

Place and Customer

ECC Member Induction

2nd June 2026

Place and Customer

Senior Leadership Team



Agenda

1 Introduction Place and Customer Service

David Gibson
Executive Director



2 Highways and Transport

Jon Shortland
Director



5 Questions

3 Customer Services

Suzanna Shaw
Director



4 Environment and Climate Action

Sam Kennedy
Director



Function Overview

The Function delivers a diverse and complex portfolio critical to the quality of life, sustainability and resilience of Essex, working in partnership across the county.

Services include transport planning, highways management, waste disposal and recycling, managing local flood risk, protecting and improving Essex's natural environment, improving resilience to the impacts of our changing climate, strengthening and nurturing Essex's culture and heritage, whilst being responsible for our regulated services – coroners and registrations, as well as our compliance, complaints and customer contact.

The Function is also responsible for our 74 libraries across Essex.

In total the Function comprises c.2,500 staff and manages an annual revenue budget of £255m.

Place and Customer Budget Overview

Place and Customer - Revenue	2025/26 Original Budget £000	2026/27 Final Budget £000	2027/28 Draft Budget £000	2028/29 Draft Budget £000	2029/30 Draft Budget £000
Customer	22,804	23,490	24,212	24,487	24,960
CECS Mgt Team	626	878	892	899	914
Highways & Transportation	138,238	139,047	164,808	184,568	216,600
Environment & Climate Action	91,638	91,877	94,236	98,718	101,574
Place and Customer	253,306	255,292	284,148	308,672	344,048
Growth from 2025/26 Budget		0.8%	12.2%	21.9%	35.8%
Growth year on year			11.3%	8.6%	11.5%

Place and Customer Capital	2026/27 Final Budget £000	2027/28 Forecast £000	2028/29 Forecast £000	2029/30 Forecast £000	2030/31 Forecast £000	Five year Total £000
Customer	280	-	-	-	-	280
Highways & Transportation	108,485	106,014	109,307	112,568	110,326	546,699
Environment & Climate Action	7,853	7,182	3,866	2,900	2,250	24,051
Place and Customer	116,618	113,196	113,173	115,468	112,576	571,029

Highways and Transport

Jon Shortland

Highways and Transport Director

June 2026

Agenda

- 1 **Essex Highways**
- 2 **Network Development**
- 3 **Integrated Passenger Transport Unit**
- 4 **Sustainable Transport**
- 5 **Future Highways Programme**

Highways and Transport

Highways and Transport is one of Essex County Council's largest and most visible statutory responsibilities.

ECC is the **Local Highway Authority**, and is responsible for maintaining Local Roads and Rights of Way – but not Motorways or Trunk Roads (such as the A12 and some of the A120) or the A130 PFI. ECC is also the **Local Transport Authority**, meaning that we are responsible for transport planning, public transport and active travel.

The Unitary Authorities of Thurrock and Southend are the Transport and Highways Authorities in their respective areas.

The District Councils deliver Street Cleansing and Off-Street Parking.

Essex Highways

Essex Highways

The highways network is Essex County Council's most valuable asset, valued at just over **£13 billion**



8,000km of roads



1,500 bridges & Structures



131,500 streetlights



6,400km of footways & cycleways



255,000 gullies



14,300 illuminated signs and bollards



6,400km of Public Rights of Way



80,287 non-illuminated signs

Essex Highways

Essex Highways is a strategic partnership, created in **2012** by ECC and Ringway Jacobs, to manage and deliver local highway services.

It consists of a small commissioning team of Council staff overseeing c. **750 mixed staff** – both RJ employees and embedded ECC personnel.

The scope of the contract includes, but is not limited to:

- Routine maintenance Emergency response Winter gritting Drainage
- Inspections Responding to safety defects Street lighting Traffic signals

This contract is valued at approximately **£130m–£150m** per year and is the single largest contract that Essex County Council holds.

In 2021 this contract was extended by five years, meaning that this contract currently expires on **31st March 2027**, but it is being extended to **31st March 2028**.



Essex Highways



£160m of spend delivered through the contract.
Over **£16m** delivered in March alone.



Over **470** schemes designed.
Over **500** schemes and sites delivered on the ground



26,329 highway inspections completed.
1,184 bridge inspections completed.
20,268 highway defects resolved.
189,674 drainage assets cleansed.



