

HIGHWAYS HIGHLIGHTS

HHHH

INFORMATION FOR LOCAL COUNCILLORS
JULY/AUGUST 2024

SAFER / GREENER / HEALTHIER

**£25M FUNDING
BOOST FOR
COUNTY'S
HIGHWAYS
NETWORK**

COMMENT

COUNCILLOR TOM CUNNINGHAM

**CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS INFRASTRUCTURE
AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT**

While August might be quieter for most, in the world of highways I have been busy announcing an extra £25 million funding for more repairs this year. The investment - known as Priority One - will boost resurfacing on key roads. It will also keep roadside vegetation in check, and repair and repaint signs and lines. These works are already underway.

There's a huge amount of repairs taking place across Essex at the moment. As well as Essex Highways' usual repairs and Priority One works, County Councillors continue to work with Essex Highways on repairs in their local communities. This means even more repairs than usual to improve the look and feel of where you live.

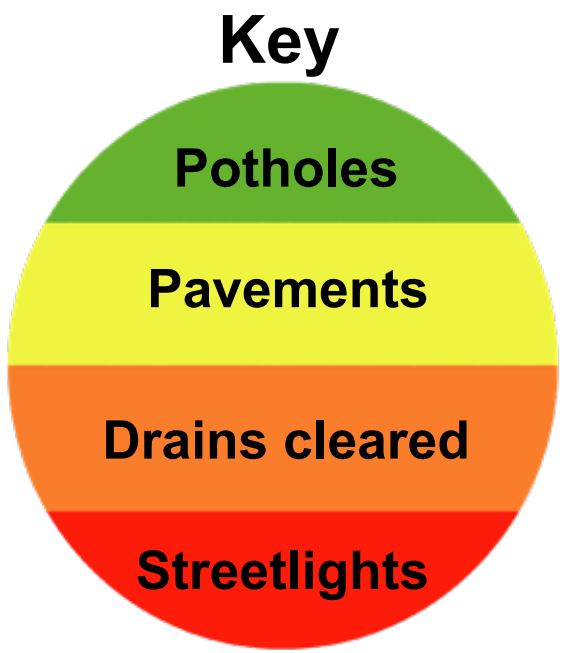
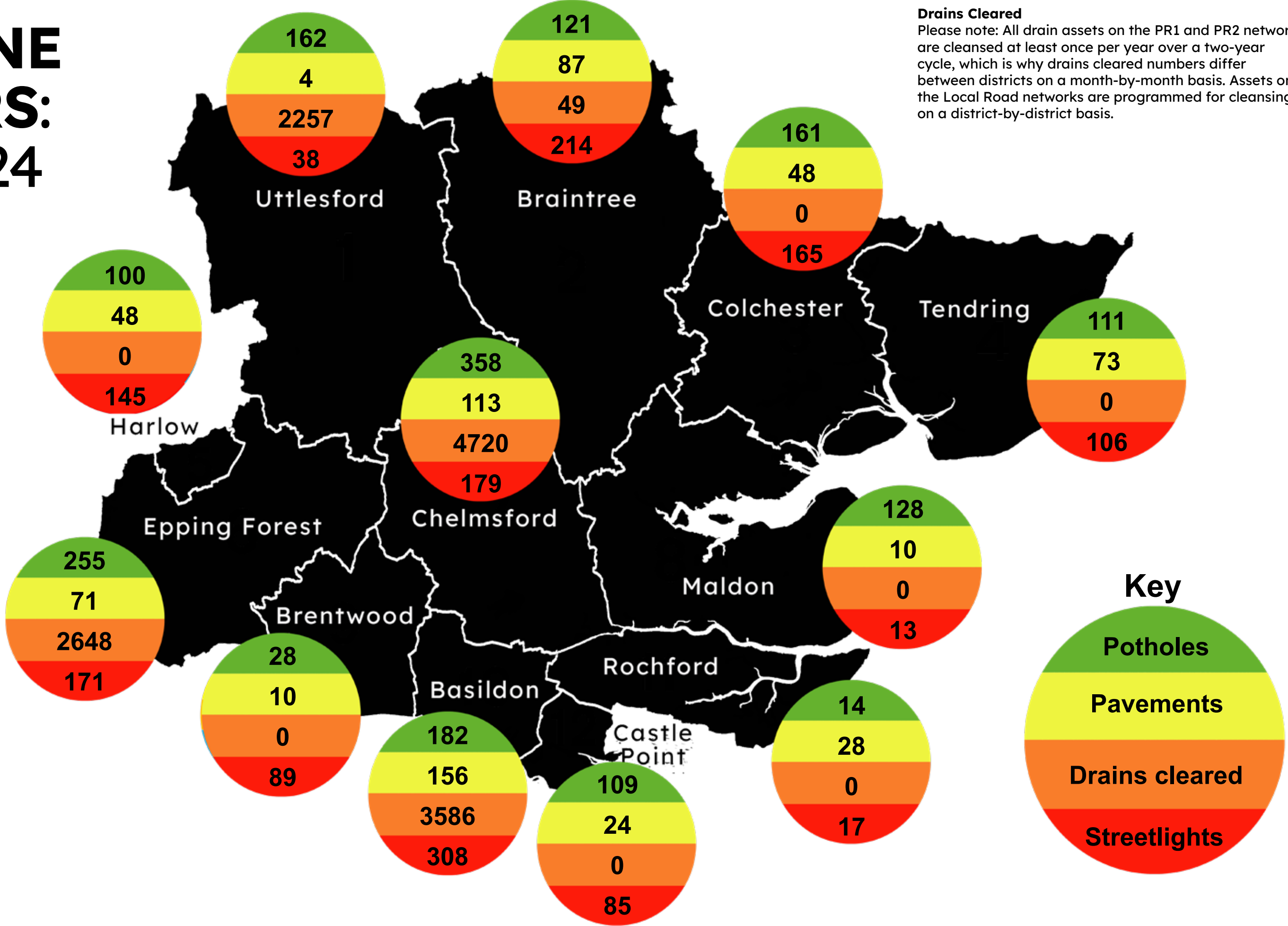
Away from potholes and other repairs, there's important work happening to look at travel and transport in Essex in the future. The Local Transport Plan is currently available for you to comment on, and I urge everyone to take a look and provide feedback. You could help shape the future of travel in Essex.

