

## MALDON DIVISION MONTHLY UPDATE – COUNCILLOR JANE FLEMING

### ESSEX ROADS RECEIVE A GREEN RATING FROM CENTRAL GOVERNMENT

Essex County Council has welcomed the news that the county has received a 'green' rating from the Government for its road maintenance and repair.

The rating reflects the hard work that's gone into repairing more than 5,000 miles of roads, thanks to the additional funding provided by the Department for Transport and the County Council.

The council has invested an extra £49 million, in addition to the annual highways' maintenance budget, to repair potholes and other defects since 2024. Additional funding was also secured from the Department for Transport, which has confirmed Essex County Council would receive over £168 million for road repairs until 2029/30.

The repair programme has been delivered through the Priority One programme over the last year and the ongoing Members' Highways Initiative, which have ensured thousands more additional repairs have been carried out in the last two years.

Priority One focused on proactive maintenance such as road resurfacing, vegetation clearance, white lines and replacing broken signs.

The Members' Highways Initiative gives County Councillors the opportunity to have dedicated crews carry out smaller road and pavement repairs in their divisions every few weeks, alongside £300,000 to carry out repairs caused by winter weather conditions and address concerns of local residents.

Crews are currently managing the winter service and keeping the roads safe for travellers in wintry weather. This includes driving the gritters in icy conditions and carrying out make safe repairs where the weather is causing damage.

However, larger scale resurfacing and repair works will resume in the Spring to carry out further repairs and maintain the condition of the county's roads for even longer.

### MORE FUNDING FOR BUSES

Essex County Council has secured more than £68 million to support and improve local bus services across the county over the coming years.

The government funding will support initiatives to improve reliability, strengthen local connections

and encourage more people to travel by bus. It will also help ensure services remain accessible and responsive to local needs.

The government's new consolidated bus funding framework combines Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding with the Local Authority Bus Service Operator Grant (LA BSOG). Essex will receive £10,778,248 annually from 2026/27 to 2028/29. This totals £32,334,744.

Alongside this revenue funding, Essex County Council will receive £36.26 million in Local Authority Bus Grant capital funding between 2026 and 2030.

Essex County Council currently subsidises bus services where there is no commercial service, but there is a need to help residents stay connected. These make up around 15% of the bus services in the county.

The funding follows the government's 2025 Spending Review. In this, it was confirmed areas outside London would receive more than £1 billion a year in long-term bus funding. This includes both capital and revenue support for local transport authorities.

## **SAFER ESSEX ROADS PARTNERSHIP OUT IN THE MALDON DISTRICT**

The Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP) was out last week responding directly to community concerns and known collision sites, as part of ongoing work to support Vision Zero and reduce the risk of people being killed or seriously injured on Essex roads.

The team joined forces with Maldon District Council officers during a morning of targeted enforcement across the Maldon district, focusing on areas highlighted through collision data, community concern and reports of speeding vehicles. Locations visited included Maldon town centre, Purleigh, Great Totham, Wickham Bishops, Southminster, North Fambridge and Althorne. By combining targeted enforcement with engagement and education, the SERP continues to work with communities and partners to deliver safer speeds, reduce harm and move Essex closer to Vision Zero.

Find out more about the Vision Zero ambition here: [www.saferessexroads.org/visionzero](http://www.saferessexroads.org/visionzero)

## **LAUNCH OF '100 IN 100'**

Essex businesses are being challenged to give young people real insight into the world of work. It is through a new programme called '100 in 100'. This was launched on 2 December at the Glenwood School SEND sixth form being built by Morgan Sindall Construction.

100 in 100 aims to secure 100 meaningful work experiences in 100 days. It is being led by the [Essex Growth Agency](#) in partnership with the [Greater Essex Careers Hub](#).

100 in 100 will connect businesses with schools and colleges to offer experiences. For example:

- workplace visits
- career talks
- mentoring

These opportunities help young people build confidence make choices about their future. They also benefit businesses by:

- creating a pipeline of future talent
- building relationships with education providers
- shaping the local skills agenda
- raising their profile in the community

100 in 100 aligns with the [Essex Year of Opportunity](#). This is a wider campaign by Essex County Council across 2025/26.

The Essex Year of Opportunity removes barriers into work and education for all ages. It does this through projects and partnerships with organisations. As a result, people can gain real insight and access to essential skills.

100 in 100 is being delivered by Deyton Bell on behalf of the Essex Growth Agency. Over the next 100 days, they will help businesses deliver their pledge. This makes it easy for employers of all sizes to get involved.

[Sign up and find out more about 100 in 100.](#)

## **ESSEX SECURES FUNDING FOR COMMUNITY DIGITAL SKILLS PROJECTS**

The £375,000 grant comes from the Government's Digital Inclusion Innovation Fund. The grant was launched by the Department for Science, Innovation and Technology (DSIT).