Dealt with:
35,291 customer enquiries,
2,290 Member Enquiries,
1,559 Formal Correspondence



11,432 Driver Offender Retraining Scheme courses delivered

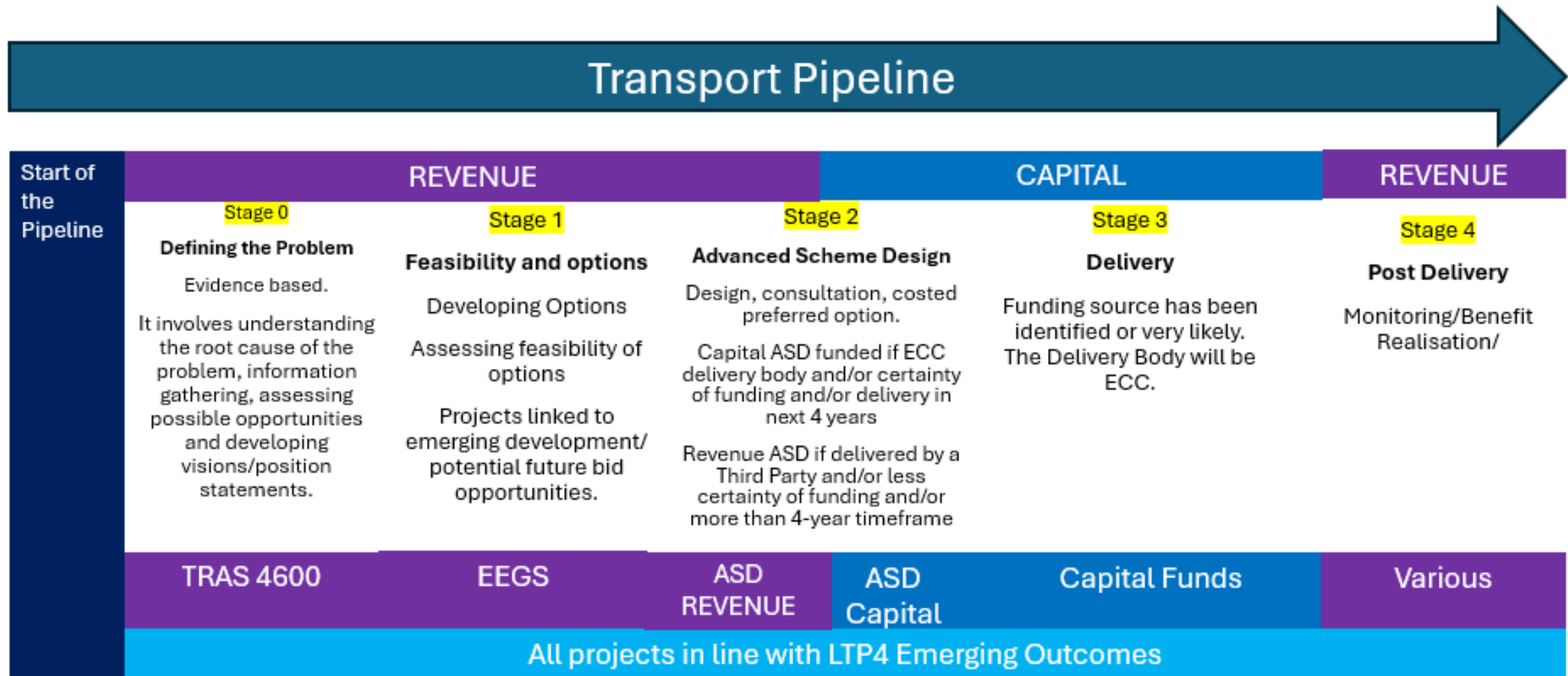


109,476 street works permits processed, generating **£4.7m** of income.
£2.7m of road closure income also secured.

Network Development

Pipeline of Future Schemes

We manage a pipeline of projects, which enables us to have 'bid-ready' schemes when funding opportunities arise, and to engage early in the planning process. Since 2013, we have secured **£500m+** in external funding.



