

# HIGHWAYS HIGHLIGHTS

## SPREADING WINTER KNOWLEDGE

Each year, towards the end of October, Essex Highways commences our winter service. This year we go on standby from 21 October. Using daily small-area forecasts and local knowledge our 'decision-maker' decides each day if, where and when we need to send out the fleet of 62 gritting lorries.

Our winter treatment routes cover 40% of our road network, or about 2,000 miles and the routes are re-evaluated every year to ensure we can provide treated access to all communities of 50+ households.

For the first time this year, as well as offering a winter briefing to all County Members, we offered via the EALC all Towns and Parishes the opportunity to attend a briefing too, helping to build local community knowledge and preparedness. We even brought a gritting vehicle along to Great Dunmow so delegates could see the technology we use for the public's benefit.

Working with Parishes in the Spring of each year we deliver our 'Salt Bag Partnership', which offers local communities supplies of bagged salt for local use as they decide. We also invite local farmers to sign up to act as local auxiliary snow clearers, clearing local roads that our network doesn't cover.

To learn more about how we manage and deliver the service please visit our [Winter Service](#) webpages. They show the routes we cover, offer information about how people can self-help and serve their local community when and if we get snowfall; you can even track our gritting vehicles in real time.





## COMMENT COUNCILLOR KEVIN BENTLEY

DEPUTY LEADER,  
ESSEX COUNTY  
COUNCIL  
AND CABINET  
MEMBER FOR  
INFRASTRUCTURE

Summer seems to be a distant memory and already in Essex Highways we are preparing for our Winter Service.

This means that our teams of gritters will be on standby to ensure our primary and bus routes are ready for any weather conditions.

Grit bins have been restocked and our Parish scheme is working well to ensure as very local areas as possible are kept safe for pedestrians as well as those using the roads.

I would like to thank in advance all of our crews who work hard repairing our roads and also keep them safe during bad weather.

# ESSEX GAINS NATIONAL RECOGNITION

In September Essex Highways hosted an influential national cycling conference **Cycle County Active County** at Anglia Ruskin University. This annual event focused on cycling, walking and other active modes of transport and their benefits.

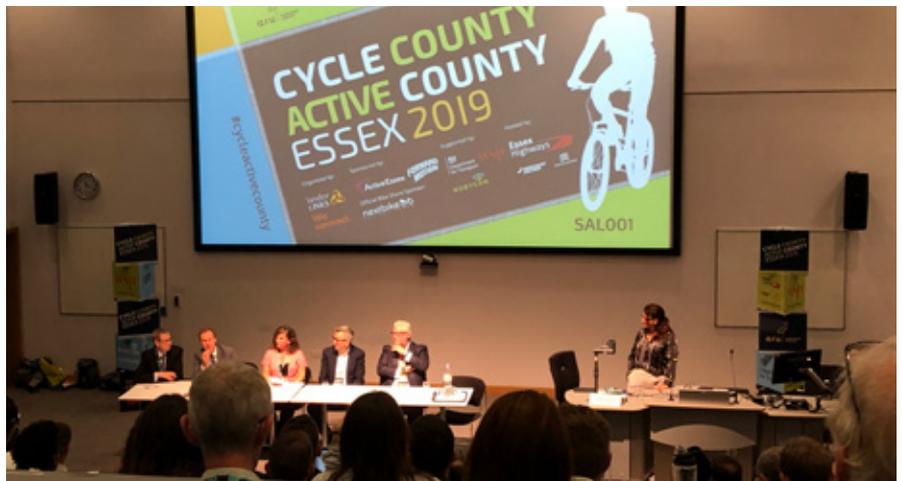
It brought together key thought leaders, politicians and sustainable transport professionals to debate, discuss and demonstrate the latest thinking.

Amongst other keynote speakers including Lilian Greenwood MP (Chair of the Transport Select Committee) and directors from the Department for Transport was Cllr Bentley, Deputy Leader of Essex County Council and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure. Kevin

spoke about Essex's desire to make it easier and healthier for people to travel in Essex, reducing congestion in part by embracing cycling and walking as options to consider for shorter journeys.

Also, on Friday 6 September the Department of Transport ran a national campaign highlighting the work that highways authorities deliver day-in, day-out through their front-line highways workers.

Titled **#RoadHeroes**, the campaign included several short videos that had been filmed in Essex a few weeks prior. Essex Highways further contributed by being part of the dozens of highway authorities that tweeted out pictures of our 'roadheroes' working to improve the county's roads.





