

## MALDON DIVISION MONTHLY UPDATE – COUNCILLOR JANE FLEMING

### FIVE UNITARIES ANNOUNCED

On Wednesday 25 March the Government confirmed its preference for five new unitary authorities to replace the existing county, unitary, city, district and borough councils in Greater Essex.

In the short-term, nothing will change. Council services will continue to be provided by the existing councils as normal. The new authorities are not expected to come into effect until April 2028.

[Visit the LGR hub website for more information](#) and to find out more about the changes coming to Greater Essex.

### MAY ELECTIONS

County, District, Borough and City council elections are taking place on Thursday 7 May 2026. To vote in person, by post or by proxy, you must be registered.

Taking part in local elections should feel simple and accessible for everyone. If you've never registered before, recently changed address or updated your name, please [register to vote by Monday 20 April](#).

After you've registered, there are extra deadlines depending on how you want to vote, or if you need to apply for free voter ID. The deadline to apply:

- for a postal vote or a postal proxy vote is 5pm on Tuesday 21 April
- for a proxy vote is 5pm on Tuesday 28 April
- if you need free voter ID is 5pm on Tuesday 28 April

Registering to vote helps make sure your voice is part of the decisions that affect local services, places and community life.

### WE RISE MENTORING PROGRAMME

The We Rise Mentoring Programme offers friendly, free one-to-one support for young people aged 16 to 25-years-old. Mentors from local Essex employers across a range of industries can help:

- build confidence
- improve CVs

- prepare for interviews
- explore career options
- share valuable industry knowledge

[Find out more about the We Rise Mentoring programme.](#)

## POPPINS BURSARY

If you've ever thought about becoming a childminder, ACL Essex can help you take the first step. Their [Preparing to Work in Home-Based Childcare course](#) covers everything you need to run a safe, engaging setting, and you may also be eligible for the Childminder Start-Up Grant.

For more information, please email [Poppins.Bursary@essex.gov.uk](mailto:Poppins.Bursary@essex.gov.uk).

## ESSEX SAFER SPEEDS STRATEGY – CONSULTATION CURRENTLY RUNNING

Speed is the biggest factor in fatal road traffic collisions in Essex. Essex Highways have launched a draft Essex Safer Speeds Strategy and want to hear your views on how our roads can be made safer.

[Share your views on the Essex Safer Speeds Strategy](#) before the consultation closes on 26 April.

## BUS PASSENGER NEWS

Bus Passenger News provides information on forthcoming local bus service changes in Essex.

If you would like further information about a particular service, contact your Transport Provider – contact details are available from [www.TravelEssex.co.uk](http://www.TravelEssex.co.uk). TravelEssex has agreed common registration dates for new registrations, variations, and cancellations.

The latest copy of Bus Passenger News provides upcoming timetable changes. The next set of timetable changes take place on: Sunday 12 April 2026.

## CHELMSFORD PARK & RIDE BUS SERVICES

The new Essex County Council (ECC) bus services are now running at Chelmsford Park and Ride sites.

The official ECC Park and Ride buses are run by First Buses – the £3.10 day ticket (£1.60 for concessionary pass holders) covers parking and the bus ride to and from the City centre. At

Sandon, the service 700 ticket activates the exit barrier from the car park. Route 701 is now a commercial service and not connected with the Council.

Further details including the timetable are [here](#).

## LOVE YOUR BUS GRANT PROGRAMME

Essex County Council has awarded £895,160 through the Love Your Bus 2 programme, supporting 23 Parish and Town Councils to deliver improvements based on the specific needs of their communities. The programme is funded through the Department for Transport's Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and enables local councils to shape the services people rely on every day.

The funding will support more frequent journeys, extended routes, reinstated weekend services, youth fare initiatives, passenger information upgrades, and community-led promotion and awareness activities. These enhancements aim to improve accessibility, reduce isolation, support local journeys and encourage greater use of sustainable, reliable transport.

Enhancements funded through Love Your Bus 2 are expected to begin from April 2026, following coordination with local councils and bus operators.

More details about the Love Your Bus programme and individual project updates can be found [here](#). In the Maldon District the following Parishes were successful:

<b>Stow Maries Parish Council</b>	Extend six daily 99 journeys (Maldon ↔ SWF), with two continuing to Broomfield Hospital.
<b>Woodham Walter Parish Council</b>	Retain one previously cut journey and add a new morning journey on Route 99 enabling Maldon return trips.
<b>Burnham-on-Crouch Town Council</b>	Add late evening Friday/Saturday journeys on Routes 31/331 aligned with last train arrivals.
<b>Burnham-on-Crouch Town Council</b>	Introduce Saturday services on Route 45 (Bradwell–SWF) to improve leisure and shopping access.

## STEPHENSONS OF ESSEX BRAND NEW BUSES

On Wednesday 11 March, Stephenson's of Essex unveiled two brand-new buses at the Museum of Power in Langford.

The buses will operate on the 90 service, running from Witham through Wickham Bishops to Great Totham to Heybridge to Maldon.

Staff, councillors and members of the public were invited to enjoy an inaugural ride before the buses went into action later that afternoon.

Ryan Scott of Stephensons said the company has invested £2 million in the Essex area since becoming an employee-owned trust in October 2024.

The new buses are custom-built, low-carbon vehicles with 33 seats, making them well suited to the route. Their size is ideal for the rural roads they will serve, and as brand-new additions to the fleet, they are expected to offer a high level of reliability — something especially important for passengers in more remote areas.

## CHELMSFORD NORTH EAST BYPASS

The first section (1A) of the new [Chelmsford North East Bypass](#) is set to become part of a four-project works package to upgrade the road network in line with development of the [garden community](#).

Alongside the newly-opened [Beaulieu Park Station](#), the improvements mean that, as far as possible, the necessary transport infrastructure is being put in place as new homes are built.

The four-project package will see:

- Completion of the construction of Section 1A of the [Chelmsford North East Bypass](#), from Generals Lane to Cranham Road, due at the end of Summer 2026.
- Construction by developers of the Northern Radial Distributor Road linking the garden community with the northern end of the bypass. A scheme given planning permission by [Chelmsford City Council](#) at the end of last year, the road will run from Wheelers Hill to a new roundabout being constructed as part of the bypass scheme.
- Increased capacity and enhanced safety at Junction 19 of the A12 Boreham Interchange, a new [Essex County Council](#) project to replace [National Highways'](#) scheme to upgrade the junction as part of its A12 widening work, which was cancelled by the Government last year.
- [Essex County Council](#) improvements to the Beaulieu Park Station access roundabout, enabling it to cope with heavier traffic as new homes are built.

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