

## JULY UPDATE MALDON DIVISION – COUNCILLOR JANE FLEMING

### CHANGES TO FREE SCHOOL MEAL VOUCHERS

Following the Department for Work and Pensions announcement of [Household Support Fund 4](#), the council announced there will still be significant support to those families in receipt of free school meals in Essex.

This year there will be some minor changes to allocations and timings of payments. This is due to the fact families in receipt of free school meals will be receiving additional support from the government's cost of living payments.

Allocations per child for 2023 will have a total value of £150 paid in three stages outlined below:

- May £15
- July £75
- December £60

### GOVERNMENT EXTENDS £2 SINGLE BUS FARE



Travelling by bus continues to be affordable with single fare tickets costing just £2 allowing passengers to travel across Essex, exploring its vibrant cities, picturesque

countryside and charming towns.

All you need to do is ask your bus driver for a single ticket then sit back and enjoy your bus journey. Before you travel make sure to check your route is eligible for the £2 single fare on the [Government website](#). The **£2 rate will run to 31 October 2023**.

The capped single fare will then be extended for at least another year at **£2.50 until 30 November 2024** – when the government will review their effectiveness and future bus fares.

## LONDON MARATHON FOUNDATION AWARDS £750,000 TO CONTINUE INSPIRING ACTIVITY IN ESSEX

Since Ford RideLondon-Essex took place in May, the London Marathon Foundation have announced additional funding of £750,000. This funding is a direct benefit of Essex County Council hosting Ford RideLondon-Essex.

The additional funding will continue supporting communities across Essex to lead active and healthy lives. In total the London Marathon Foundation has awarded £1.75 million to Essex since May 2022. [Read more about the additional funding](#) on the Active Essex website.

## SHARE YOUR VIEWS ON BARRIERS TO APPRENTICESHIPS

Working with Essex University, we're running a survey for young people aged 16 to 18 and their parent/carers to explore financial barriers to apprenticeships. We will use the findings to make apprenticeships more attractive and accessible for young people in Essex, especially those struggling financially.

Share your views by completing the [survey for 16 to 18-year-olds](#) or the [survey for parents and carers](#).

## INNOVATION IN DIGITECH

Want to find out how digital solutions could support your business or future career? Come along to our free event at the Launchpad Southend on Friday 7 July.

Hear from expert speakers, network with likeminded individuals and enjoy lunch on us. [Secure your free ticket for the Launchpad](#) today.

## COULD OUR APPRENTICESHIP HUB SUPPORT YOUR NEXT STEPS?

Finishing school or college and not sure what to do next? Our Apprenticeship Hub can:

- connect you to local employers
- get you job-ready with interview practice and CV guidance
- support you with additional training and education

Find out more about the [Apprenticeship Hub](#).

## SIGN THE ESSEX GREEN SKILLS PLEDGE

We're inviting local employers and training providers to sign the Essex Green Skills Pledge. With up to eight actions to pledge to, there's something for every organisation.

As a thank you, you will receive exclusive resources to support your pledge and marketing collateral to promote your involvement. [Sign the pledge today](#).

## ESSEX LAUNCHES NEW CLIMATE ACTION APP!

Last month saw the launch of the Carbon Cutting Essex app. The pioneering app is a fantastic way to keep track of our carbon footprint and discover how we can reduce it through our daily lifestyles. [Download the free Carbon Cutting Essex app today](#).

## SHARE YOUR VIEWS ON THE FUTURE ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING NETWORK IN ESSEX

We are running a consultation on our new [Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy](#). Supporting the shift towards electric vehicles will help achieve our net zero goals and improve air quality.

The strategy sets out plans to improve access to charging points. Find out more and [have your say on the strategy](#).

## DO YOU KNOW SOMEONE THAT NEEDS HELP GETTING ONLINE?

Digital Essex has launched a new interactive map, which shows where digital support is available in your local area. Organisations can help you get online safely, access free mobile data and use essential online healthcare services. Visit the Digital Essex map and [find digital support near you](#).

## FUNDING AVAILABLE TO CREATE RESILIENT AND VIBRANT COMMUNITIES

We're inviting organisations in Essex to bid for funding to help create resilient and vibrant communities through the [Essex Community Initiatives Fund](#) (CIF).

There are two levels of grants. The main CIF offers grants up to £10,000 towards projects that benefit the wider community. The [Micro Grant Community Chest Fund](#) offers grants of up to £1,000 to help communities connect.

