

HIGHWAYS HIGHLIGHTS

INFORMATION FOR LOCAL COUNCILLORS | FEBRUARY 2023

WHY WE USE 'MAKE SAFE' REPAIRS



SAFER / GREENER / HEALTHIER

COMMENT

COUNCILLOR LEE SCOTT

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT



Following the conclusion of our gritter naming competition, I send a big warm welcome to 'Monster Meltdown' and 'Slush Puppy' – my two personal favourite names of the new gritter fleet.

There were some great suggestions put forward, and with the cold weather seemingly making a reappearance this month the names couldn't have been assigned at a better time. **You can see where the gritters are operating at any given time on our online track-the-gritters portal.**

To reassure you all, we keep a very close eye on the weather predictions and our winter service is ready to handle whatever comes our way.

The article about 'make safes' is an important read, so please do spend some time looking through that. I am often asked why a repair wasn't a permanent one and this article gives you some insight. While a permanent repair will, of course, always be favoured, urgent repairs need to be completed quickly to ensure the safety of all using the carriage or footway. This can mean that a 'make safe' is the best option for a temporary repair.





‘MAKE SAFE’ REPAIRS - NOT ‘MAKE DO’

We are often asked why we carry out temporary ‘make safe’ repairs rather than permanently fixing the problem from the get-go. Good question – here’s why we undertake ‘make safe’ repairs...

Identifying the defect

When councillors, members of the public and our inspectors identify and report potholes and other issues, we quickly assess them. The highest risk problems need to be dealt with urgently, for public safety.

Our deadlines

For the highest-risk potholes, we have a specific timescale in which the defect must be made safe by. Once the inspector has submitted their online report, the on-call crew will be notified. They aim to arrive on-site within two hours to carry out an urgent intervention.

For unplanned works we are only allowed to close a road for 15 minutes in any one hour, and if a pothole is on a main road the crew have to be extremely careful with how they stop or control traffic to make the repair.

Our Tools and Materials

For these most urgent repairs, we don’t have time to book a permit to close the road, order traffic management and get together all the equipment and hot asphalt, so we must make the defect safe with temporary fixes.

For example, for a pothole, cold asphalt material is used to quickly fill in the defect and tamp it down to make it safe for a temporary period. With other problems, all we can do on the spot is put cones, barriers and signs on site to warn drivers and other road users – for instance if there is a missing gully or manhole cover.

What happens next?

Once a “make-safe” repair or guarding activity has been undertaken, our staff continue to

monitor the condition of the intervention. This applies to pavement, pedestrian guard rail, drain covers and other issues too.

Depending on the nature and size of the risk and where budgets permit, a more permanent repair will be planned and scheduled for a future date once all the necessary permits, materials and equipment and specialist crew(s) are available. Due to our limited resources, we must prioritise our work and fix the higher-risk issues first.



LED PHASE 4 UPDATE



Following trials in 2016, Essex Highways started to replace existing inefficient sodium streetlights on our main roads with LED (‘light-emitting diode’) streetlight technology. LED lights use less electricity, provide better light and reduce maintenance costs.

Our phase 4 LED installation began in May 2021, which saw crews replacing the first of the remaining 82,000 old-style streetlights ECC operates. By the end of 2022, we had upgraded a total of 40,325 luminaires* (37,000 units through the main programme and 3,000 units through maintenance activities).

The replaced units have achieved an average energy reduction of over 75% and an annual carbon reduction of over 1300 tonnes.

The phase 4 programme was significantly impacted by the global shortage of components for the telecells that are used to control the streetlights. This was due to major events out of our control such as the effects of the pandemic lockdowns and the war in

Ukraine. Our telecells manufacturer was unable to supply materials from April until the end of September.

We mitigated this risk for the most part by ordering a surplus of stock before the shortage hit but we were still slightly behind our target programme.

Despite this, a recovery programme has been agreed with our contractors to ensure works are completed by the end of the financial year 2023/24.

You may have noticed that some streetlights in areas haven’t yet been replaced and you may be concerned that they have been missed entirely.

There are many reasons why this could be, such as operatives being unable to safely gain access to equipment due to foliage or parked cars, to concerns about the column structure. We will get back to them. We are continuing to work until all unfinished units are completed.

*Complete lighting units consisting of a light source such as a lamp the parts that distribute the light, position and protect the light source and connect it to the power supply

SAFER GREENER HEALTHIER

Transforming travel in Essex

A GREENER WAY TO GET BACK TO OFFICE BASED WORKING

If you're planning to return to office-based working, which involves a commute, could now be a good opportunity to do it differently to pre-pandemic ways? With nearly 60% of journeys of one-two miles being made by car, it's more important than ever for the sake of our health and the health of the planet to consider a more active way of travelling.