Best wishes
Councillor Tom Cunningham



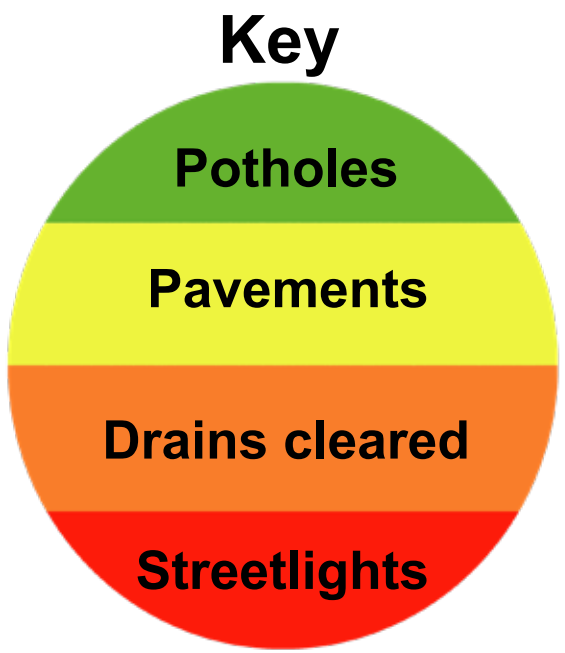
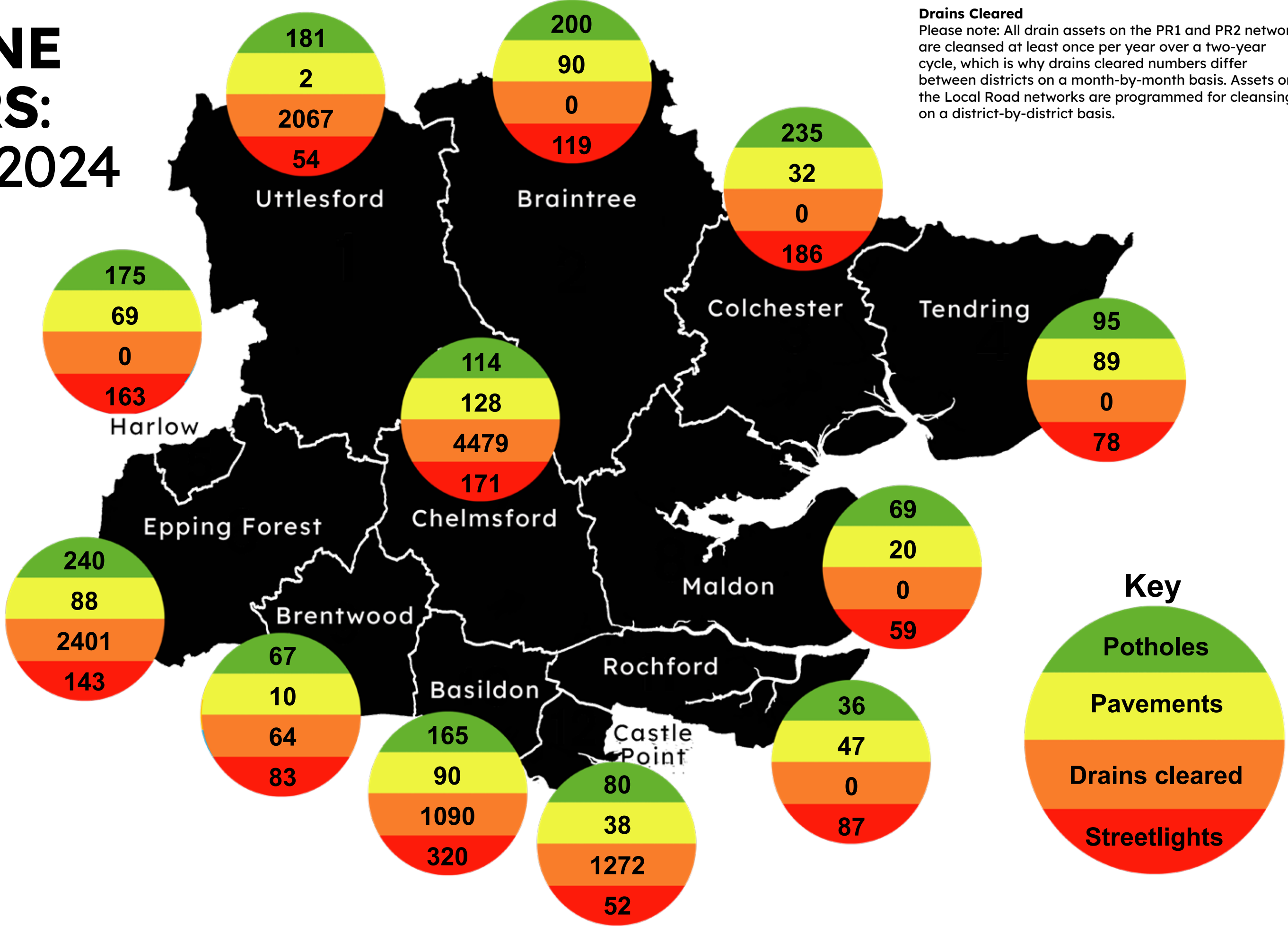
ROUTINE REPAIRS: July 2024

