



A GUIDE TO YOUR COUNCIL TAX

2020 - 2021



A Campus for the Future at Colchester Institute's Braintree Campus

Colchester Institute has officially launched its all-new Braintree Campus, now that the final building – The Learning and Technology Centre is complete. These new facilities are aimed at equipping students, Apprentices and adult learners with the essential skills and experience they need for jobs that will be waiting for them in industry.

Students local to Braintree will have access to state-of-the-art technology on their doorstep that the area has never seen before, giving them the opportunity for first-class training that can best-prepare them for a rewarding career in their chosen industry.

Braintree Campus now boasts high-quality workshops, flexible learning spaces, computer suites, wood workshops and CAD suites. Media studios include the new Media Lab, which is home to an impressive industry-standard TV studio. A new Student Hub incorporating the library and the new River Kitchen have been created in the existing STEM Innovation building to improve the student experience.

Current students have already been enjoying these new facilities in the £5m Learning and Technology Centre since its completion and it has received superb feedback since its opening from visitors, staff and students.

Level 3 Film and Television student, Heather Hamilton said: "The Media Lab is our place and we get to use a lot of equipment. We have a range of cameras and a brand-new studio where we can film whatever we like. There are plenty of computers to do extra work and the environment is very welcoming – I would definitely recommend studying here if Media is your passion."

For more information on the courses and Apprenticeships available at the Braintree Campus at Colchester Institute, please visit: colchester.ac.uk/braintree

In April, the Braintree Campus is opening its doors to the local community by inviting local residents to have a look around during its Open Event alongside potential students on Thursday 23rd April 2020, 5pm-7pm. To register to attend this event, visit: colchester.ac.uk/event



Better Careers Begin Here



Contact us

WEBSITE:

www.braintree.gov.uk



EMAIL:

csc@braintree.gov.uk



TELEPHONE:

01376 552525



POST:

Braintree District Council,
Causeway House,
Braintree, Essex CM7 9HB



Connect with Braintree District Council



Follow us @BraintreeDC



Follow us @BraintreeDC



Useful contacts

BILLING ENQUIRIES

01376 557755
or counciltax@braintree.gov.uk

LATE-PAYMENT ENQUIRIES

01376 557722
or payadvice@braintree.gov.uk

COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT ENQUIRIES

01376 557852
or benefits@braintree.gov.uk

OUR 24/7 AUTOMATED PAYMENT LINE

01376 557894

If you require this leaflet in an alternative format, please call 01376 557755

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REPORT FRAUD NOW

08000 740405

fraud@braintree.gov.uk

Data Protection Statement:

The Council may share information internally and with other agencies to carry out its statutory functions efficiently.

Braintree District Council has a duty to protect the public funds it administers, so we may use information you provide for the prevention and detection of fraud.

Information may also be shared with other bodies responsible for auditing or administering public funds for these purposes.

More information can be found on www.braintree.gov.uk/privacy

Local solutions to global issues



Like most councils, Braintree District Council has declared a climate emergency and aims to make its activities, as far as possible, carbon neutral by 2030

Braintree District Council has already:

- Invested £640,000 in solar panels on council properties reducing energy costs and producing an income and savings of £100,000 each year.
- Saved 858 tonnes of CO2 in business travel since 2015.
- Since 2005, we have reduced our electricity and gas usage saving a total of 1,912 tonnes of CO2.
- Enabled more than 150,000 residents to save £705,000 over the last 5 years through its energy switching scheme.
- Encouraged residents to reduce, reuse and recycle their waste.
- Supported residents to install more than 8,700 energy saving measures since 2014 directly resulting in the saving of over 1000 tonnes of CO2.

Keep up to date with our work by signing up to our Environment, Refuse, Recycling emails www.braintree.gov.uk/tellmemore

Braintree's Essex Energy Switch

The scheme is delivered by the Council and iChoosr, an independent specialist provider in collective buying schemes.

**Register from 1st April – 18th May
Auction on 19th May
Closure on 30th June**

Find out more at www.braintree.gov.uk/essexenergyswitch or call the iChoosr helpline on **0800 048 8285**

Solar Together Essex

Solar Together is a group buying scheme, delivered by iChoosr which gives you the opportunity to buy high quality solar panels at a highly competitive price.

