

HIGHWAYS HIGHLIGHTS

HELPFUL
TIPS AND
INFORMATION
FOR LOCAL
COUNCILLORS

In April's issue we explained that our safety-critical road inspection and repair work, including fixing potholes, has carried on during the coronavirus period. However, the crisis situation and government guidelines did mean that some of our larger projects and seasonal programmes of road improvements were paused. Our managers and our contractors had to work out how best to ensure public and worker safety and availability of materials supplies.

When the Government announced that some of the COVID-19 restrictions could be reduced, we re-started many planned highways works quickly across the county. These improvement schemes are continuing with appropriate social distancing measures in place. Announcements have also been made of additional highways maintenance funding from the Department for Transport for increased road repairs.

For public safety we are switching some of the road surfacing schemes we had planned for residential areas this year to main roads instead. Those local roads will still be repaired and will be included in the surfacing programme for next year.

The impact of the pause to some highways work and the need to work differently to protect highways crews and the public, will inevitably affect the completion dates for some larger schemes.

However, Essex Highways remains committed to delivering almost all of this year's programme of work as planned. [Follow Essex Highways Twitter feed](#) for daily updates and [the programmes map](#) for all planned work.

ESSEX ROAD IMPROVEMENTS RAMP UP AS CORONAVIRUS RESTRICTIONS EASE



COMMENT COUNCILLOR KEVIN BENTLEY

**DEPUTY LEADER,
ESSEX COUNTY
COUNCIL
AND CABINET
MEMBER FOR
INFRASTRUCTURE**

I am very proud of all our teams who have ensured that road maintenance has continued during the pandemic.

All our crews have operated in a safe manner and are observing the social distancing rules. As restrictions start to ease slightly we are now ramping up our summer programme of resurfacing and re-dressing work and many councillors and Parishes will have received notification of scheduled repairs.

This proves our full commitment to ensuring we keep our roads safe during the winter months and I hope you join me in thanking our crews who have kept working hard during these difficult times.

AROUND A MILLION SQUARE METRES OF SURFACING UNDERWAY

As the pace picks up, major improvements on the A133 at Ipswich Rd to Harwich Rd in Colchester have re-started, as have the Edinburgh Way works in Harlow, having changed to daytime works.

Preliminary work to build the new Junction 7A on the M11 at Harlow is also starting, linked to a new east-west route across the town.

Road surfacing work is now also fully underway, with Surface Dressing and full Resurfacing (night works) programmes operational. The second

Resurfacing team and the micro-surfacing crew started on Monday 18 May. Follow [Essex Highways Twitter feed](#) for daily updates and [the programmes map](#) (inset) for all planned work.

Please remember that planned surfacing work is subject to weather, and delays may impact on the dates for subsequent schemes too.

Residents are encouraged to watch out for on-site sign boards alerting to work in the near future and particularly requests not to park on the road on the day.





STOP PRESS! HALF OF ENTIRE 2020 SURFACE DRESSING PROGRAMME COMPLETED BY END OF MAY

Despite starting later, we should have completed this year's programme of surface dressing by the end of June. Already we have completed 500,000 square metres of Essex roads which have been given a further waterproof, skid-resistant and re-lined lease of life, despite earlier delays caused by lockdown – a good result!

CONSERVATION TRIAL AIMS TO PROVIDE AN **ECOLOGICAL BOOST** TO COUNTY'S ROADSIDE VERGES

Braintree Council has agreed a joint trial project with Essex County Council to cut parish verges in central areas of the district only once instead of twice this year.

This will allow plants to grow and flower, encouraging the insect life that is declining generally in the UK. Road sight lines will be monitored, and if there are safety issues, verges will be cut back as far as necessary.

Councillor Kevin Bentley said: "I'm delighted to support this plan where wildlife protection takes priority and extending it to other areas if it is successful. This is part of many ecological initiatives being coordinated by the County Council."

Cllr Wendy Schmitt, Braintree District Council's Cabinet Member for Environment & Place said: "I am delighted this trial is taking place I have campaigned for a number of years for better protection of rural verges, supported by Braintree District Council, as these are important havens for wildlife with many common and rare species of wildflowers, insects and animals.

"A single verge cut in the Autumn will allow flowers to grow and seed. It is more important than ever to consider how we can give nature a 'helping hand' by protecting and preserving our natural environment for this and future generations."

Councillors and parishes will be asked to give their feedback on the effects of the trial scheme.



INNOVATION IN ACTION >

SHAKE UP FOR SAFETY AT ROAD WORKS

NEW DEVICE HELPS TO SLOW TRAFFIC NEAR WORKERS...

It looks really simple, but actually took months of careful development, including trial and error.

“Roadquake” by Tricel Construction is being deployed at selective roadworks sites in Essex. Deputy Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, Councillor Robert Mitchell saw it in action at Colchester and explains how it works.



IMPROVED ONLINE ESSEX HIGHWAYS REPORTING SYSTEM

As one of the largest, most complex and most used Essex County Council websites, we are always making changes to the Essex Highways web content to keep it up-to-date.