Drains Cleared
 Please note: All drain assets on the PR1 and PR2 network are cleansed at least once per year over a two-year cycle, which is why drains cleared numbers differ between districts on a month-by-month basis. Assets on the Local Road networks are programmed for cleansing on a district-by-district basis.



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MEMBER HIGHWAY INITIATIVE 2024/5 HIGH LEVEL REPORT (2 SEPTEMBER)

Request Status



Triage Result

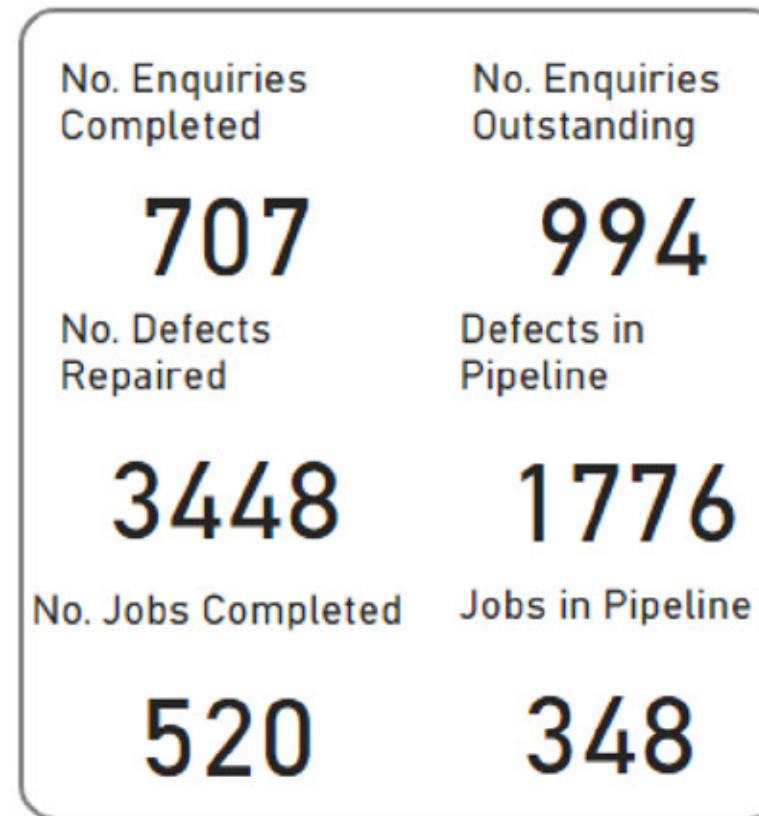
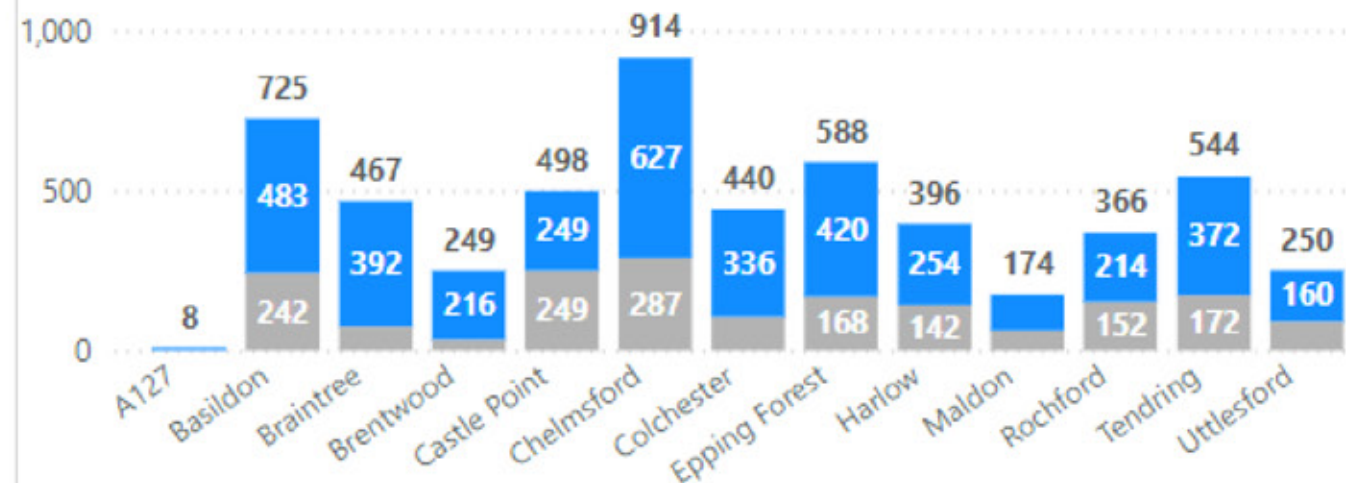
RAG assessment of difficulty of scheduling Member request.



