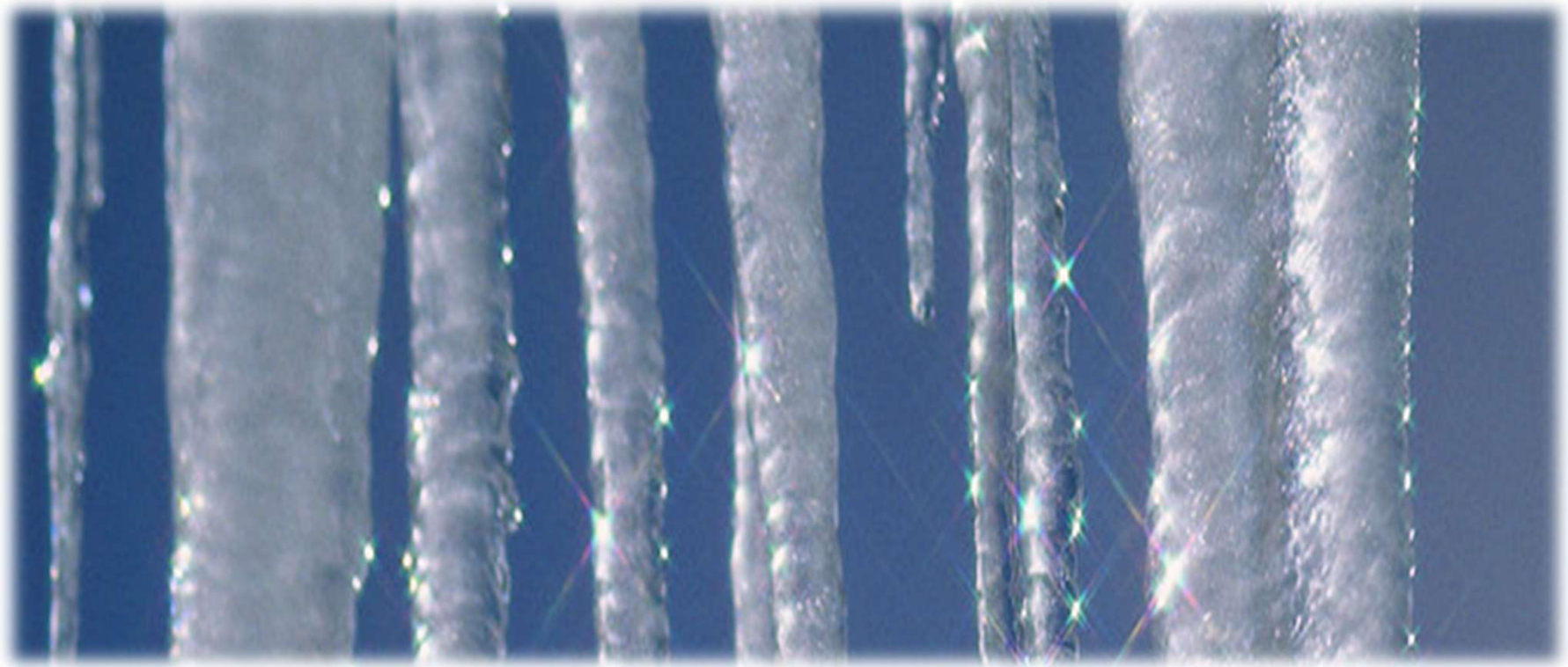


# Essex Highways

## Urban Salt Bag Partnership Scheme Guidance and your responsibilities



Essex County Council

# How many people take part?

For the Winter 2025/26 scheme;

- **49 Parish/Town Councils took part of which 21 took new salt deliveries.**
- **4 Councillors covering un-parished urban divisions took part**

They collectively recruited hundreds of volunteers in Essex to build their communities resilience during winter.

# What are the Salt Bag Partnerships?

- **Urban Scheme** - For un-parished divisions only led by County Councillors
- **Parish Scheme** - For Parish and Town Councils led by Clerks

To support local communities to help themselves during periods of heavy snow and build on community resilience, Essex County Council invite Parishes, Town Councils and Urban divisions to sign up to the Salt Bag Partnership each year.

The schemes are reviewed annually. This year we are providing free:

- ✓ Allocation of **1 Tonne of salt + delivery** to the participants chosen location.
- ✓ A **support pack** to help participants run their scheme.