We last significantly updated the problem reporting system we offer in 2016, so work is now under way to improve it based on users’ comments. In particular we are changing how you move through the site as you report a problem, making it clearer and simpler.

We have also changed the mapping used and are working to make the site more accessible for everyone. The work is still under way, and we continue to make changes as people use it, so if you haven’t used the reporting tool in a while, please do try [the new version](#) and let us know what you think.

Tell us about road or highway issues

We carry out regular inspections of roads and pavements on our network, but we know that issues may come up between these inspections. These could be potholes or other road surface issues, damaged street lights, overgrown trees or missing lit bollards.

You can tell us about issues online by using our highways reporting tool.

If you think there’s a risk to public safety, do not report it online, please call us immediately on 0345 603 7631 or if you have hearing problems you can use our text phone service on 0345 758 5592.

Our tool uses a map that is not accessible to keyboard or screen reader users - please follow the guidance on [How to tell us about an issue if you can't use the map](#).

Issues we don't look after

You need to contact:

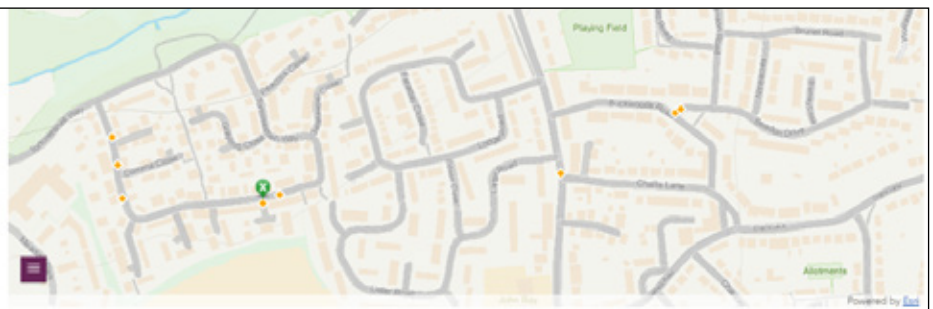
- your [local council](#) for abandoned vehicles, street cleaning, street name plates and road spillages
- [Highways England](#) using info@highwaysengland.co.uk or 0300 123 5000 for issues on A12, A120 between the M11 junction and Parkeston roundabout in Harwich, M11 and M25
- [Southend on Sea Borough Council](#) and [Thurrock Council](#) for issues in those areas
- CountyRoute on 0845 351 1130 for issues on the A130, between A12 (Chelmsford) and A1245 (Fairglen Interchange)
- [Parking Partnership](#) about paying parking fines and parking enforcement in Essex
- residents of each private road or landowners for private roads or roads on private land

Track an existing issue

You can use our [map](#) to check if we already know about an issue or track the progress of an issue you’ve told us about.

Report a pothole on our [current tool](#) rather than our Beta tool.

<p><u>Road, pavement and surface issues</u></p> <p>Issues with the surface of the road or pavement, potholes, kerbing issues, faded lines or the surface around a manhole cover.</p>	<p><u>Trees, hedges and weeds</u></p>	<p><u>Flooding, drainage and manhole covers</u></p>	<p><u>Lights, signals and signs</u></p>
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Please note: multiple reports of the same issue will not change the status or speed of the investigation.



EMAIL US YOUR IDEAS FOR FUTURE CONTENT

Did you know that Highways Highlights has now been published for two years?

We have plenty more items to show and explain, however if you have an idea for a factual general highways topic you'd like HH to consider covering in a future issue, just drop your ideas to: rebecca.sheppard@ealc.gov.uk



Missed an issue? [Highways Highlights](#) back issues can be found [here](#)

POTHOLES, PAVEMENTS AND DRAINS FIXED IN THE MONTH...

Potholes fixed per district/city/borough in April are as listed below: When considering these numbers, remember that there are many more miles of road in Uttlesford than in Harlow, for example, and the balance of types of road (main, secondary, local) are different too, so a direct comparison is misleading.

Drain clearing on the A127 was carried out in April, working at night to minimise disruption to the travelling public. All drains in Lane 1 (nearside) from M25 to Southend boundary on both carriageways with 1425 drains checked and cleared. "Risk-based", (those we know get blocked quickly or cause surface water), clearing was begun in Basildon. The total cleaned in April was 11,242.

DISTRICT	COUNTY ROUTES	LOCAL ROADS	PAVEMENT DEFECTS FIXED	DRAINS CLEARED
BASILDON	84	13	204	646
BRAINTREE	58	65	100	0
BRENTWOOD	56	19	61	0
CASTLE POINT	16	25	124	0
CHELMSFORD	36	49	85	5252
COLCHESTER	33	55	41	2030
EPPING FOREST	118	51	90	0
HARLOW	75	36	66	0
MALDON	66	16	31	0
ROCHFORD	13	13	54	0
TENDRING	58	30	248	0
UTTLESFORD	35	73	32	1891
TOTALS	648	445	1136	9819

