

MALDON DIVISION MONTHLY UPDATE – COUNCILLOR JANE FLEMING

BEAULIEU PARK STATION TO OPEN ON SUNDAY 26TH OCTOBER

Beaulieu Park station is the first new railway station on the Great Eastern Main Line in over 100 years.

The station will open on **Sunday 26 October 2025**, and there will be several frequent daily bus services to and from Chelmsford City Centre. More detailed information is available at TravelEssex.co.uk.

The new station will be operated by Greater Anglia and provide travel to London Liverpool Street in 40 minutes.

It will feature three platforms, a new track for passing trains, a taxi rank, drop-off areas and several ways to reach the station. These include:

- Bus connections – the C11, C9, C8 and 73 operated by First will be extended to stop at Beaulieu Park Station from opening day
- Car park run by Chelmsford City Council and another by Greater Anglia – 752 parking spaces total, including 38 free of charge for Blue Badge holders and 10 electric vehicle charging points. Tariffs and opening times can be found on the [city council](#) and [Greater Anglia](#) websites
- Walking and cycling – improvements to local routes with some new paths created. Option between free covered bike storage and paid secure storage at the station
- Disabled access – step-free access, two lifts to all platforms and braille throughout the station

Road users will be able to reach the station via the new A131 Beaulieu Parkway relief road, which connects to Essex Regiment Way in the west and the Boreham Interchange to the east.

Essex County Council in partnership with Chelmsford City Council began the delivery of Beaulieu Park Station after securing funding in June 2022, with construction beginning in March 2023.

Funding and infrastructure

- Beaulieu Park Station is being funded by around £175 million. This includes £141 million from the Government's Housing and Infrastructure Fund, £12 million from the South-East Local Enterprise Partnership and £22 million from the developers of Beaulieu, Countryside (now part of the Vistry Group) and L&Q.
- The new Beaulieu Parkway relief road will help bring passengers to the new train station from the nearby A12. In time, the Chelmsford North-East bypass will provide a more direct route for those travelling from Braintree and nearby villages.

- The first section of the bypass is currently being delivered by Essex County Council, which is planned to link into the Northern Radial Distributor Road to be constructed by developers. A planning application for the link road is due to be determined by Chelmsford City Council.

Chelmsford Garden Community

- Beaulieu Park Station is a significant addition to the Beaulieu and Channels neighbourhoods in the north of the city, which form the first phase of the new Chelmsford Garden Community.
- The garden community will comprise 10,000 new homes. 4,350 have planning permission, including 1,989 which have already been built. A further 6,250 will be delivered over the coming years.
- This housing growth will be supported by much-needed infrastructure such as shops, community services, health services, schools and transport links, including the new station.
- Beaulieu Park Station will provide easier and quicker access to jobs, helping the economic development of the area and encouraging further investment.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVE FUND

Funding of up to £10,000 available to voluntary organisations, community groups, residents' associations and Town and Parish Councils.

Essex County Council's Community Initiative Fund (CIF) aims to strengthen local communities and make Essex an even better place to live, work and visit.

Since it launched, the CIF has supported projects such as:

- upgrades to sports facilities
- improvements to community buildings such as new heating systems or accessible toilets
- staff costs for projects or maintenance
- IT systems or support
- cultural events and activities

Through the main CIF round, grants of up to £10,000 are available for projects designed to strengthen local communities.

[Applications to the fund](#) should be made before the closing date of Friday 28 November.

Alongside the main CIF round, micro grants of up to £1,000 are also available.

These grants could help reduce social isolation, improve wellbeing or encourage communities to connect. They could also support organisations to build and develop their capabilities and skills.

[Applications to the micro grants fund](#) will remain open until all the funds for these are allocated.

Last year, more than £200,000 was distributed through the CIF. £225,000 will be available this time round.

The fund is administered by the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) on behalf of Essex County Council

'LOVE YOUR BUS' PART 2

The next round of funding—Love Your Bus 2—will open this autumn. To make it easier for Parish and Town Councils to apply, the application form has been simplified and weekly online Q&A and engagement sessions introduced. These sessions are a great opportunity to ask questions, explore ideas, and get support in shaping projects that benefit local passengers.

The first round is already making a difference for bus users across Essex. Find out more on the dedicated [Love Your Bus page](#).

SUPPORTED LOCAL BUS SERVICES CONSULTATION

As a reminder, Essex County Council is reviewing its support for 41 local bus services and wants to hear from residents.

Bus users are invited to share their views on a number of bus services we support. The services being reviewed operate Essex-wide but are mostly in rural areas. The consultation looks at 41 of the 154 services that operate across the county.

The consultation remains open (closing on Monday 27 October 2025) and focuses on taxpayer-funded services, mainly in rural areas, evenings, and Sundays. These services make up about 15% of the county's bus network and cost around £11 million each year.

Residents are invited to share their views on options such as keeping services as they are, redesigning routes/timetables, or returning some services to commercial operation.

Take part and view the full list of services under review on the [TravelEssex website](#).

Residents can feed back on options around continuing services as they are now and redesigning services to better reflect how they are used. [Share your views on the bus service consultation](#) before Monday 27 October.

PLUSBUS E TICKETS

Earlier this year, PlusBus became available as an eTicket making combined bus and rail travel even easier. You can now buy a QR-code ticket on your smartphone, giving you unlimited bus travel in the PlusBus zone at either end of your rail journey—with no peak-time restrictions.

You simply add a PlusBus eTicket when booking your rail ticket. Paper and smartcard tickets are still available, but the new eTicket offers a quick, convenient way to travel.

Find out more on the [PlusBus website](#).