**Register from 23rd March 2020
Auction on 27th April 2020
Closure 27th June 2020**

Find out more at www.solartogether.co.uk or call **0800 048 8639**

Save money at home on your energy bills



Contact the Sustainability Team on **01376 552525** or email energyadvice@braintree.gov.uk for impartial advice and information on **saving energy and water and available funding**

Significant investment for the Braintree District

Braintree District Council will invest more than £40 million for projects such as the Manor Street redevelopment, Horizon 120 Business & Innovation Park and I-Construct.

The investment is all part of the Council's Health, Homes, Journeys and Jobs agenda and will unlock more opportunities for residents and businesses.

New capital projects include:

- **Pedestrianisation of Braintree Town Centre** to create a safe, flexible and social space which will draw people in and keep them entertained for longer generating more trade for shops and businesses. It will also unlock much-needed improvements to the condition of the current road and pavements.
- **Refurbishments to play areas** in Rivenhall, Witham, Braintree and in Notley Green.
- **Protection of a number of open spaces** in Braintree and Witham from unauthorised encampments.
- **The creation of a footpath** linking Albert Moss car park to the Village Hall in Rivenhall and playing fields which will make it much more accessible for all.
- **Creation of gardens of remembrance** within some of Braintree District Council's cemeteries.
- **CCTV upgrades** in Braintree and Halstead towns.

- **Resurfacing of the artificial grass pitch and improvements to the athletic track** at Braintree Sports & Health Club. The pitch and the track are regularly used for schools district sports days as well as regional athletic and football competitions.

Cllr Graham Butland, Leader of Braintree District Council, said: *"We're investing in what matters to our residents. From smaller community projects, better play areas and sports facilities keeping our young people away from screens to taking on some of the big issues such as climate change, being a place where innovative businesses can thrive and homes for our young people."*

Investment in much loved ancient monument

The much-loved grade 1 listed Bocking Windmill will receive a £58,000 investment over the next six years for much needed repairs to the steps, sails, windows and body of the mill.

The windmill, owned by Braintree District Council and cared for by the volunteer group Friends of Bocking Windmill, opens its doors to the public for a number of days throughout the summer months.



HAVE A GREAT BUSINESS IDEA?

If you're aged 16-30, We can help bring your idea to life!

Find out more:
www.braintree.gov.uk/yep

HANDS UP IF YOU'RE SAYING NO TO SINGLE-USE PLASTIC...



...JOIN US AND TAKE THE ESSEX PLASTIC PLEDGE AT

lovessex.org/plasticpledge



BRAINTREE MUSEUM

ESSEX 2020

Join us at Braintree Museum

to celebrate a year of science with our action packed programme!

 www.braintreemuseum.co.uk

 01376 328868

 [museumbraintree](https://www.facebook.com/museumbraintree)

SCIENCE MAY HALF TERM
26 – 29 MAY

Big Science Day
Tuesday 26 May 10am – 4pm

Science Crafts
Wednesday 27 – Friday 29 May
10.30am – 12.00

Toddler Time
Wednesday 27 May
10.30am – 11.30am

Admission applies

EXHIBITION

Space: Fact and Fiction
July to December 2020
Admission applies

SPACE SUMMER HOLIDAYS

28 July – 28 August 2020
Space, science and sci-fi inspired crafts
Admission applies

HERITAGE OPEN DAYS

Hidden Nature; The Sciences of John Ray
Saturday 12 September
Saturday 19 September
Free admission

Activities and trails exploring the fascinating works by the 'father of natural history' John Ray.

SCI-FI OCTOBER HALF TERM

27 – 30 October

Sci-fi and Science Day
Tuesday 27 October

Crafts
Wednesday 28 – Friday 30 October

Toddler Time
Wednesday 28 October

Admission applies



We're hiring

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COMMUNITY
CARE ASSISTANTS**

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pay rates...**

you'll know that you're valued for your contribution to helping others.

Plus...

- 45p mileage allowance
- Traveling time paid between calls
- Annual salary reviews and performance bonus
- Healthcare support scheme
- Up to £1,000 'refer a friend' scheme available to staff
- Double pay on bank holidays
- Guaranteed hour contracts available
- Potential for flexible shift patterns

**FIND OUT MORE, VISIT
www.ecl.org/braintree**

Your Career Starts Here.