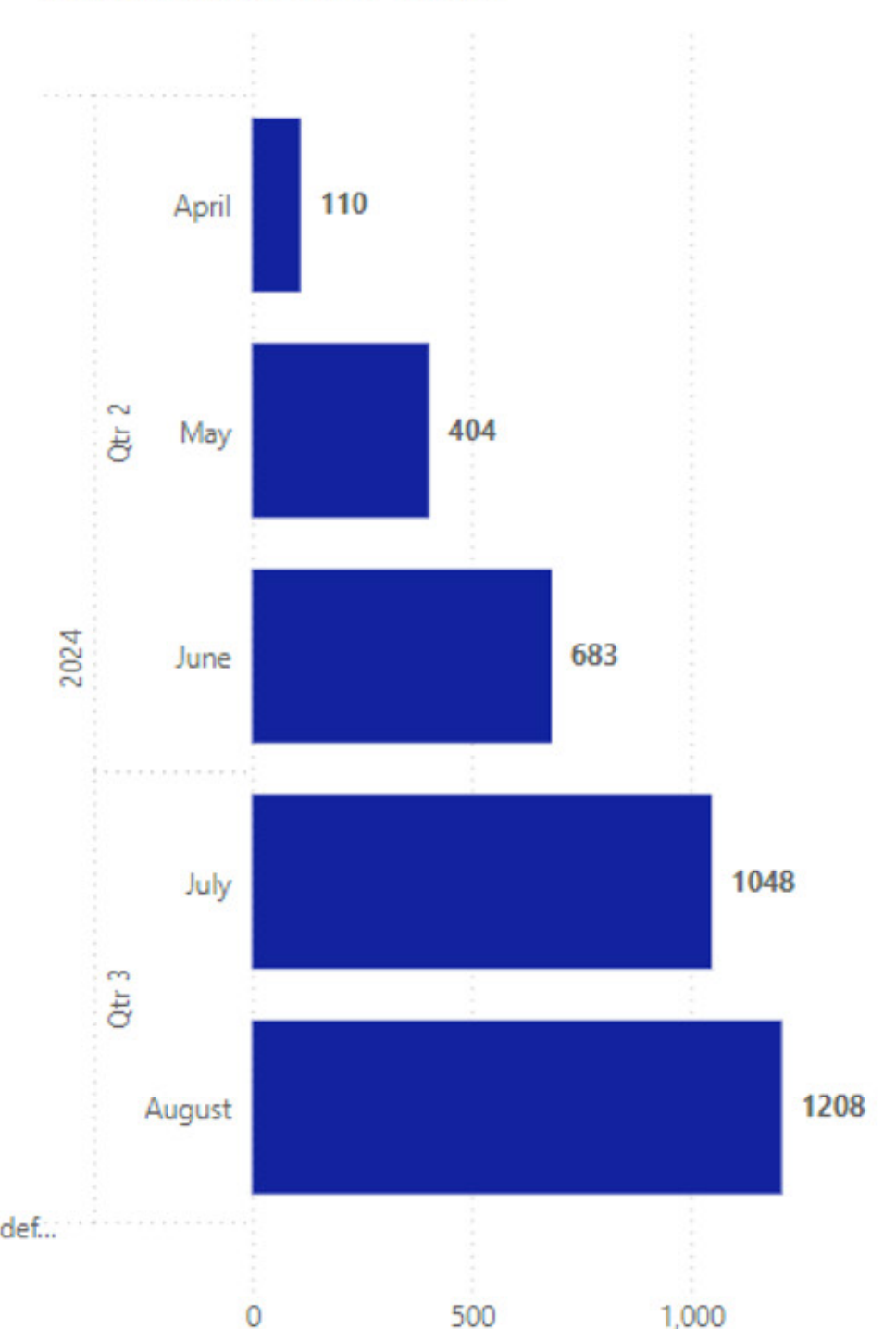
Defects by District

Shows defects that have been repaired and those programmed for repair.

