

HIGHWAYS HIGHLIGHTS

HELPFUL
TIPS AND
INFORMATION
FOR LOCAL
COUNCILLORS

LEDs ARE GO!

82,000 NEW LED STREETLIGHTS NOW REPLACING OLDER LIGHTS ON RESIDENTIAL STREETS

Following trials in 2016 Essex Highways started to replace existing old sodium streetlights on our main roads with LED ('light-emitting diode') streetlight technology.

Building on the thousands already switched, in May crews began to replace the first of the remaining 82,000 old-style streetlights ECC operates, mainly in residential roads, starting in Basildon and Chelmsford. Over the next three years, we will be working to install new LED lights county-wide.

LED lights use less electricity, provide better light and reduce maintenance costs. And with decisive advantages moving away from old technology to new, spare 'bulbs' for old streetlights are no longer even being produced.

Councillor Lee Scott, Essex County Council's Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport, said: "Last year

our repair crews attended nearly 38,000 streetlights to fix them, but we are still struggling to keep up with repairs. LED streetlights last longer, use less electricity and so provide a better service to us all while saving taxpayers' money.

"We have already installed around 45,000 LED streetlights on main roads and now I'm delighted to announce we are investing to replace the remaining 82,000 lights on residential streets."

Councillor Scott added: "We are making a total investment of £26.8 million (£10.3M of which is an interest-free Government loan) to make savings above the cost of loan repayments from year 1. After 25 years we estimate the net savings to the Council will be around £39 million. We may not be able to fix every old sodium type single light that fails immediately, but now there will be light at the end of the.. er lamp post."

DID YOU KNOW?

- LED lights save around 60% in energy usage, reduce costs and save thousands of tonnes of carbon emissions involved in electricity generation
- Negligible toxic materials, are expected to last 20 years (50% of sodium lamps fail after 5 years)
- LED lights can be dimmed - those installed in Essex are controlled and monitored by our central management system, via improved, longer-lasting "Telecell" radio units.
- Safety-critical high energy use 'all-night' lights were upgraded first, for instance at roundabouts and crossings.
- Individual failed sodium units awaiting imminent repair will be replaced as part of the LED programme

WATCH
A SHORT
VIDEO





COMMENT COUNCILLOR LEE SCOTT

CABINET MEMBER FOR HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE AND SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT

I am honoured to be given the post of Cabinet Member for Highways Maintenance and Sustainable Transport and I would like to thank all the team for the warm welcome I have been shown.

I know that, together, we can make a difference across all areas of my portfolio for the residents of Essex.

The LED street light roll-out is making our streets better for all and the repairs being undertaken on our roads are making a difference for cyclists, walkers and motorists. I look forward to working with officers and will be visiting all departments across the team over coming months.

Warmest Regards, Lee.

NEW COUNCILLOR? WELCOME TO ESSEX HIGHWAYS!

Following the local elections, we welcome our new County Members and indeed new councillors at all tiers in Essex. We'd also like to welcome back our existing readership.

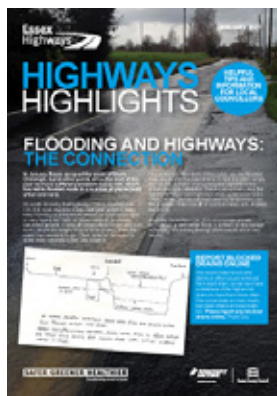
This publication, Highways Highlights, is issued about 10 times a year by Essex Highways. Compiled specially for County Members, it is designed to provide readers with concise updates and insights into topical matters concerning the county's highways service.

Issues often include links to informative videos and other web-based resources. Issued first to

County Members, back issues of Highways Highlights are subsequently made available on the Essex Highways website, for reference.

This issue is a little different, in that we are using it to include signposts to some of the key information we shared with County Members during the May round of introductory Highways briefings offered to them.

You may want to keep this issue as a handy guide. We hope readers find this publication useful, and we would welcome feedback on factual highways topics we could cover in future editions.