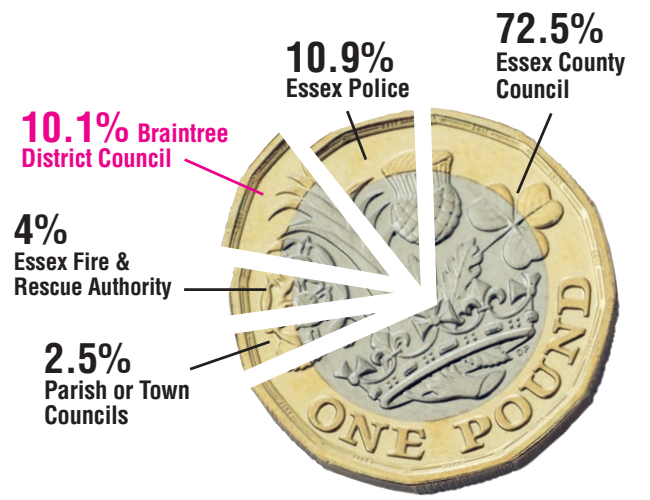
**ECL is the trading name of Essex Cares Limited, Registered in England and Wales
VAT Number: GB 945649774 Company Number: 06723149
Office: Seax House, Victoria Road South, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 1QH**



your guide to your Council Tax

How your Council Tax is shared

Braintree District Council collects the Council Tax on behalf of the District Council, Essex County Council, Essex Police, Fire & Crime Commissioner (Responsible for Policing and Community Safety and Essex Fire & Rescue Authority) and the Parish and Town Councils in the district.



Our part of the Council Tax bill explained...



Did you know that just 10p in every pound of Council Tax you pay goes to fund the services Braintree District Council provides? Although you pay it all to Braintree District Council, most of it goes to fund other services – emergency services like police and fire, Essex County Council and even your local Town or Parish Council.

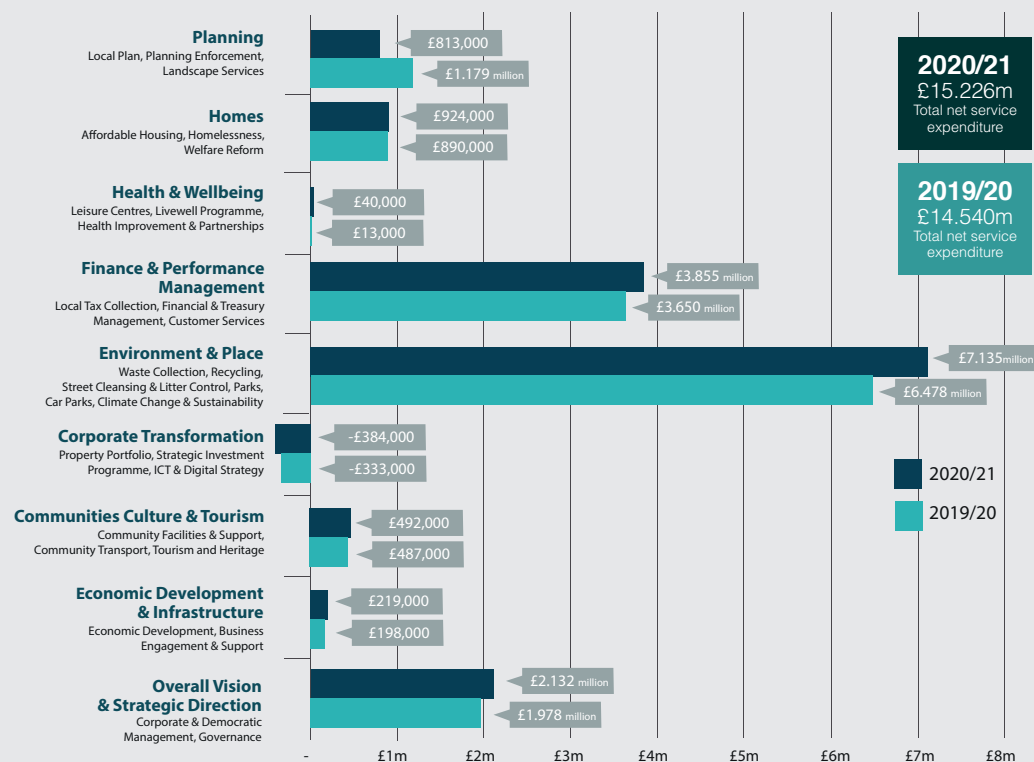
So what does that 10p in every pound pay for?