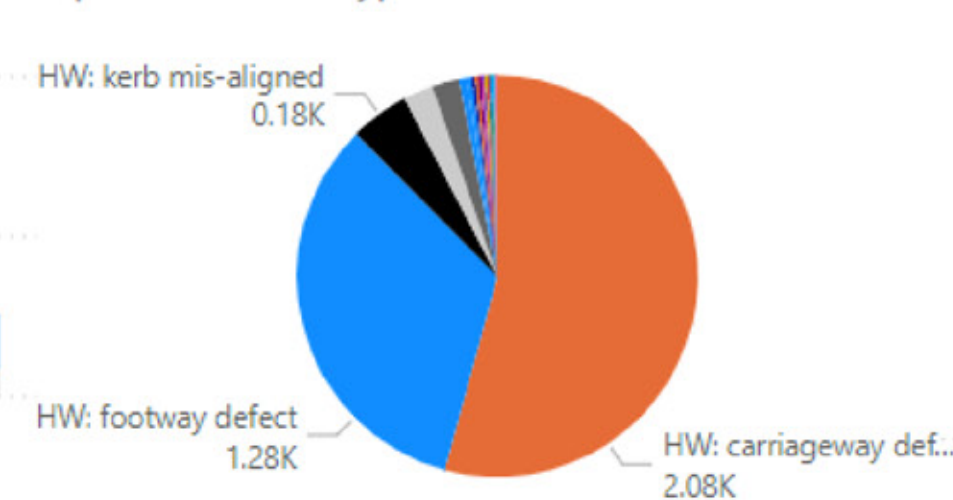
Defect repaired ● N ● Y



Defects Repaired by Month



Repaired Defect Types

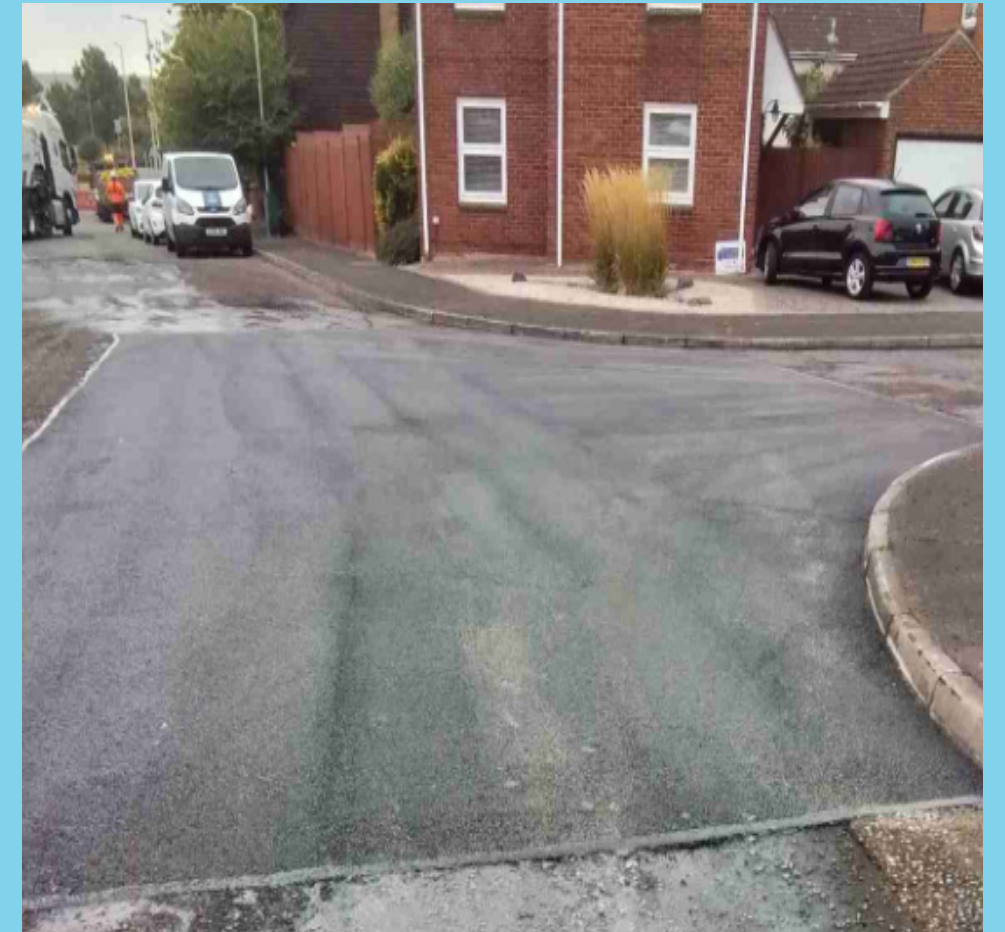


The Members' Highways Initiative, funded by £8 million of the £12 million announced for highways repairs in February, is making a positive difference across the highways network in Essex.

The £12 million has been allocated across different areas of work, including additional highway crews for each borough, city and district to prioritise repairs raised by local Members and residents.

Each Member has a crew allocated to them for a week every eight weeks, in addition to the work Essex Highways already carries out to repair and maintain the county's highways.

The Members' Highways Initiative is enabling Members to identify, plan and prioritise defects in their division. This includes repairing outstanding issues as well as any new defects. Things in scope under the MHI include potholes, pavements, repairs to street furniture, drainage and enforcing vegetation maintenance on private land where it meets the highways. Opposite are a couple of before and after photos of the types of work being selected and completed through the MHI.



£25 MILLION BOOST TO HELP CHANGE THE FACE OF ESSEX'S ROAD NETWORK

Extra funding announced to radically improve the face of highways across the county

Essex's road network has had a £25 million boost to power resurfacing on key roads, and to ensure roadside vegetation is kept in check and signs and lines are repaired and repainted. The new programme is named 'Priority One' reflecting how important highways are to residents and businesses.