# What is the Support Pack?:

Templates are provided to help you set up your scheme safely. The pack contains:

- **Manual Handling Guidance** - Good handling techniques for lifting
- **Volunteer Briefing Sheet** – How to salt and clear snow, staying safe and things to think about.
- **Winter Plan** (to record the areas you decide to salt/clear snow) + **Risk Assessment**

# Your Winter Plan

- **Identify the priority areas/Hot Spots** in the local community (not private driveways) to form your **Winter Plan**
- **These could be:** Footpaths outside local shops, doctors, access routes to main bus stops etc. (which are not already salted by Essex Highways).
- **The salting network** is mapped on the ECC Website here:  
<http://www.essexhighways.org/transport-and-roads/roads-and-pavements/winter-travel/salting-routes.aspx>

# Salt Delivery information

- Deliveries will take place between September to early October 2026. The delivery company will contact the delivery contact person you have named on the form to arrange delivery prior to them coming out.
- Please note there can only be one drop off location. The salt will be delivered by a large lorry (a bit bigger than a dustbin lorry) and the salt will be removed from the lorry via a tail lift and then moved on a trolley to its final destination.
- The trolley does not go over uneven or loose ground (grass, pebbles etc) or steep inclines. The location you identify for delivery must be able to accommodate this.
- Please secure or distribute the salt to volunteers as soon as possible after delivery.
- There will be no further re-stocks of salt for this scheme for winter 26/27, as we will procure the volume of salt required following the closing date of the salt bag scheme and will not be storing excess salt bags.



# The Paperwork to complete and keep – what to do with the volunteers?

1. Give each volunteer a copy of the **Snow Clearance Guidance**; how to clear snow and safety/security to help them decide if they are confident and physically able to remove snow/salt when required.
2. Use page 3 in the **Winter Plan** to record the details of all volunteers taking part in your scheme, their allocation of salt (so you can keep track) and where they are clearing/treating in the areas identified.
3. Complete the **Risk Assessment Form** with them - Talk through any additional risks they feel they might encounter, then discuss options to minimise these risks and record them.
4. Provide them with the **Manual Handling Sheet** and salt. The salt bags are 25kg so care must be taken. to store in *preparation* for Winter - don't wait until the bad weather hits!



# **Councillors responsibilities:**

**Please note that your responsibilities cannot be delegated**

**The direct instruction to Volunteers must come from you for insurance purposes.**

**Don't be put off by the paperwork it is designed to protect you, the volunteers and ECC**

# Common Questions - Will the volunteer be insured if undertaking snow clearance?

- For the **Parish** Scheme, the Parish or Town council insure their volunteers as it will be them that is issuing *direct* instructions and keeping records.
- For the **Urban** Scheme, as a County Council Member, you are considered an 'employee' of Essex County Council and as such can issue direct instruction to the volunteers.
- **Therefore it is vital that you record and keep the details of every volunteer taking part in the scheme and provide them with the information in the Support Pack.** By doing so each individual volunteer will be insured within the ECC employee cover when they are undertaking snow clearance activities.



# **Common Questions - Can a volunteer be sued if a member of the public falls over on a cleared area?**

**ECC remains responsible for the public highway and will process any claims received from the public during the period through our normal procedures.**

- Under common law a volunteer can only be considered negligent if they deliberately went out to create a hazard.
- Actions which could give rise to liability for negligence would be (a) the careless discharge of snow from the shovel, (b) the careless placing of snow so as to conceal or create a hazard and (c) the use of water which actually increases the risk of slipping or skidding.

# Common Questions -

**The Snow Code** - Advice issued by the Department for Transport;

- On clearing snow and ice from the pavement outside your home or public spaces to prevent slips and falls. Follow the snow code to clear snow and ice safely.  
<https://www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather/warnings-and-advice/seasonal-advice/your-home/clearing-paths-and-driveways>
- Don't be put off clearing paths because you're afraid someone will get injured. Remember, people walking on snow and ice have a responsibility to be careful themselves.
- Follow the advice to make sure you clear the pathway safely and effectively.
- And don't believe the myths - it's unlikely you'll be sued or held legally responsible for any injuries if you have cleared the path carefully



# What to do now - Recruit Volunteers!

## Recruit volunteers - direct engagement works!

- You can advertise your scheme in local publications/Website/Notice Board/Community Publications/Centres to attract volunteers.
- Local shops and businesses
- Residents Associations
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Local Volunteering Groups



# What are the benefits in taking part?



## Community:

- ✓ Involvement
- ✓ Resilience
- ✓ Spirit

## Power to the people:

- ✓ Local knowledge
- ✓ Local decisions
- ✓ Control in your area
- ✓ Opportunity to plan ahead and think about how your community will be ready for Winter