It pays for things such as waste collection and recycling, street cleaning, planning, leisure centres, economic development, running elections, housing, environmental health, emergency planning, parks and open spaces, cemeteries, car parking, markets and more.



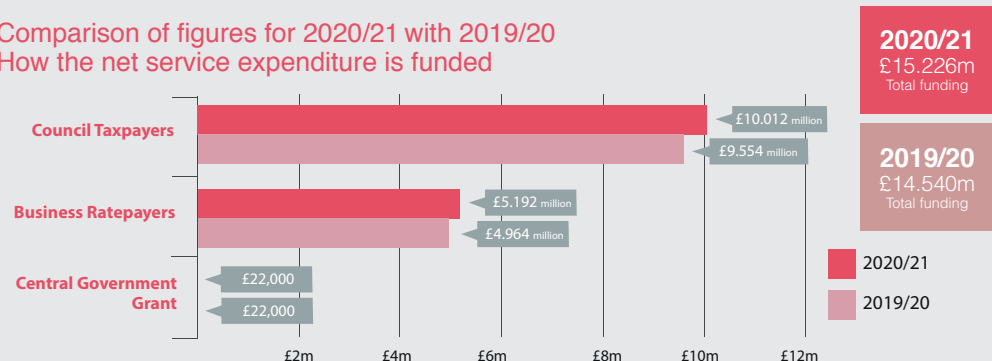
Braintree District Council spending plan

Comparison of figures for 2020/21 with 2019/20



Braintree District Council income

Comparison of figures for 2020/21 with 2019/20
How the net service expenditure is funded



The net spending plan above includes income from fees and charges £6.11m, rental income £3.48m, interest and dividends £1.09m. The spending plan for Corporate Transformation shows a net income position.

What is Council Tax?

Council Tax is a tax on homes collected by your local council to pay for local services.

Valuation band	Value of property on 1 April 1991	Braintree District tax rate	Essex County tax rate *	Essex Police tax rate	Essex Fire & Rescue tax rate
A	Up to £40,000	£123.12	£880.74	£132.42	£49.26
B	£40,001 to £52,000	£143.64	£1027.53	£154.49	£57.47
C	£52,001 to £68,000	£164.16	£1174.32	£176.56	£65.68
D	£68,001 to £88,000	£184.68	£1321.11	£198.63	£73.89
E	£88,001 to £120,000	£225.72	£1614.69	£242.77	£90.31
F	£120,001 to £160,000	£266.76	£1908.27	£286.91	£106.73
G	£160,001 to £320,000	£307.80	£2201.85	£331.05	£123.15
H	Over £320,000	£369.36	£2642.22	£397.26	£147.78

* Includes an amount for Adult Social Care. Find out more at www.essex.gov.uk

If you think your home should be in a different valuation band, please email The Valuation Office Agency at csteast@voa.gsi.gov.uk or phone 03000 501501.

Who pays Council Tax?

At least one person in each household is responsible for paying Council Tax, whether they own the home or rent it.

In most cases the person (or people) aged 18 or over who will be responsible for paying Council Tax are:

- owner-occupiers
- leaseholders
- people who pay rent
- people who have a licence to occupy, such as people who live in tied cottages (housing relating to their work)
- people such as squatters, who live in the property but have no legal interest in it (that is, they don't own or rent it)
- people who own the property but don't live in it.

People living together such as tenants, married people or civil partners can be jointly or separately responsible for the whole Council Tax for their property.

What is Local Council Tax Support?

If you are struggling to pay your Council Tax bill due to a low income, you may be entitled to help through the Local Council Tax Support.

Call the Benefits Team on **01376 557852** or visit www.braintree.gov.uk for more details.

If you would like to apply and are of state pension age, you can also contact the Pension Service on **0845 6060265** and they will assist you.

Apply for Council Tax Support online.



Challenging Local Council Tax Support decisions

If you have applied for Local Council Tax Support and you disagree with the decision, write to us stating the grounds on which you are aggrieved.

If we cannot resolve your grievance within 2 months, you may appeal to the Valuation Office Tribunal.