The funding comes as a result of the council's strong financial management, creating a mid-year funding boost. Priority One will see more repairs being carried out on the roads to substantially improve the condition of the network. The focus will be on larger road resurfacing rather than individual potholes, which will continue to be repaired through existing funding. The extra money will also be invested in more drain cleaning, repainting white lines, cutting back vegetation and repairing signs.

Councillor Kevin Bentley, Leader of Essex County Council, said: "This investment is a game changer and comes at a time of year when we can make a real impact on the network, before the winter weather and shorter days set in. The Priority One programme is well named because roads are our residents' top priority.

"An extra £25 million being announced today will give us the power to deliver even more improvements for our residents. Put simply, it will mean more crews on the roads, more roads

being resurfaced and better signs and lines. We have one of the largest road networks in the country and it powers our economy. I live for the day when the government gives back to Essex the vehicle tax our residents pay so we can invest it directly in our roads, but in the meantime, we are doing our bit on the network."



'THIS INVESTMENT IS A GAME CHANGER AND COMES AT A TIME OF YEAR WHEN WE CAN MAKE A REAL IMPACT ON THE NETWORK'

Councillor Tom Cunningham, Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure and Sustainable Transport, said: “It’s my priority to make sure my fellow Essex residents feel proud of where they live, because Essex residents deserve no less.

“The condition of the roads is central to instilling that pride because most of us use the road network in some way or another every day. To see it deteriorate impacts how we feel about our home. We all want a high-quality environment and we are determined to deliver one.

“Priority One is our route to making a positive difference to the road network across the county – not just the tarmac, but road signs, verges and white lines.”

The latest funding comes after £12 million of extra investment was announced earlier this year for highways. £8 million of this supports the Members’ Highways Initiative, where County Council Members prioritise the issues they want Essex Highways crews to repair. £39 million was also set aside this year for the annual resurfacing programme.



‘PRIORITY ONE IS OUR ROUTE TO MAKING A POSITIVE DIFFERENCE TO THE ROAD NETWORK ACROSS THE COUNTY – NOT JUST THE TARMAC, BUT ROAD SIGNS, VERGES AND WHITE LINES’

ESSEX HIGHWAYS MAKING JET BOOSTED ROAD REPAIRS

Essex Highways is carrying out even more road repairs thanks to additional funding announced earlier this year by Essex County Council. The improvements are being carried out by Jet Patchers, which can deliver rapid repairs on potholes.

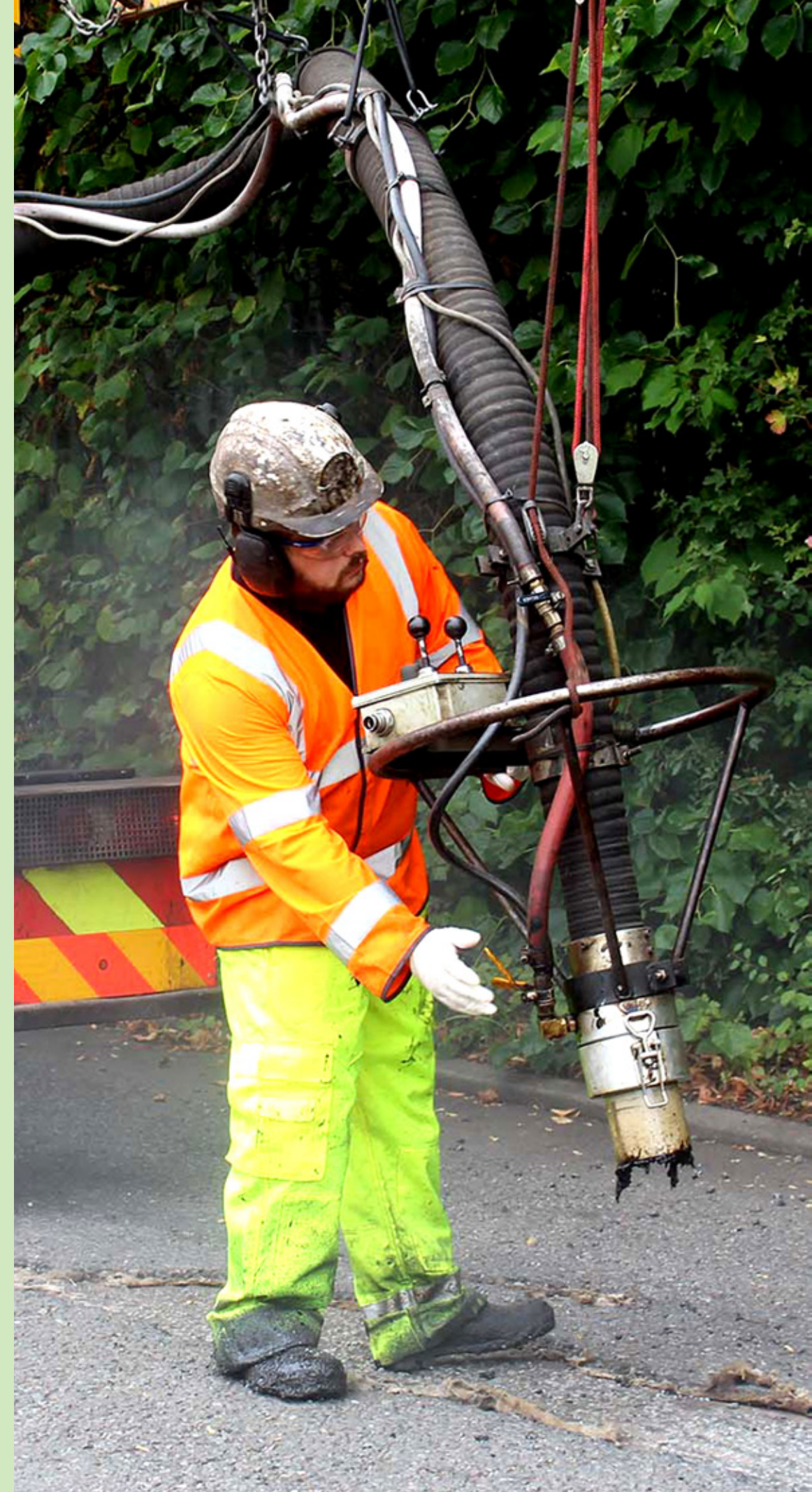
Since June, over 2,300 potholes have been fixed, making the roads of Essex safer, greener and healthier to travel on for all users. The Jet Patching machines and crews are currently operating in the Maldon and Uttlesford districts, carrying out rapid repairs on rural and local roads.