## POTHoles, PAVEMENTS AND DRAINS FIXED IN THE MONTH...

Potholes fixed per district/city/borough in August 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. Districts are done in rotation. A further 309 drains were cleaned on roads being surfaced during August, making a total of over 11,000. Cleaning of drains on local roads will continue in Braintree and in Epping Forest (Loughton and Chigwell areas followed by Waltham Abbey). Further “risk-based” priority cleaning of those drains that may otherwise cause problems will be done in Maldon and Uttlesford.

DISTRICT	COUNTY ROUTES	LOCAL ROADS	PAVEMENT DEFECTS FIXED	DRAINS CLEARED
BASILDON	6	6	97	0
BRAINTREE	7	67	44	4041
BRENTWOOD	6	26	103	Cycle done
CASTLE POINT	0	25	18	0
CHELMSFORD	18	48	36	0
COLCHESTER	3	39	52	0
EPPING FOREST	9	50	36	2212
HARLOW	1	27	15	0
MALDON	6	2	7	1524
ROCHFORD	8	9	278	0
TENDRING	11	41	24	671
UTTLESFORD	12	16	7	2385
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>87</b>	<b>356</b>	<b>717</b>	<b>10833</b>

# MEMBER-LED FOOTWAYS UPDATE

Under the Member-led Footways scheme announced earlier this year, County Members have requested over 260 sections of pavement for repair. We have already completed over 26 of them, and work will continue on the rest through to March, weather permitting.

Examples of repairs finished in August and September include Shrub End Road, Colchester where a slab had been lifted by growing tree roots; Forest Drive in Chelmsford where the surface was breaking up and Higham View in North Weald (Epping Forest District) where the pavement had been damaged by HGVs overrunning.



# A LOT OF ROAD DRAINS TO KEEP CLEAR - HOW IT'S DONE

Public roads in Essex have around quarter of a million drains (or 'gullies' as engineers call them) and our regular 4 in-house crews and one supply-chain company vehicle work to keep these as clear as possible.

On our main roads (called by us 'Priority 1' and 'Priority 2' routes) we carry out at least one clean (usually suction to remove debris and high pressure jetting) per year. As we mentioned last issue, we also gather data on silt levels, cleaning operations and reports of flooding, so that we can prioritise cleansing in likelier problem areas. In August (see table, page 3) we cleaned over 11,000 road drains

in several districts. Crews also respond to immediate problems if a road or pavement suddenly floods.

Many times we clear rubbish from a blocked drain that has clearly been deliberately shoved in by people mistaking a drain for a refuse container! Anything you can do locally to discourage this would be very helpful, as it helps to minimise flooding and the cost of putting it right.

- We also have more than 28,000 'catch-pits'. These trap sediment before it enters pipe-runs
- We also know of more than 36 miles of drainage channels

[More information here](#)

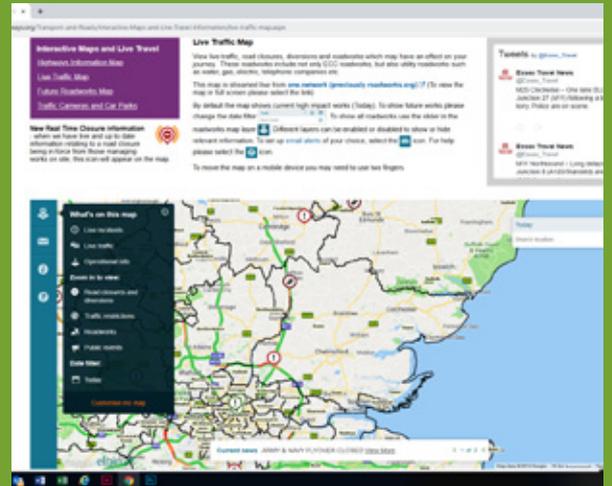


## WHERE CAN I FIND OUT ABOUT ROAD REPAIRS AND IMPROVEMENTS COMING TO MY DIVISION?

Perhaps the easiest way to see what improvement works are coming up, for about a year ahead is on our **Highways Information Map**, where all our planned surfacing works and Public Footpath maintenance schemes can be found.

If you have a look at the **interactive map** you can see all current and planned roadworks for up to a year ahead and even set up an email alert which will automatically tell you of new Permitted works to come in an area you can define on the map.

However, where we go in quickly, with just very temporary Traffic Management (cones, barriers) to fix a few potholes in a road, that probably won't require a Permit and so won't show up on the map.



## DON'T FORGET OUR WEBSITE

[www.essex.gov.uk/highways](http://www.essex.gov.uk/highways) - is a veritable treasure-trove of reference information, as well as the place to go to report problems. Not only can you catch up on back issues of Highways Highlights (in the 'News and Press Releases' section); you can check current and future local roadworks, check highway records and get updates on key schemes under way.

There are also videos, downloads and various maps available, as well as Local Highway Panel information and lots more information, so check it out!

