ will reveal about this crazy moment in time that has without a doubt irreversibly changed our world.”

Anna Woolman, British Science Festival Engagement Manager, stated: “The British Science Festival are excited to be partnering with *Snapping the Stiletto* to platform Essex women’s voices and stories of the COVID-19 pandemic in ‘A Diary of the Pandemic Year’.

“The Festival exists to celebrate the people, stories and ideas at the heart of science – and through this project we hope to do just that. It’s easy to get lost in the statistics and figures around the COVID-19 pandemic. While these are important when it comes to sharing information, it’s only one part of the story. By helping women share their experiences we hope to reveal another part of that story – one which is more grounded in local people’s day-to-day lives.”

For more information about the *Snapping the Stiletto: Campaigning for Equality* project, please visit [www.snappingthestiletto.co.uk](http://www.snappingthestiletto.co.uk).

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**For more information contact:** Emma Williams, Marketing and Communications Lead, Emma.Williams@essex.gov.uk or Christopher Davies, Marketing and Communications Officer, Christopher.Davies@Essex.gov.uk or telephone 07738 885659.

**Explore Essex:** Explore Essex brings together a unique group of Country Parks and heritage venues which are owned by Essex County Council. Its mission is to deliver a broad range of exciting facilities and activities for the people of Essex with an emphasis on culture, heritage and environment. [www.explore-essex.com](http://www.explore-essex.com) @exploreessex @exploressex

**Snapping the Stiletto: Campaigning for Equality:** *Snapping the Stiletto: Campaigning for Equality* is a National Lottery Heritage Funded project which aims to seek equality and challenge stereotypes by sharing and celebrating the stories of Essex women. The project’s purpose is to find and tell the stories of women of all ethnicities and backgrounds including, those from Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic backgrounds, LGBTQ+ individuals, working women and women with special educational needs and disabilities.

<https://www.snappingthestiletto.co.uk/> @snapthestiletto

**British Science Festival**: The British Science Festival is one of Europe’s largest science festivals and regularly attracts hundreds of the UK’s top scientists and speakers to discuss the latest developments in science with the public. Working in partnership with Anglia Ruskin University and other organisations in the Chelmsford, the Festival will entertain an audience of non-specialist adults with a broad interest in science, delivering over 100 specially curated events between the Tuesday 7- Saturday 11 September 2021.

All tickets for the British Science Festival are completely free, but booking is essential for most events. More information about each event and ticket bookings can be found at: [www.britishsciencefestival.org](https://eur02.safelinks.protection.outlook.com/?url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.britishsciencefestival.org%2F&data=04%7C01%7C%7Cd9cd90eacf35453bf07008d942de5426%7Ca8b4324f155c4215a0f17ed8cc9a992f%7C0%7C0%7C637614344931379163%7CUnknown%7CTWFpbGZsb3d8eyJWIjoiMC4wLjAwMDAiLCJQIjoiV2luMzIiLCJBTiI6Ik1haWwiLCJXVCI6Mn0%3D%7C1000&sdata=YPlorYj25HKFs%2BzYoaRt8TkhK06nnwey9f9VYnfJ9qg%3D&reserved=0) #BSF21 @BritishSciFest*.* For more information please contact Anna Woolman, Engagement Manager, by emailing anna.woolman@britishscienceassociation.org or telephone 07795 572830.

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