WORKING SPACES AT ESSEX LIBRARIES

Libraries across Essex now offer low-cost, professional co-working spaces ideal for freelancers, startups, and small teams. With rates from just £6 per hour, flexible booking, Wi-Fi, printing, and convenient locations, these spaces are perfect for working, meeting, and growing.

In partnership with Wimbletech CIC, Essex Libraries have also launched co-working hubs in Loughton and Harlow – with more coming soon! Whether you need a desk for a day or a creative space to collaborate, enjoy affordability, flexibility, and community.

[Book a room or arrange a tour today](#)

BLOOD PRESSURE MONITORS AT YOUR LOCAL LIBRARY

Essex residents aged 18 and over can [borrow blood pressure monitors for free from 74 local libraries](#) with no GP referral needed.

Each loan pack includes a:

- blood pressure monitor
- cuff
- guidance leaflet
- diary to record readings
- QR code linking to more guidance

Monitors can be borrowed for up to two weeks. In addition, 15 of our libraries will offer freestanding monitors for walk-in use, allowing users to check their blood pressure readings instantly. This initiative supports early detection and monitoring of high blood pressure, while reducing unnecessary clinical appointments.

FLU JABS

Flu can hit you hard if you have a long-term health condition, even if you feel well most of the time. You can reduce your chances of being hospitalised with flu by nearly half just by getting vaccinated.

The NHS offers a free flu jab every year for people with conditions such as asthma, diabetes, heart disease or a weakened immune system. Protect yourself this winter by [booking your free flu jab at your GP practice or local pharmacy](#).

STOP SMOKING WITH THE ESSEX WELLBEING SERVICE

[Stoptober](#) is back and we're calling on Essex's smokers to join millions of others who have successfully quit with the campaign. Quitting smoking is one of the best things you can do for your health. Did you know, if you quit smoking for 28 days, you're five times more likely to quit for good.

[Essex Wellbeing Service offer free Stop Smoking services](#) and can help you find the right treatment, advice and support.

HALF TERM ACTIVITIES WITH ESSEX OUTDOORS

Make this autumn half-term memorable by booking children onto an [Essex Outdoors school holiday activity day](#). In small groups of around 10, children (aged 8 to 16) will enjoy four exciting activities each day with enthusiastic and highly qualified instructors.

Sessions can include:

- high ropes and climbing
- zip wire
- water sports
- archery
- mountain biking

Days start from £40, at either Danbury, Mersea, Bradwell or Harlow.

FREE ARCHIVE EXPLORERS CLUB THIS OCTOBER

Got young children? Love local history? Why not join the free Archive Explorers Club this October at the Essex Record Office on Wharf Road, Chelmsford. This family-friendly, relaxed group is a great opportunity to meet other parents/carers while discovering fascinating historical records

from your local area. There will be toys available for children aged 0–5, and free refreshments for grown-ups.

Each week will have a different theme from Chelmer waterside through time on 2 October to local landmarks and architecture on 9 October. [Book your free archive explorers club place on Eventbrite.](#)

FOSTERING WITH ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

Fostering gives vulnerable children much needed support and stability. This month, join foster carers and social workers at an informative event to learn more about becoming a foster carer. There has never been a better time to start fostering. Join Essex County Council at [the fostering drop-in event on Saturday 18 October](#) to discover how it can fit your family.

ESSEX ENERGY SWITCH

Register now to see if you're paying too much for your energy. A previous customer of the scheme said, "It was very easy to sign up, and I felt confident knowing the council was involved. I would thoroughly recommend it to others!" [Register for free with the Essex Energy Switch.](#)

CYCLE WITH CONFIDENCE COURSE

Whether you're a complete beginner or want to build confidence on the road, our free adult cycle training is here to help. Expert instructors, flexible sessions, and locations across Essex. [Sign up now for a cycling course](#) and start pedalling with confidence.

ESSEX YEAR OF OPPORTUNITY

The Essex Year of Opportunity is unlocking education and employment for all ages. With £1.33 million invested, we are tackling skills gaps, boosting digital confidence, and expanding apprenticeships. Schools, colleges, and employers are encouraged to get involved and help shape Essex's future. Visit the [Essex Year of Opportunity Project Directory](#) to learn more.

FUNDING FINDER FOR BUSINESSES

A new [Ambitious Essex Funding Finder](#) is now live. Powered by Idox plc's Open 4 Business platform, the Funding Finder gives you the opportunity to discover funding, grants, loans, and awards for your business, whether you're a startup, SME, or established enterprise.

How it works:

- Smart search by business type, sector, turnover, and more
- Easy browsing by funding category or organisation type
- Save and download opportunities for future reference
- Personalised email alerts to stay ahead of new funding

[Sign up today](#)

CONNECTED INNOVATION PROGRAMME WITH NORFOLK & SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCILS

Essex County Council has partnered with Norfolk and Suffolk County Councils to co-fund and deliver the [Connected Innovation Programme](#) and Innovation Grant Mentoring for 2025/26. This marks a major step in expanding the region's innovation ecosystem, with Essex joining a network that has already secured over £10 million in funding and supported hundreds of SMEs.

The programme will run from October 2025 to October 2026 under a unified brand, showcasing a shared commitment to innovation-led growth. The partnership will be formally launched at the [Innovate Local: East of England event on 22 October](#) – we hope to see you there!

[Book your place at Innovate Local: East of England](#)

SMALL BUSINESS BOOTCAMP

Small business owners won't want to miss the [Federation of Small Businesses \(FSB\) Business Bootcamp](#) taking place on 20 November 2025.

Sharpen your strategy, build resilience, and connect with fellow entrepreneurs through expert-led workshops on sales, PR, and navigating political landscapes.

[Spaces are limited - secure your spot today!](#)

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