So if you're thinking about getting back on your saddle this spring but would like a bit of a confidence boost, ECC offers FREE adult cycling courses. These include our beginners Learn to Ride training (45 minute sessions, maximum of four), Confidence-building session (two hours in length, one session only) or Advanced session (a 1-to-1, two hours in length, one session only). All training is delivered by our qualified instructors. [More info here.](#)

Or perhaps the Essex Love to Ride online community might be a good place to start if you are looking for support. They run challenges throughout the year offering prizes for cycling and allowing riders to compete on a variety of leaderboards.

Finally, Tier Mobility are currently delivering the Essex e-scooter trial in Basildon, Chelmsford and Colchester. With over 1.3 million rides undertaken to date since the trial launched two years ago, e-scootering costs 15p a mile once you've unlocked the Tier app for a £1 - why not give it a go if you live in any of these locations.





After a series of twitter polls, our 15 new gritters have finally received their names. Please welcome:

- 1) Billericay Grittie
- 2) Colchester Gritty
- 3) Dermot Snow Cleary
- 4) Grit Dunsnow
- 5) Gritter Thunberg
- 6) Jennifer
- 7) Maldon salt
- 8) PLOWIE
- 9) Rupert Grit
- 10) Weeley Salty
- 11) Monster Meltdown
- 12) Grit Expectations
- 13) Spready Mercury
- 14) The Grit Gatsby
- 15) Slush Puppy

We have put a lot of thought into what areas each of our brand-new vehicles will cover. For example, we have made sure that Colchester Grittie and Dermot Snow Cleary are covering the Colchester area.

You can track our new gritters while they're out and about on our website

We'd also love to see your photos of them in action. If you spot one, why not take a snap or even a selfie (where safe to do so) and tweet them to us with the hashtag #EssexGritterWatch.

BLACK LETTER DAY



Owen Draper, Manager and Dean Swain, Vehicle Assistant, (pictured top) both from supply chain partners Castle Point Motors, visited our Springfield Depot on Thursday 2 March to apply the winning names to the gritters. Castle Point Motors have serviced and helped maintain our fleet for several years and vehicle livery is one of their many skills. Thanks for a great job, guys!

The very first 'Tea With Lee' took place on Tuesday 28 February.

These informal sessions have been set up to let highways staff get to know Cllr Lee Scott, Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport ask him questions, and generally let both parties get a better understanding of each other, through lively, entertaining, educational, thought-provoking, fun conversation about highways, work, life and most points in between!

Following introductions, Cllr Scott thanked everyone for their hard work and individual contributions to the service. The conversation that followed covered a hugh amount of ground. Among the topics discussed were Road Safety, Ride London, Structures, Digigo, the need to better develop infrastructure for electric vehicles and drink/drug driving.

The time passed very quickly and the session was very well received by attendees. Cllr Scott very much enjoyed the chance to meet Essex Highways staff, saying: "It was great to meet everybody and hear their views on a variety of topics while finding out a bit more about their roles. I'm looking forward to the next 'Tea With Lee' sessions and look forward to holding some in the depots to meet the operatives."



ROUTINE REPAIRS: JANUARY 2023

In January we continued to repair carriageway and footway defects. When looking at these numbers, it is important to remember that repairs are prioritised by severity not by district, so numbers can vary considerably. Streetlights-fixed totals don't include the work being carried out in the LED upgrade programme. Please note: Our gully clearing service has been severely impacted this month by the winter weather as most of our Essex Highways gully operatives are also winter service drivers.

DISTRICT	COUNTY ROUTES	LOCAL ROADS	PAVEMENT DEFECTS FIXED	DRAINS CLEARED	STREETLIGHTS FIXED
BASILDON	56	38	122	1809	475
BRAINTREE	91	55	5	0	74
BRENTWOOD	32	41	58	0	202
CASTLE POINT	40	18	19	0	104
CHELMSFORD	45	39	8	0	25
COLCHESTER	68	85	20	0	91
EPPING FOREST	92	25	42	0	108
HARLOW	40	12	0	0	77
MALDON	32	27	8	0	36
ROCHFORD	47	20	15	0	151
TENDRING	19	36	27	0	111
UTTLESFORD	41	9	3	2909	62
TOTALS	603	405	327	4718	1516

Essex Highways

KEEPING ESSEX SAFE AND MOVING IN WINTER

52 gritters and 104 drivers available 24/7

18,000 tonnes of rock salt spread in an average winter (the same weight as 2571 bull elephants!)
13,000 tonnes (the same weight as 72 Blue whales!) kept in stock and regularly replenished

3.0 hours average to complete route treatment

40% of the network is treated each time

120,000 miles of road treated, in an average season... (That's London to Sydney 11 times!)

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Essex Highways

Salt - The myths and the facts

CLICK TO VIEW

essex.gov.uk/highways

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If you would like more information or have any questions, please contact: Member.enquiries@essex.gov.uk