

HIGHWAYS HIGHLIGHTS

PIONEERING HIGHWAYS DEVOLUTION PILOT SCHEME LAUNCHED

On 14 June Essex County Council and the Essex Association of Local Councils joined early adopter West Bergholt Parish Council to formally launch an innovative highways scheme devolving decision-making closer to local communities.

The scheme will help participating Parish and Town Councils across Essex to improve their areas based on the local community's knowledge and needs.

Focused on local delivery of lower-level works such as verge and vegetation work, traffic sign maintenance and minor footway repairs, the scheme, being run as a pilot until February 2020, will allow local councils to improve the street scene quicker than the County Council can.

This in turn will enable the County Council to focus on delivery of the larger, more complex highways work such as road surfacing, that has a wider impact and needs more specialist skills and equipment.

The scheme will run as a pilot until February 2020, and will be reviewed as it progresses so that partners can improve it with a view to wider adoption in future.

Find out more [here](#)



Above Left to right: Cllrs Chris Stevenson, Peter Davey and Kevin Bentley sign the agreement

COMMENT COUNCILLOR KEVIN BENTLEY



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

Welcome to an actioned packed June issue of Highways Highlights. I am really delighted to announce that we have now launched officially the Devolution pilot for Parish Councils and we will work with those that are in the scheme to ensure there is quick and efficient local delivery of issues that affect their areas.

Once the pilot is complete, and providing successfully, we shall look to offer this to other Parishes and District Councils who would like to be involved.

We are also keen to hear from all readers about items they would like to see featured in future editions – see contact details elsewhere in this issue.

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

Potholes fixed per district/city/borough in May 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.

Drains are cleared in a “cyclical” programme, so that for example crews cleared over 9,000 in Maldon District in May, whereas the cycle starts for Uttlesford in June. Not included are 258 drains cleared when we needed to do so as part of Surface Dressing work on the road.

Footway (pavement) defects fixed includes “remote footways” that is pavements or paths not directly alongside the road.

DISTRICT	COUNTY ROUTES	LOCAL ROADS	PAVEMENT DEFECTS FIXED	DRAINS CLEARED
BASILDON	27	12	46	0
BRAINTREE	22	16	132	0
BRENTWOOD	16	14	38	2941
CASTLE POINT	4	52	41	0
CHELMSFORD	23	52	41	0
COLCHESTER	24	77	91	0
EPPING FOREST	54	74	138	0
HARLOW	16	41	91	0
MALDON	15	27	9	9125
ROCHFORD	6	45	67	0
TENDRING	24	31	57	697
UTTLESFORD	11	26	20	Started June
TOTALS	242	467	757	12763



NO BARRIERS TO AVOIDING INCONVENIENCE AND COST...

Working smarter and planning effectively allows us to do more, cause less inconvenience to road users and save money.

Consider 'safety barriers' (engineers call them 'Vehicle Restraint Systems' or 'VRS') – these often lurk on an inaccessible central reservation or are close to the edge of our higher-speed roads. This

makes them difficult to get to for inspections without extensive use of lane closures and other expensive traffic management measures, often leading to inconvenience and delays to road-users, as well as cost.

Nowadays we try and minimise such disruption by combining one type of work with another where possible. For instance we combine our

VRS inspections with scheduled grass-cutting work, minimising the number of lane closures etc we need to deploy.

This is the type of co-ordination that is achievable through a collaborative contract as we constantly encourage our teams to work more closely across service areas to ensure this type of delivery collaboration continues to develop.



GRASS, VEGETATION AND VERGES

Did you know around 40 miles of roadside verges in Essex are designated as “Special Roadside Verges”?

Essex Highways works with ECC Place Services, Essex Wildlife Trust and other partners to manage these important locations to conserve wildflower and other native species living there.

As a result we carefully schedule when these areas get cut.

Read more [here](#)

Twice a year (in Spring and Autumn) we cut verges and central reservations on sections of our high-speed roads, including the A120, A130, A12, A133, A127 and A1245. Sadly, we often have

to pick up tons of litter too, wasting time and money.

We cut our other grass verges in late spring and autumn to keep safety sightlines clear in Uttlesford, Tendring, Epping Forest and Colchester council areas, with other councils in Essex organising their own cutting on our behalf.

You can help too, by encouraging residents and businesses to look after their areas adjoining the highway, and by encouraging them to cut back their overhanging trees and shrubs. It all helps keep our roads looking good and safe to use.

Further details of all these programmes can be found [here](#)



EMAIL US YOUR IDEAS FOR FUTURE CONTENT

Highways Highlights has now been published for a year!

We have plenty more 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

Remember that articles are likely to be short, and more info is available [here](#)

Thanks!



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