Crews will be moving across the entire county this summer, ensuring that the issues that matter most to residents are addressed, promoting pride of place in communities across Essex.

Jet Patching is a pothole repair method that is known for its speed and efficiency. It minimises disruption to traffic and significantly reduces the need to close roads. Key benefits of the method include:

- Speed and efficiency - allowing entire roads to be treated quickly, requiring minimal planning and traffic management
- Versatility - which means it is effective on quieter rural roads, but adaptable to use in busier areas
- Not requiring road closures - allowing for continuous traffic flow even during repairs

Councillor Tom Cunningham, Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure, and Sustainable Transport, said: “The deployment of the Jet Patchers marks a significant step forward in our commitment to maintain and improve the quality of Essex’s roads. By targeting these urgently needed repairs, especially on our rural roads, we’re ensuring safer and smoother journeys for all residents.”



BRIGHT FUTURE FOLLOWS STREETLIGHTING UPGRADES

A major project to make streetlights in Essex more sustainable, efficient and cost-effective is coming to an end. Energy savings of up to £39 million over the next 25 years are set to be made by upgrading almost 135,000 streetlights to new LED models.

The new units installed at the rate of 600 a week over the past three years save around 75% in energy costs compared to the previous lights. As well as being more energy-efficient, the new lights are more reliable and, with a 20-year lifespan, require less maintenance. This in turn provides further benefit to Essex County Council with which Ringway Jacobs provides highway services through the Essex Highways strategic partnership. As part of the upgrade programme, the older LED units being replaced have been made available to parish councils to be fitted to streetlights they own. One such council, Rayne Parish Council has already reported reduced monthly streetlight maintenance costs.

Councillor Tom Cunningham, Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Highways, Infrastructure, and Sustainable Transport summarised the benefits of the new LED lighting when he said: “The adoption of LED technology in our streetlights represents a significant step forward in our infrastructure. These lights are more energy-efficient and have a longer lifespan, providing long-term benefits for our County and greatly contributing to building a safer, greener, and healthier Essex.”





**AROUND
THE
COUNTY**

WICKEN FEN BRIDGE RECONSTRUCTION PROGRESSING WELL

The reconstruction of Wicken Fen Bridge has been progressing well, with significant milestones taken place in recent weeks. The team has successfully lifted and installed the new precast reinforced concrete box units, a crucial step in the bridge's reconstruction.

Following the installation of these robust units, the team moved on to the next phase: waterproofing. This essential process ensures the longevity and durability of the bridge by protecting it from water damage and other environmental factors.

With the waterproofing completed, the focus has now shifted to backfilling the structure. This involves filling the areas around the newly installed units with suitable material to provide stability and support. The backfilling process is the next step in ensuring the bridge's structural integrity and preparing it for the final stages of reconstruction.

We anticipate works to be completed by mid-September.



REPORTING ISSUES TO ESSEX HIGHWAYS ONLINE NOW EVEN EASIER

Improvements to the Tell Us tool include reporting urgent issues online and the option to inform Essex Highways when issues have got worse

Improvements have been made to the Essex Highways Tell Us tool to make it easier for residents to report issues on the county's roads, following a successful trial which took place between February and April.