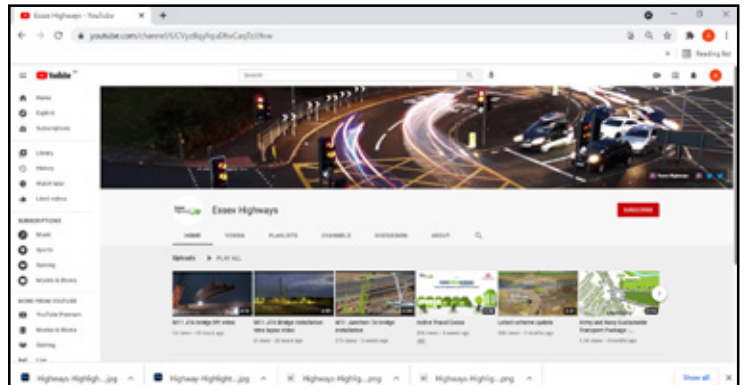


 FIND HIGHWAYS HIGHLIGHTS BACK ISSUES HERE 

TO HELP MAKE THINGS CLICK..

WE PRIMARILY USE WEB-BASED METHODS TO PROVIDE INFORMATION ON ESSEX HIGHWAYS, SUPPORTING ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL'S DRIVE TO ENCOURAGE ACCESS TO INFORMATION ONLINE

👉 To see an **introductory video to Essex Highways**, visit YouTube where we also have entire **Essex Highways channel**, and post information videos from time to time.



👉 **Your first, quickest, most comprehensive resource is our website.** A few minutes invested in navigating the menu or using the search can save hours of time! ***It is also the place where highway problems should be reported in the first instance***, as they are passed through automatically to our inspectors – you can even **look up existing issues and 'follow' them** for status updates.

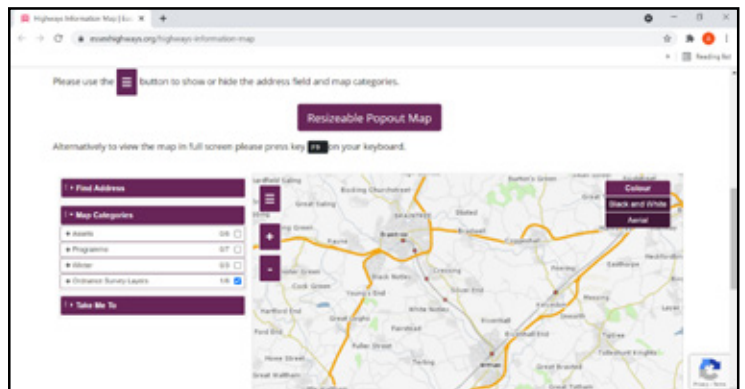


👉 We have two main Twitter accounts that provide useful information:
@Essexhighways – for general service and industry information Monday to Friday, including advance notice of selected works; useful information from highways-related organisations; and photos showing our works underway or completed
@Essex_Travel – this provides real-time travel/congestion updates Mondays to Saturdays



👉 We use Facebook (**our Essex Highways Major Transport Projects page**) for updates and public engagement on major infrastructure projects such as the works for M11 Junction 7A Harlow; Active Travel Consultation, and other strategic projects.

👉 For smaller-scale works we provide local information on many sites on **our Highway Schemes Update pages**. If you want to find out who is working in a road on planned activity, **go to the one.network website** to use an interactive map that enables you to find more details covering planned and ongoing works by Essex Highways, utility companies and developers. It will also show official diversions where relevant.



👉 One last key map to look at is our own **Highways Information Map**. This is a rich resource, with layers you can select, showing everything from the highways boundaries, through our Public Rights of Way, to forward capital programmes of work we are planning to do over the coming year.

HELP TO MAKE MORE THINGS CLICK..

Member Enquiries: If County Members can't find the answer online, or it's a more complex local issue, County Members (only) can email the Member Enquiries team at County Hall as your officer researchers, who will find what information is available.

Highways 'Buddy': A great ally inside the highways service are County Members' personal 'Relationship Leads' – also known as their 'buddy' highways officer – an experienced manager in Highways who can provide advice, or assistance to their paired county Member to help to resolve complex issues, where the usual channels have not so far worked.

Local Highway Panel: When someone locally calls for a highways improvement, a safety measure or has a concern about, say, speeding, then bringing the issue to your Local Highway Panel is a good way to get local issues considered for potential investment in changes. Read more about LHP procedures, budgets and technical issues online on the [LHP webpages](#).

Cabinet Member surgery: The Cabinet Member also holds 'surgery' meetings - County Members can contact the Cabinet Member to request a slot at one, to further discuss specific highways issues. They may 'sponsor' a District or Parish Councillor to accompany them to the surgery if relevant.