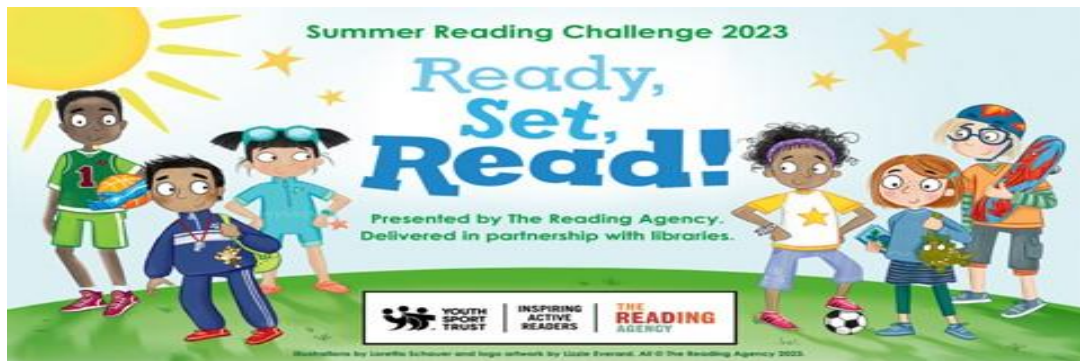
Town and parish councils, community groups, social enterprises and individuals can [apply now](#).

## CHELMSFORD SKILLS FESTIVAL

Hundreds of school pupils learned about the important issue of air pollution at a special careers event last week. Representatives from [Jacobs](#), working through Essex Highways, attended the Chelmsford Skills Festival to give an insight into careers at the company and share ongoing work to improve air quality in Essex.

Year 8 pupils from secondary schools across Chelmsford took part in a series of interactive activities, learning about the sources of air pollution and the impacts it has on our health. They also considered the actions we can all take to help improve air quality by using [Safer Greener Healthier](#) modes of transport.

## SUMMER READING CHALLENGE 2023



Ready, Set, Read will be coming to Essex Libraries on Saturday 15 July!

Come and sign up so you can help our six characters and their mascots make their way through a summer obstacle course, collecting golden books along the way. Read six books, collect special stickers and rewards, and receive a certificate and medal when you finish!

[Find out more about how to take part in the Summer Reading Challenge here.](#)

## SERVICE CHANGES

A summary of each service change that we are aware of for June/July can be found in Bus Passenger News.

[Bus Passenger News](#)

## CONSULTATION OPEN FOR THE NEW TRANSPORT STRATEGY FOR THE MALDON DISTRICT



Residents, businesses, and visitors to Maldon are being encouraged to have their say on the future of travel in the district.

The new [Maldon District Future Transport Strategy](#), created by Essex County Council in partnership with Maldon District Council, sets out the current transport issues and opportunities in the district, as well as a strategy for how transport schemes will be approached in the future.

There is a high reliance on car use in the district due to its rural and coastal nature and fragmented bus and cycle networks. There is potential to encourage a shift towards using more sustainable types of transport for short journeys through the town, as well as longer distance journeys for those living and working in surrounding areas.

A public consultation is open until Monday 31 July 2023 and the quickest way to have your say is by completing our short [online consultation survey](#).

### ENJOY GREAT SAVINGS WITH AN ESSEX EXPLORER PASS

Enjoy free car parking and café discounts at the eight Essex Country Parks with the annual Explorer Pass and get out more this summer. [Buy your Essex Explorer pass](#) in July to receive one month free.

## STAY ACTIVE THIS SUMMER WITH ESSEX OUTDOORS

Keep the kids entertained this summer with Essex Outdoors (EO) [School Holiday Activity Days](#). There are many more ways to have fun with Essex Outdoors this summer including:

- [learning to sail](#) at RYA training centre EO Bradwell
- reaching new heights with [climbing and high ropes sessions](#)
- [learning how to operate a powerboat](#) and gain the qualification you need for when on holiday in the UK or abroad

Alternatively, sit back and enjoy someone else taking the helm on a [Sailing or Powerboat Experience Day](#) on the Blackwater Estuary.

## CONSULTATION ON SUPPORTED LOCAL BUS SERVICES 2024-2028

Essex County Council have launched their Supported Local Bus Services 2024 - 2028 consultation. Bus services are important to many of our residents and communities, so participation by as many as possible would be greatly appreciated:

- Consultation is open now until 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023. We are consulting on 3 groups of services:
  - The vast majority where we are proposing no change until at least 2028
  - An 'at risk' group which we will support until at least 2026 but where we are looking for an increase in passenger numbers
  - A low use group which are clearly not meeting the needs of communities
- It's really easy to participate in the consultation on line – much easier than hard copy because of the number of services on which we're consulting.
- To access the consultation please follow this link: <https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/iptu/2023>
- We are asking Parishes, bus groups and other groups to help those who need support to complete the survey on-line – please ask your local groups too
- If residents would like a hard copy they should first approach their Parish Council. If they are unable to help they should contact [passenger.transport@essex.gov.uk](mailto:passenger.transport@essex.gov.uk)

## MOSHI IS HERE TO HELP THIS SUMMER



Going on holiday with your children this Summer? Or chilling at home? Well, The Moshi App is here to help!

The app provides hundreds of audio stories, guided meditations, music and much more, that will help your child sleep better, regulate their emotions and encourage their imagination grow. The best part is that access to the app is free and signing up is quick and easy.

[Find out how to access your free membership](#)