

Report For Parishes – 9 March 2020

CORONAVIRUS

We are all aware that Coronavirus has reached Essex with a very small number of people that have been tested found to be positive.

The ECC website advises what to do to help contain the virus, with what individuals can do to help protect themselves and others from becoming infected with the virus. Washing hands thoroughly and regularly for at least 20 seconds (the time it takes to sing Happy Birthday twice) is very important. If you sneeze or cough use a tissue and dispose it .If you do not have a tissue then use your sleeve. If symptoms such as a fever, a cough, with breathing difficulties develop information can be found on the NHS website about what one should do.

The below is the information that was on the website on 3 March 2020:

The Department of Health and Social Care publish updated data on the number of coronavirus cases on their website each day at 2pm.

Currently there are a small number of cases in Essex. Public Health England (PHE) is working closely with NHS colleagues and Essex County Council to manage the situation and help reduce the risk of further cases.

Dr David Edwards, Consultant in Health Protection, Public Health England East, said:

“Public Health England is contacting people who have had close contact with the confirmed cases of COVID-19. We are working closely with local NHS colleagues as well as Essex County Council to manage the situation and help reduce the risk of further cases.

“Close contacts will be given health advice about symptoms and emergency contact details to use if they become unwell in the 14 days after contact with the confirmed cases. This tried and tested method will ensure we are able to minimise any risk to them and the wider public.”

Cllr John Spence, Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care said: “I’m satisfied the work Essex County Council has been doing

already with our public health colleagues means we have very well-developed plans in place to deal with whatever comes next.

“Let us be calm and proportionate in our response to what is a relatively mild form of virus. We have had a small number of cases, in a county of one and a half million people.

“I would ask all Essex residents to keep washing their hands and make sure they don’t create facilities to spread the illness. Keep aware of personal hygiene and keep aware of the things you can do to minimise the spread, such as catching coughs and sneezes in tissues and then disposing of those tissues. And keep washing those hands.”

Essex County Council’s Director of Wellbeing, Public Health and Communities, Mike Gogarty said: “ New cases of coronavirus is nothing unexpected. We fully anticipate an increase in numbers which is why our services have planned for, and are ready, for this situation.

“I’d like to reassure people that the risk to the general public remains low and Essex County Council is working with health colleagues to do everything we can to stop the virus spreading and ensure the people of Essex are protected.

“Current evidence indicates that most cases appear to be mild, with patients experiencing flu-like symptoms. Older residents or those with weakened immune systems or long-term conditions may experience more severe symptoms, which is why it is important to help protect ourselves and each other.

“Following Government guidance to take basic hygiene precautions remains the best way of significantly reducing the chances of spreading any virus: sneeze or cough into a tissue, bin it, wash your hands frequently and don’t touch your face unless you’ve just washed your hands. We should do this all day every day as we should for flu.

“Good regular cleaning with normal detergent of surfaces people touch regularly or may cough onto, like door handles and lift buttons, is also sensible.”

Based on current evidence, Coronavirus COVID-19 presents with flu-like symptoms including a fever, a cough, or difficulty breathing. The current evidence is that most cases appear to be mild. Anyone who is concerned about health symptoms is advised to follow the advice on the NHS website.

SECONDARY SCHOOL OFFER DAY

Over 85% of pupils who are due to start secondary school in Essex in September 2020 have been offered their top preference of school.

On 2 March 2020 families of more than 16,000 pupils discovered the outcome of their secondary school applications, with those who applied online getting confirmation by email or via the Essex County Council website.

Thanks to investment in school places, 85.45 per cent of pupils have been offered their first preference of school.

A further 7.99 per cent have been offered their second preference, meaning 93.44 per cent have been offered either their first or second preference.

Cllr Ray Gooding, Essex County Council's Cabinet Member for Education, said: "I am delighted that, once again, we have been able to offer so many pupils their preferred secondary school place. It is an exciting time for pupils across the county and I hope they enjoy their last few months at Primary and Junior School before they set out on their next academic adventure."

STATEMENT: ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL SUCCESSFUL IN TWO DFT FUNDING BIDS

It has been announced on 28 February 2020 that Essex County Council has been successful in two funding bids from the Department for Transport.

The only authority in the country to have two successful bids, ECC will receive £380,000 to support with costs associated with the removal of the Army and Navy flyover in Chelmsford and £1million to invest in maintenance of Braintree town centre.

Cllr Kevin Bentley, ECC's Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, said: "I am thrilled by today's announcement from the Department of Transport and pleased the Government has recognised the importance of investing in Essex by funding two significant projects across the county. We are the only Local Authority in the country to be successful with two separate bids.

"The additional funding to cover the cost of current Army and Navy removal works will free up much needed funds which we can invest in establishing a long-term solution for this busy junction which sits at the heart of our county.

“Investment in Braintree town centre is also testament to the role of local high streets – the life blood of our communities - and how important it is that we continue to maintain them now and in the future so that they can thrive.”
Read more about the announcement at gov.uk.

Take Part In Essex Library Services Book Amnesty This March

Have you lost your library card or haven't had time to return your library books? If something has been holding you back from using your local library, don't let it worry you anymore!

From 1 March to 31 March, Essex Library Services is holding a book amnesty.

Return your forgotten library books or any library item to your local Essex library, mobile library or Thurrock library without paying any late charges.

If you have lost your library card, just bring along some ID, and we will replace your lost library cards free of charge too!

For more information visit <https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/news/take-part-in-our-book-amnesty-this-march/> or visit any Essex library or mobile library during March and rediscover all your library has to offer.