MANAGING OUR HIGHWAYS NETWORK

The Essex Highway asset covers over 5,000 miles of roads, 1,500 bridges, 4,000 miles of Public Rights of Way and 127,000 street lights. It is the seventh largest network in the country and has some of the heaviest traffic flows. As you can imagine, keeping the county moving is a lot of hard work. Our core, day-to-day activities include:

Potholes & Maintenance: All our roads and pavements, including kerbs, are inspected regularly, on foot or driven along at low speed either yearly, quarterly or monthly, depending on the type of road. If you spot problems, please **Tell Us about them online**. Reports made online go straight to our Highway Inspectors' tablet devices via our database and help us assess each issue quickly. Read more about the subject on our [Potholes page](#). We report each month on how many potholes, streetlights, pavements and drains are fixed per district in this newsletter - see page 8.

To permanently repair a pothole by digging out around it and re-filling it with layers of hot, compressed asphalt typically takes more than an hour and may have to be planned ahead to include "traffic management" (closing a road, or half a road in one direction, maybe with traffic lights).



Make safe repair

MANAGING OUR HIGHWAYS NETWORK (CONTINUED)



Potholes & Maintenance (continued):

We don't have the resources to permanently fix every pothole that appears or that gets worse immediately, but the road must be kept safe if it is to be kept open, so we often carry out a "make-safe" repair (see photo, previous page).

Many people misunderstand this and complain about "shoddy" or "quick" fixes which don't last long, particularly if the weather is bad or in a busy traffic location.

These repairs, with cold-lay material, are designed to last until we have the resources to schedule a return and either carry out a permanent patch repair with hot material, or perhaps resurface the whole road under a future capital programme. You can find out about how we define defects ; how we risk assess and prioritise them; and our related maintenance

policies covering "carriageways" (roads), "footways" (pavements) and other assets, by reading the documents available on our '[roads strategies](#)' page.

We use a nationally benchmarked 'Asset Management' approach to help us consider the priority with which we repair or replace road surfaces and many other things we are responsible for, according to our resource levels.

Please remember that Essex Highways is NOT responsible for the A12; M11; M25 or A120 in Essex – these are Highways England's responsibility.

The A130 between Howe Green (A12) and Rayleigh Spur roundabout (A1245) is managed separately by County Route. Roads in Thurrock and Southend-on-Sea are managed by their respective unitary authorities.



Road Surfacing: We employ several different techniques for resurfacing our roads. Our Asset Management approach enables us to plan for the type of treatment that will help prevent a road deteriorating to a future point at which it might need a far more expensive, approach.

You can read more about them on our [Renewing surfaces web page](#), alongside information videos. The technique known as 'surface dressing' ('tar

and chips') has a [specific video explainer](#) as it tends to generate more enquiries. Surface dressing needs summer weather, whereas other surfacing can be done in less favourable weather.

You can see our forward programmes on our highways Map. When we are working in an area we will door-drop a local leaflet too (social distancing restrictions permitting) and, occasionally we may use a '[Tow Away Zone](#)' too.

MANAGING OUR HIGHWAYS NETWORK (CONTINUED)



Drains: In 2012 we had records of over 246,000 drains (we call them ‘gullies’), a further 28,000 catch-pits and more than 36 miles of drainage channels. With the resources available, we can’t guarantee to keep all road drains clear of debris. However, we do clean all drains on a regular “cyclical” programme district by district, month by month, reported in the table below.

We also pro-actively manage our drainage assets by using data collected over years to identify which drains are more at risk of being blocked and of causing significant flooding on busier roads. We clear these out more frequently.

It may be useful to remember, when responding with residents about flooding during heavy rain, that no drain can cope with large amounts of water – it’s important to allow time for the water to be dispersed. Also if the area around the drain is waterlogged (the water table is high) then the drains have nowhere to drain to. Often the problem is also landowners not clearing private drainage ditches, which is usually where rural road drains feed into. Blocked field drains often lead to water flowing onto our roads, bringing soil etc that blocks our drains. See our [Drainage and Flooding page](#) for more information.

Pavements (engineers call them “footways”): Busy town centre pavements will be inspected monthly, and any defects are recorded and prioritised for repair, dependent on the level of risk assessed. Just like on the road (the ‘carriageway’ to an engineer) we often do urgent “make-safe” repairs, say with black asphalt, until we can reinstate in the future.

Where our asset-led approach suggests, and budget allows, we will carry out capital footway improvements. We use “slurry sealing” to quickly spread a thin, hard-wearing layer on top of the existing surface to last for years, or other suitable techniques. Pavement repair volumes are reported here in [Highways Highlights](#) each issue - see page 8.