You cannot withhold payment of your Council Tax while the matter is investigated/under appeal.

I am having difficulty paying, what can I do?

We are here to help you.

Contact us as soon as possible on **01376 557722** or email payadvice@braintree.gov.uk

We only send two reminders in the year. Following that, should the bill remain unpaid, a summons and possibly a liability order will be issued which will incur additional costs being added to your account.

I think my property should be exempt

If you think your property should be exempt from Council Tax or you should pay a reduced rate, please contact us.

I receive a discount but my situation has now changed

You must tell us within 21 days about anything that could affect an exemption or discount you receive. If you fail to tell us in this timescale you may be subject to a £70 penalty.

Mine is a second home, am I exempt?

If your property is furnished and no-one lives there as their main home, a full charge is applied.

Exempt properties

Council Tax is not payable on 'exempt properties'. These include properties lived in only by students, people who have a severe mental difficulty or people aged under 18.

Empty properties are exempt if they:

- are owned by a charity (exempt for up to six months)
- are left empty by someone who is in prison
- are left empty by someone who has moved to give someone else personal care, or has moved to receive personal care
- are waiting for probate or letters of administration to be granted (after someone has died) and for up to six months after the probate or letters are granted
- have been repossessed
- are the responsibility of a trustee on behalf of someone who is bankrupt
- are owned or leased by foreign diplomats
- have no-one allowed to live in them by law, or
- are waiting to be lived in by a minister of religion.

Forces barracks and married quarters are also exempt. People living there contribute to the cost of local services through a special arrangement with us.

What is empty homes premium?

The Government is keen to ensure that dwellings do not remain unoccupied or unused for extensive periods. Unfortunately, it remains the case that nationally, a distressing number of dwellings are being left empty at a time when there is an overall housing shortage.

There are currently 200 properties across our district which have been unoccupied for 2 years or more. Therefore, to encourage home owners to bring these properties back into use, there is a Council Tax premium charged on long term empty homes. From 1st April 2020 the premium will be 100% for properties left empty between 2 and 5 years and 200% for properties left empty for 5+ years. From 1st April 2021 the premium for properties empty for 10+ years will be 300%. For more details, please visit

www.braintree.gov.uk/emptyhomes

I live on my own, am I entitled to a discount?

Your Council Tax bill assumes two adults are living in your household.

If you are the only adult living there (as your main home) we will reduce your bill by 25%.

When we look at the number of adults living in a property, we need to know about:

- full-time students, student nurses, apprentices and youth trainees
- people who live in hospital
- people who are being looked after in care homes
- people who are severely mentally disabled
- people staying in some hostels or night shelters
- 18 and 19-year-olds who are at or have just left school
- care workers working for low pay (usually for a charity)
- people caring for someone with a disability who is not their partner, or their child (a child is someone under 18)
- members of visiting forces and some international institutions
- diplomats and their husbands or wives (who are not British)
- monks and nuns, and
- people in prison (except people who are in prison for not paying their Council Tax or a fine relating to their Council Tax).

People with disabilities

You may be entitled to pay less Council Tax if you or someone who lives with you has a room or extra space, or an extra bathroom or kitchen, or uses a wheelchair in your property, to meet special needs relating to a disability.

This means that if you have a disability you might not have to pay more Council Tax for the extra space you need.

We have an annexe, do we get a discount?

A Council Tax discount of 50% is available for property annexes.

It applies for people living in annexes providing they are related to the person liable to pay the Council Tax of the main dwelling.

www.braintree.gov.uk/annexediscount

I don't think my bill is correct

You can appeal to us if you think you should pay less Council Tax, or none at all, for example, because:

- you do not live in or own the property
- you feel the property should be exempt
- you believe we have made a mistake working out your bill.

If you appeal, you must continue to pay your Council Tax until your appeal is decided.

If your appeal is successful, we will give you back any Council Tax you have overpaid.

How do I pay my bill?

See all the different ways to pay on page 15.

Can I pay in instalments?

Yes, see page 15.

