

Parish Update – Key Achievements 15/16

Essex roads better than this time last year

Statistics just published show that Essex roads have 12 per cent fewer potholes than the same time last year, despite an increase in the last three months caused by winter conditions.

The total number of potholes and other defects at the end of the 2015/16 financial year on Essex roads stood at 5,024, down from 5,694 last year.

The latest statistics for the three months to 31 March, which includes most of the winter, show that the numbers of defects increased on Priority 1 routes from 76 to 173, on Priority 2 roads from 126 to 318 and on local roads from 4,028 to 4,533.

Wivenhoe Cycle Path

A new £1.9m million cycle and pedestrian link between the University of Essex's Colchester campus and the town along Colchester Road opened on 20th April.

The path is a shared-use, unsegregated cycle and pedestrian route. Work included new lighting, road widening, realignment and resurfacing, the addition of new hedges, trees, fences plus a new Toucan crossing.

Creating a First Class Education System

Investing more than £365 million over the next three years in one of the biggest school building programme the county has ever seen, creating nearly 10,000 new schools places.

Ensuring every child in Essex is attending a good or outstanding school by 2018.

Radically overhauling and increasing the provision of Special Education, spending £57 million on new special schools and pupil referral units across the county.

Helping People Stay Independent

People who need simple equipment (costing less than £100) to help them stay independent will soon be able to be assessed and get a prescription, as a result of Essex County Council's scheme.

They would then be able to take the prescription to an accredited retailer in their area and exchange it for the prescribed equipment. Within 2-3 years there will be a network of outlets retailing simple equipment.

This will give people great choice and control about the retailers they visit, together with the equipment they need.

Superfast Broadband

Superfast Essex continues to be ahead of schedule in delivering superfast broadband to Essex residents. We have now connected 65,500 premises across the county and continue to invest in broadband infrastructure to cover 95% of Essex. The scheme has been praised as a national exemplar.

Children

Essex is nationally recognised as a leader in Child Protection, being only one of eleven Local Authorities in the UK that has received a good rating by Government Inspectors. The number of children in care is less than 1,000 from a high of 1,600 over the last few years.

While the overall number of children in care is reducing we have seen a continued rise in unaccompanied asylum seeking children and young people, the number having doubled over the last year. This increase has presented considerable challenges to our specialist children in care team but is being managed within existing resources. Essex continues to work with the Home Office in doing its part to look after these particularly vulnerable children and young people

Essex is also a recognised leader in Children and Adolescent Mental Health Services (CAMHS). From November 2015 a new service commenced: the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service (EWMHS). This service will provide targeted and specialist emotional wellbeing and mental health support for anybody aged between 0-18, living in Southend, Essex or Thurrock. EWMHS is also available to anybody with Special Educational Needs up to the age of 25 and is free at the point of entry. Children and young people currently receiving treatment as part of CAMHS will be transferred safely and the same staff will continue to provide the new service; wherever possible current service users will see the same person in the same location.