Streetlights: The Streetlighting Team attend about 40,000 streetlight-related faults every year, and we aim to have no more than 2% of our stock with a fault. 45,000 of our 127,000 ECC streetlights have already been converted to LED, on main roads and busy junctions. From May 2021 we have embarked on a multi-year programme to replace a further 82,000 mainly residential streetlights with LED lanterns.

Where a failed sodium light is amongst others still working and LED conversion is due soon, we will wait to repair it until the project reaches that location. LEDs provide better light with less electricity and so less cost and carbon footprint. They do look whiter and brighter when first put up, after which they are dimmed and people adjust to them, so we ask people to wait a few weeks before contacting us about any issues. See our [Streetlighting web page](#) for more information.



MANAGING OUR HIGHWAYS NETWORK (CONTINUED)



Utility works (gas, water, electric, telecoms) - Residents are often upset that they haven't been told about roadworks outside their house – often these are emergency works, where for obvious reasons advance notice is impossible. If the works are not an emergency (such as a water or gas leak, or power outage) then works planned by third-party utility providers have to be given a 'Permit' by Essex highways – even our own works need a permit.

All organisations who want to work on the public highway have a right to be treated equally for access. Our Permits team licence all but emergency work and inspect the work and liaise with contractors to ensure it is completed on time and the road is correctly reinstated. If there would be too many works causing disruption in the same area at the same time, they refuse permission – that way we manage the best use of our road-space, to minimise congestion. Where we can, we encourage organisations working in the road to collaborate with each other and with us.

Planned utility works can be seen up to a year ahead on the map at <https://one.network/> You can read about the many sorts of applications for highway-related works that organisations and individuals can make on our [Applications page](#).

And finally...

We have of course many other things we manage and look after, including bridges, underpasses and retaining walls; Public rights of Way; Traffic Light systems, working with Developers and so on – we will explain more about these in future issues of Highways Highlights.

SAFER, GREENER, HEALTHIER (SGH) TRAVEL – A NEW PERSPECTIVE AND PRIORITY FOR HIGHWAYS!

Population and motorised vehicle traffic have been growing steadily in Essex for years and show no signs of abating.

Even without adding to damaging climate change, high levels of driving is impacting our health and increasing road congestion. The UK had to implement emergency measures to allow for socially-distanced walking and cycling in urban centres as the pandemic hit us, but now national government and local councils are turning it into an opportunity to consider much more provision for walking and cycling especially for shorter journeys.

Some of these plans will sometimes give less priority for motorised traffic. [Read more here on our SGH plans and ambitions](#) and the following page about our active travel fund consultation.

SAFER
GREENER
HEALTHIER



ACTIVE TRAVEL CONSULTATION PLEASE GIVE US YOUR FEEDBACK

Our ambition for Essex is to make walking and cycling so easy, straightforward and fun that it becomes the automatic choice for getting around, especially for short journeys. A safer, greener and healthier county where we don't just automatically jump in the car.

Over the last 12 months, more of us have started walking or cycling— not just because of Covid-19 but because many of us realise the positive health benefits that exercise gives us. Or perhaps, we want to do our bit for the environment, improve air quality and reduce our carbon footprint. That's why we've been working on plans to transform our

transport network into safer, greener and healthier routes, specifically designed with cyclists and walkers in mind. Working with district, city and borough councils in Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Colchester and Wickford plus local community and accessibility groups, we now want to hear what you think of our proposals.

To find out more about the Active Travel Fund consultation and importantly, to give us your feedback, please visit www.essexhighways.org/active-travel-essex The consultation will run until 11 July. Help us make Essex safer, greener and healthier.



ROUTINE REPAIRS DURING MAY 2021

In May we continued to clear out drains on local roads in Basildon and drains at higher risk of blockages on main roads in Basildon, Brentwood, Epping, and Rochford. We also cleared 2950 drains on the A127 in addition to the figures listed below.

DISTRICT	COUNTY ROUTES	LOCAL ROADS	PAVEMENT DEFECTS FIXED	DRAINS CLEARED	STREETLIGHTS FIXED
BASILDON	58	50	100	190 (local)	720
BRAINTREE	50	40	49	1801	330
BRENTWOOD	15	17	20	0	194
CASTLE POINT	14	19	26	0	254
CHELMSFORD	22	34	28	1844	434
COLCHESTER	27	31	36	0	375
EPPING FOREST	25	29	44	391 (started)	232
HARLOW	13	22	21	0	255
MALDON	18	20	3	1472	32
ROCHFORD	46	10	18	0	127
TENDRING	22	27	37	1334	320
UTTLESFORD	29	30	2	0	137
TOTALS	339	329	384	8160	3410