

# ESSEX CONSERVATIVES

## Reporting Back



Leader of Essex County Council,  
Cllr Kevin Bentley



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## AN ESSEX FOR EVERYONE

Conservative Essex County Council's new administration, led by Cllr Kevin Bentley and elected in May 2021, is getting things done for local people.

The Plan for Essex sets out a road map to 2025, which seeks to renew the economy, promote equality, drive ambition and 'level up' across the county. As part of its ambitious vision for the County the Council will invest £1 billion in infrastructure and pursuing green growth.

The Council is committed to supporting the most vulnerable people across the county. For example, ensuring older residents and people in care are able to live their lives in comfort and with dignity. They are also focused on achieving educational excellence, family resilience and stability, improving outcomes for the most vulnerable children and young people. As well as tackling health inequalities.

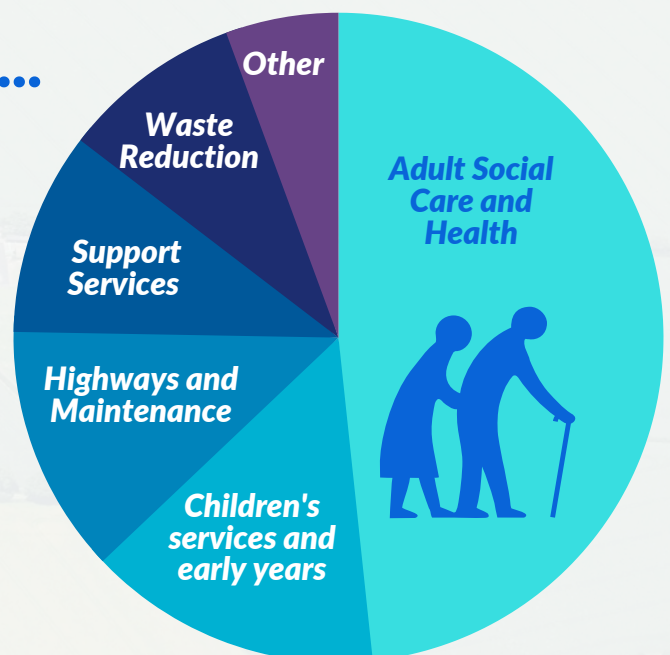
Follow the Essex Conservative Team on Facebook to find out about what is being done by Conservative led County Council to deliver a better Essex for everyone.

## How your money is spent...

Essex County Council has a gross budget of over £2 billion, it is responsible for important local services including Social Care and Highways. District, City and Borough Councils are responsible for other key services such as planning, social housing and waste collection.

More than 43% of the County Council's budget goes towards Adult Social Care and Health which includes £229 Million for Learning Disabilities, £100 Million for Older People and £53 Million for Physical and Sensory Impairment.

We live in challenging times financially, however despite this, Conservative led Essex County Council has a balanced budget which puts people first.



# A CLEANER, GREENER, ESSEX

Do you know how much waste is thrown away in Essex? The total is around 700,000 tons, and about 56% of that is recycled.

Whilst the recycling rate is better than that of many other authorities, it still leaves the council with a massive amount of material to dispose of in an environmentally sensitive manner. The best answer is not to produce the waste in the first instance and to do all that we can to ensure the reuse of materials, this reduces the cost of disposal and also preserves natural resources.

As the waste disposal authority - Essex County Council works closely with District, Borough and City councils to reduce the waste stream. However, there are still too many recyclable materials being put into the "black bag" system which could be recovered if separated.

The "Love Essex" website ([www.loveessex.org](http://www.loveessex.org)) shares information and advice about waste and recycling. For example, the free app 'Kitche' helps you keep a record of food you have purchased and suggests recipes and other ideas to make best use of any surplus... Love Essex promotes some great ideas to help you save money and have a positive impact on the environment!

## SUPPORTING THE COUNTIES MOST VULNERABLE CHILDREN

Essex Children Services have been recognised nationally as a high performing service. The service looks after more than thousand vulnerable children and young people across Essex.

As we emerge from the pandemic, Essex County Council are beginning to see the impact this has had on children and families. There is an increase in the demand on the services and ever more complex cases. The new Early Years and Childcare Strategy sets out an ambitious plan for the next five years including strengthening support for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities. The Council are working hard on early intervention and working closely with partners in health, education and the voluntary sector to deliver the best service possible.

The delivery of this service would not be possible without hundreds of dedicated foster careers across the county. The Council continues to recruit foster carers year on year and offers ongoing support for both them and the children they care for.