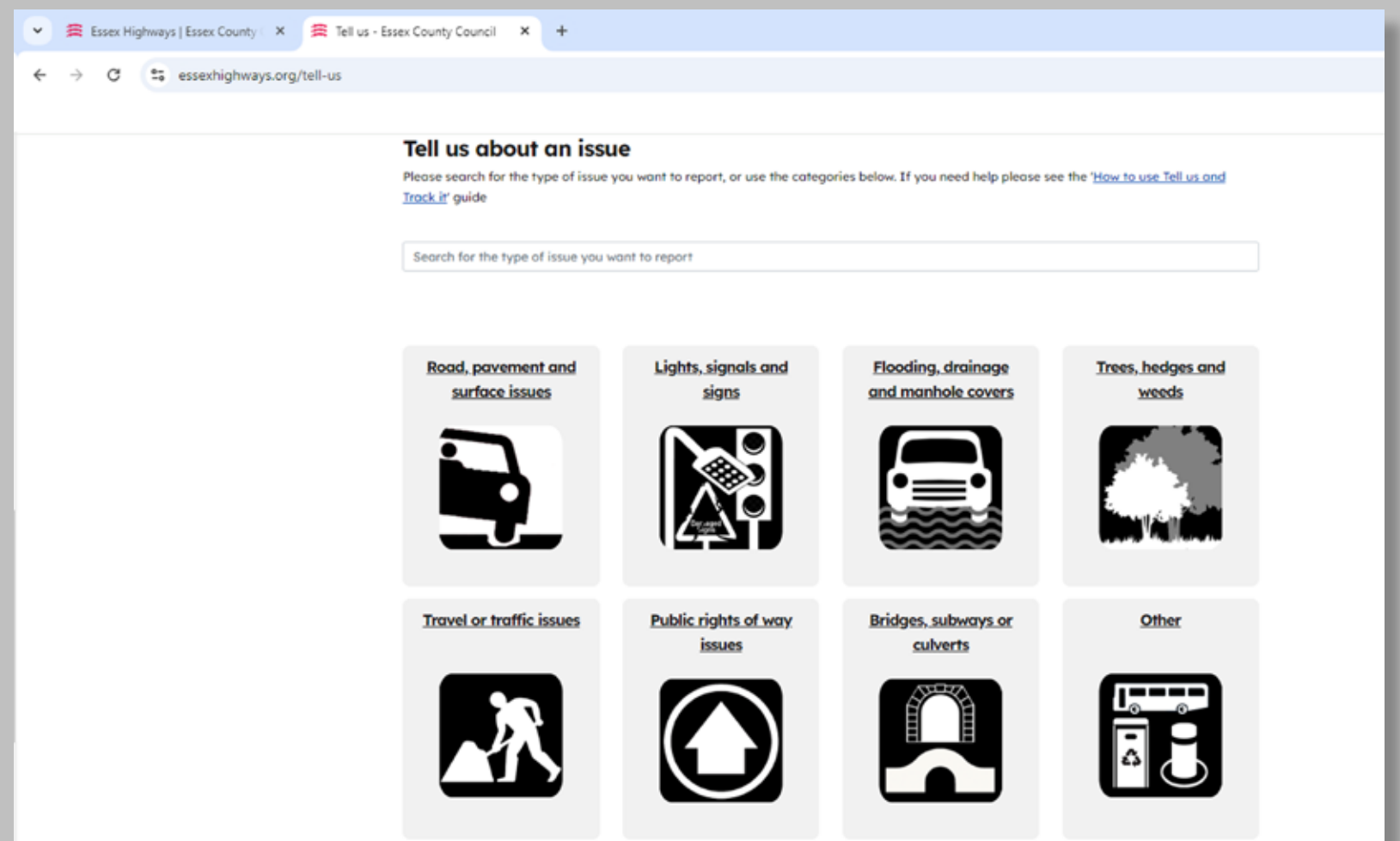
During the trial, 242 online enquiries were received with 58% requiring emergency action. The number of emergency issues reported during the trial increased by 84%, highlighting the effectiveness of the new online reporting option. Other positive outcomes from the trial included a significant reduction in the average time taken to make issues safe, with response times reduced by more than half.

The number of highways-related calls also reduced, saving approximately 23 hours of call centre agent time in March alone. The reduction of calls and streamlined online reporting enables highways inspectors to focus on more critical tasks. It also allows for quicker remedial action to be taken and is quicker and simpler for residents to use. Essex Highways will continue to monitor the impact of these changes over the next year, especially through the busier winter period. The improvements made to the Report It tool in recent weeks include:

- The ability to report some urgent issues such as large potholes, fallen trees or flooded roads online

- An option to tell us that a known issue has got worse
- The ability to sign up to updates on an issue, allowing Essex Highways to make the reporting map clearer
- Defect photos so residents can decide if the issue they wish to report is an existing one, or something new

**Report a highways issue in Essex
Track existing highways issues, or report new ones**



USEFUL CONTACTS

Whatever the weather, you never know when the unexpected might occur. Should there be instances of fallen trees, power outages, flooding etc, help and support can be found below:

IN AN EMERGENCY

If you think there's a risk to public safety, **you can now report some urgent issues online (if you are able to provide photos)**. Please follow the guidance online which will tell you if you can report the issue online (with photos) or whether you need to call us on 0345 603 7631. If you have hearing problems you can use our text phone service on 0345 758 5592.

FALLEN TREES

To report a fallen tree that is obstructing a highway please contact Essex Highways:

<https://www.essexhighways.org/tell-us/trees-hedges-and-weeds>

To report a fallen tree on a highway that is a risk to public safety call:
0345 603 7631

POWER CUTS

In the event of a power cut in your area, report to UK Power Networks by calling 0800 31 63 105 or simply 105. You can also report and check power cuts in your area at ukpowernetworks.co.uk/powercut

FLOODING

You can keep an eye on flood warnings here;

<https://check-for-flooding.service.gov.uk/>

Essex County Council is the local flooding authority:

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/floods-emergency-planning>