Digital Essex - part of Essex County Council - is leading the project. The funding will be used to run a series of community-based digital skills projects with the aim of:

- developing a national methodology to measure the benefits of helping people use digital apps
- showing how digital inclusion can improve lives and reduce inequalities

The focus will be on three priority groups:

- older adults (65+)
- young people not in education, employment or training (NEETs)
- individuals with learning or physical disabilities

## SOCIAL BROADBAND TARIFFS

At a time when living costs are reaching record highs, several broadband providers are offering special discounted deals to help people receiving benefits to stay connected.

If you're a low-income family receiving Universal Credit or other benefits, you could be eligible for a social broadband tariff and save up to £202 a year on your broadband bills.

### Who's eligible for a broadband social tariff?

If you receive one of the following benefits, you may be eligible for a social tariff:

- Universal Credit
- Pension Credit
- Employment and Support Allowance
- Jobseeker's Allowance
- Income Support

### What's on offer?

Several broadband providers are offering low-cost broadband deals to eligible residents in Essex.

These include:

- [BT Home Essentials](#) – starting at £15 a month, plus £9.99 P&P
- [Connect Fibre Basic Essentials](#) - £20 a month
- [Hyperoptic Fair Fibre Plan](#) – starting at £15 a month
- [NOW Broadband Basics](#) – £20 a month
- [Sky Broadband Basics](#) – £20 a month
- [Virgin Media O2 Essential broadband](#) – £12.50 a month
- [Virgin Media O2 Essential broadband plus](#) – £20 a month
- [Vodafone Essentials Broadband](#) - £20 a month
- TalkTalk – free broadband for six months for jobseekers on Universal Credit who don't have an internet connection (contact your Jobcentre Plus work coach)

- [YouFibre 50](#) - £15 a month
- [County Broadband's Essential broadband tariff](#) - £15 a month
- [VOXI For Now](#) - £10 a month
- [EE Basics](#) – £12 a month

Please be aware that some offers may not be available at your address. For full details of each deal, visit the provider's website.

### **If you're not eligible**

If you don't meet the criteria for a discounted deal, but still want to save money on your broadband, we have some great tips to [help you find a cheaper broadband deal](#). There are also [free skills courses and other digital support](#) available across Essex.

## **YOUTH VAPING**

Essex Public Health is committed to reducing and preventing youth vaping and nicotine dependency. Working alongside partners, Essex Public Health have produced a [youth vaping toolkit for parents and carers](#) (PDF, 306 KB).

The toolkit includes:

- signs a young person may be vaping
- key facts
- available support

These resources provide practical guidance and tools to enable open and informed conversations with young people about nicotine use and its risks.

## **FOSTER WITH ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL**

Now is the perfect time to [start your fostering journey](#) and make a life-long difference to a child's life. Experience exceptional support, award-winning training and a competitive financial package when you foster with us.

There are children of all ages within your community that need loving homes. We're with you every step of the way and can help find a fostering option to suit you. Every child deserves a brighter future.

## SAFER ESSEX ROADS DRIVING WITH CONFIDENCE COURSE

Our [Driving with Confidence course](#) is for anyone concerned about their driving. This free course is developed by experts to support older drivers that may have become less confident with their driving skills.

The course can increase your confidence in dealing with today's traffic volumes and speeds. We can address any concerns or anxieties you may have regarding driving and can give you the reassurance that you are still a safe driver.

## DONATE UNUSED LAPTOPS

Digital Essex are inviting residents to [donate unused laptops](#), tablets and phones to support children that need devices for learning. Repurposing old technology reduces waste, benefits education, and strengthens communities. It's simple, impactful and cost-effective.

## CONNECT TO WORK PROGRAMME

Connect to Work is a free programme designed to support people who are not currently working or finding it difficult to stay in work.

Details: [Take the next step with Connect to Work.](#)

## POPPINS BURSARY

New childminders in Essex from low-income households can get up to £1,000 in startup costs through the Poppins Bursary. Fully funded training is also available for both new and existing childminders, including Skills Bootcamps in childminding and early years. Discover how the [Poppins Bursary can support your start up costs](#) or email [Poppins.Bursary@essex.gov.uk](mailto:Poppins.Bursary@essex.gov.uk) for more information.

## ESSEX HEALTH & WELLBEING STRATEGY CONSULTATION

Local councils, the NHS and community groups are creating a plan called the Health and Wellbeing Strategy. It's about working together to improve the health of people in Essex.

We are consulting on four key areas and supporting priorities:

1. Improving life chances for children and young people

2. Helping more people into work, and stay in work
3. Building healthy, resilient and connected communities
4. Creating opportunities to improve health and reduce the impact of poor health

Your ideas can help us shape health and wellbeing in Essex, [take part in the health and wellbeing consultation](#).

## **BUS TIMETABLE CHANGE DATES SET**

As part of the Enhanced Partnership between Essex County Council and Local Bus Operators a set of Common Registration Dates has been agreed each year for new registrations, variations and cancellations.

These change dates align with the Essex County Council Academic Calendar and will allow better co-ordination when updating roadside printed publicity. It will also limit the number of times a particular bus corridor can change in quick succession.

Agreed change dates for 2026 are as follows:

Sunday 04 January

Sunday 22 February

Sunday 12 April

Sunday 31 May

Sunday 26 July

Sunday 30 August

Sunday 01 November

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