## VISIT ESSEX ALL YEAR ROUND!

Essex is a beautiful and varied county with a huge amount to offer, from bustling high streets and city centres to sandy beaches to quaint villages to rolling countryside and forest. There are many wonderful hospitality businesses and shops to enjoy as well as interesting activities. Tourism is one of the largest business sectors in Essex contributing £3.6 billion annually to the region's economy.

Visit Essex promotes a wide range of local activities, destinations and attractions and encourages investment in the county working with business and the private sector. Find out more at: [www.visitessex.com](http://www.visitessex.com)



## KEEPING ESSEX MOVING!

The Essex County Council Highways Team is working hard to look after local Roads and pavements. The Council is investing more than £114 million in maintenance and active transport across the county.

You can report and track any highways defects online at: [www.essexhighways.org/tell-us](http://www.essexhighways.org/tell-us)

This year the Conservative led Council has introduced a member 'pothole scheme' where each elected Member across the county can nominate 36 pot holes for a speedy repair in their local area.

**DID YOU KNOW?**



*Essex has 3500 miles of road - this is equivalent to the journey from Chelmsford to New York.*

## TURBO-CHARGING THE ESSEX ECONOMY

Conservative led Essex County Council is supporting business and promoting growth across the County. The Council want to see good quality jobs for Essex residents and to encourage businesses to invest in the local area. The Council has established a Sector Development Strategy, which looks at opportunities for growth in the County, with a particular focus on future employment opportunities in the green and technological sectors.

To turbo-charge the Essex economy the Council are delivering several major infrastructure projects including: the new Beaulieu Park Train Station, the East of England Freeport and Junction 7A on the M11 around Harlow, which opened earlier in the summer.

In recent years the County Council has worked closely with partners to increase digital usage across the County - supporting residents and businesses. During the pandemic 1 in 6 people in Essex were able to access the internet because of our Superfast Broadband connections. The Council's Digital Strategy sets out a plan to ensure no one is left behind and seeks to further boost digital connectivity and digital inclusion for all ages and backgrounds.



**4000+ new people signed up to be Essex Library Members in June!**

## THE ESSEX YEAR OF READING

The Essex Year of Reading is an important piece of work by the independent Essex Education Task Force. The Year of Reading aims to reach all communities in Essex and all ages to encourage:

- Every community to promote the importance of reading
- Every family to enjoy reading together
- Businesses, large and small to promote the fun and joy of reading

Reading confidently is a golden key to a lifetime's opportunities. The Conservative led County Council is determined to get Essex reading, in every family, every business, every community.

This rich programme which celebrates the joy and importance of reading includes a range of funded training programme's in reading for primary and secondary teachers. The aspiration is that every child should have a reading age of at least their actual age - this is tracked up to year 11.

Coinciding with the year of Reading is the publication of Essex's new Library strategy. This sets out an ambitious vision to keep every library open and become well used, wide ranging community hubs.

# COST OF LIVING SUPPORT FOR ESSEX RESIDENTS

*Support from Essex County Council*



## FREE HOLIDAY ACTIVITY CLUBS

Activate's FREE School Holiday clubs support eligible families across Essex. The clubs provide a nutritious meal, as well as fun activities including sport and art. Find out more and book here: [www.activeessex.org/children-young-people/essex-activate/](http://www.activeessex.org/children-young-people/essex-activate/)

## THE ESSENTIAL LIVING FUND

Available to individuals and families who are in crisis. The fund provides essential items such as bedding, furniture and kitchen appliances. Apply here: [www.southend.gov.uk/extra-financial-help/essential-living-fund](http://www.southend.gov.uk/extra-financial-help/essential-living-fund)

## THE COMMUNITY CHALLENGE FUND

Provides small grants for individuals and groups to develop a vision for their local community and take forward projects that will help them to achieve it from clothes swaps to funding a vehicle for community activity. Further details on application here: [www.essexfuture.org.uk/community-fund/](http://www.essexfuture.org.uk/community-fund/)



## HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT FUND

If you are facing hardship, the household support fund can help with basic living costs, it includes the essential living fund (detailed above) but also includes food vouchers for children during the summer holidays (£15 per child for five weeks) and support for pensioners, vulnerable adults and families.



## SOCIAL SUPERMARKETS

Essex County Council are going out to tenders to establish Social Supermarkets in Tendring and Basildon. This initiative will help families on low incomes buy food and household essentials at lower prices.