What your Parish or Town Council receives

The table below shows each Parish Council's Council Tax requirement (how much they need), based on a band D charge. Parish and Town Councils need extra money to pay for things like community centres, footpaths and extra street lighting. If the Parish or Town Council raises more than £140,000 from its local taxpayers, it must publish information about its spending plans. The spending plans for Coggeshall Parish, Halstead and Witham Town Councils can be found on our website www.braintree.gov.uk

Town Or Parish	Band D
Alphamstone	20.65
Ashen	31.88
Belchamp Otten	12.63
Belchamp St Paul	18.07
Belchamp Walter	55.75
Birdbrook	90.10
Black Notley	49.66
Borley Parish meeting	24.22
Bradwell	55.98
Braintree	0.00
Bulmer	37.59
Bures Hamlet	91.88
Castle Heddingham	59.46
Coggeshall	93.44
Colne Engaine	60.91
Cressing	62.50
Earls Colne	83.26
Fairstead	54.39
Faulkbourne	56.32
Feering	77.69
Finchingfield	63.95
Foxearth	44.96

Town Or Parish	Band D
Gestingthorpe	47.98
Gosfield	61.56
Great Bardfield	73.40
Great Henny	41.49
Great Maplestead	47.35
Great Notley	34.00
Great Yeldham	77.82
Greenstead Green	36.39
Halstead	47.02
Hatfield Peverel	40.93
Helions Bumpstead	84.52
Kelvedon	86.44
Lamarsh	20.65
Liston	44.96
Little Henny	41.49
Little Maplestead	37.72
Little Yeldham	38.00
Middleton	41.49
Ovington	38.00
Panfield	48.49
Pebmarsh	51.29
Pentlow	46.29

Town Or Parish	Band D
Rayne	52.75
Ridgewell	87.55
Rivenhall	44.86
Shalford	62.12
Sible Heddingham	64.44
Silver End	68.16
Stambourne	45.12
Steeple Bumpstead	69.37
Stisted	50.78
Sturmer	46.48
Terling	54.39
The Salings	71.00
Tilbury Juxta Clare	38.00
Toppesfield	79.08
Twinstead	41.49
Wethersfield	53.99
White Colne	56.24
White Notley	56.32
Wickham St Paul	88.47
Witham	73.70

Paying your Council Tax

The easiest way to pay is online.
Visit www.braintree.gov.uk/counciltax



Direct Debit

Over 40,000 Council Tax payers in the Braintree District use Direct Debit to pay their bill each month. It is so easy to arrange, simply call **01376 557755** and provide your bank account number, sort code and Council Tax reference number which you will find on your latest bill, and we will do the rest.



Debit/Credit Card payments

You can use the Council's website to make a payment with your debit/credit card. Alternatively, you can also call our automated card line on **01376 557894** which is available 24 hours a day.

Online banking

If you are making a payment using your bank's website, please ensure you quote our bank details: Sort Code **30-00-02**, Account Number **00825110**. You will also need to quote your Council Tax account number which you will find on your latest bill, in the reference box.

Payment at Post Offices or PayPoint outlets

If you are unable to pay your Council Tax bill by any of the other options, and you have a barcode displayed on your bill, you may make payments at any Post Office or Paypoint outlet.



Payment by Standing Order/Bank Transfer

Please ensure you quote our bank details: Sort Code **30-00-02**, Account Number **00825110**. You will also need to quote your Council Tax account number which you will find on your latest bill, in the reference box. Due date remains the first of each month.

Paying by instalments?

By default, Council Tax is payable in ten monthly instalments starting on 1st April and ending on 1st January.

However, did you know that you can request to spread your payments over twelve monthly instalments? These would be 1st April to 1st March. Just remember that you would lose the instalment free period during February and March if you choose the twelve monthly option. If you would like to take up this option please call **01376 557755**.

PLEASE REMEMBER

If you do not make payments by the due dates, we will issue a reminder notice.

The maximum number of reminders you may receive in any financial year is two. If the second reminder remains unpaid, a summons will be issued and cost incurred.

Problems paying?

Remember, we are here to help you. Please contact us if you cannot pay your Council Tax. Do not wait until you are in debt as this makes it more difficult to sort the problem out.



Mid Essex
Clinical Commissioning Group



EXTENDED GP HOURS

You can now get
an appointment
with a **GP, nurse
or healthcare
assistant in the
evening and
on Saturday
and Sunday**

To make an appointment,
you can call your own
GP practice during
normal business hours
or NHS111 out of hours

We want everyone
in mid Essex to Live Well



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