Current projects

Current major schemes include:

- Beaulieu Park station
- Chelmsford North East Bypass
- Army & Navy Transport Package
- A1331 Phase 1 (link road)
- Colchester Rapid Transit Scheme
- A127 / A130 Fairglen Interchange
- St Botolph's Circus
- Harlow Sustainable Transport Corridor
- A104 and A113 Safer Roads schemes
- A127 corridor transport improvements

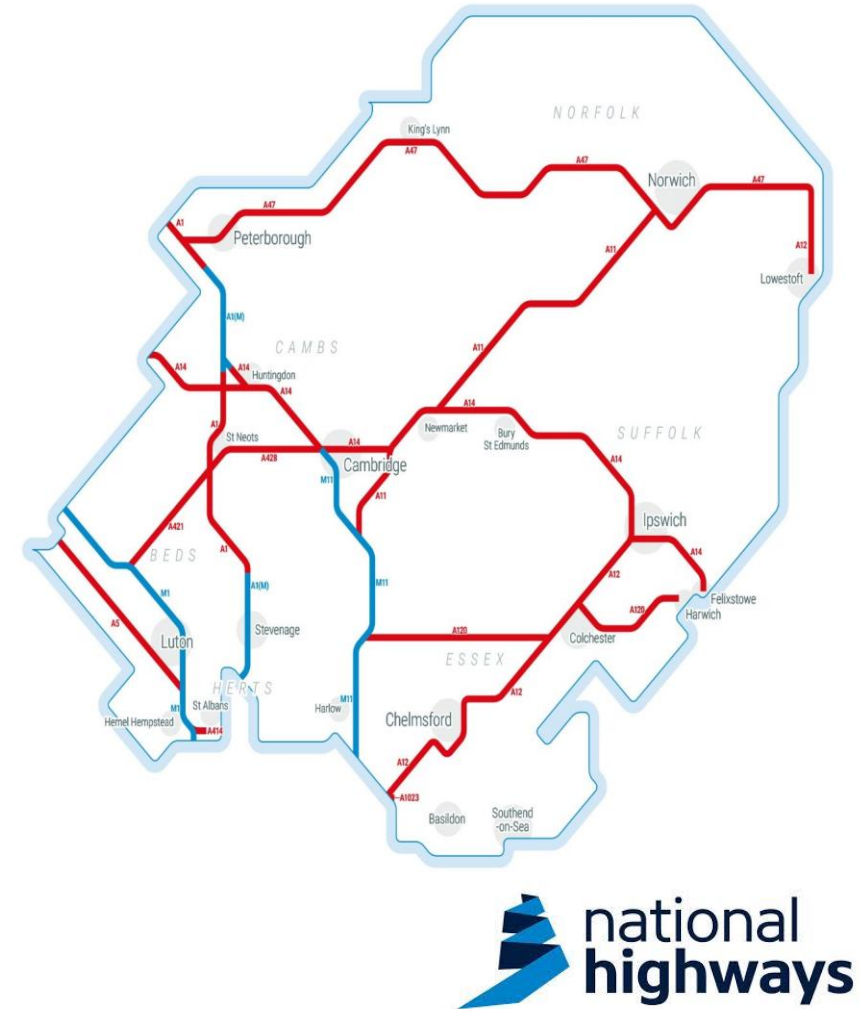


Engagement with partners

We have significant engagement with National Highways, who manage important routes in Essex not in our control, both on general matters and specific projects, including:

- The Lower Thames Crossing
- M25 Junction 28 upgrade
- A120 road safety schemes

We are currently engaging with the Department for Transport, National Highways and others on potential smaller-scale improvements, especially at Junction 19 on the A12 following the cancellation of the full A12 widening scheme in July 2025.



Integrated Passenger Transport Unit

Essex Bus Network, Community Transport, DigiGo

The Essex Bus Network

Around 39.6 million journeys were made on the bus network in Essex in 2024 (latest data).

Local Bus and Community Transport

85% of the Local Bus network is commercial (so decisions on routes / fares / timetables lie with operators).

ECC supports additional essential services where the market will not provide them, supporting the remaining 15% of the network. The 2026/27 budget is **£9.7m**.

Community Transport encompasses 12 different schemes and supports in excess of 371,000 passenger journeys a year. The 2026/27 budget is **£1.1m**.

DigiGo

A flexible public transport service which offers passengers control over their journeys. Passengers can book a journey on-demand or pre-book – running in four rural areas.

Home to School Transport

A major statutory service which supports thousands of children who meet the eligibility criteria to travel from home to school and back:

- >3 miles for secondary education,
- >2 miles for primary education, or
- Where walking routes are adjudged to be unsafe

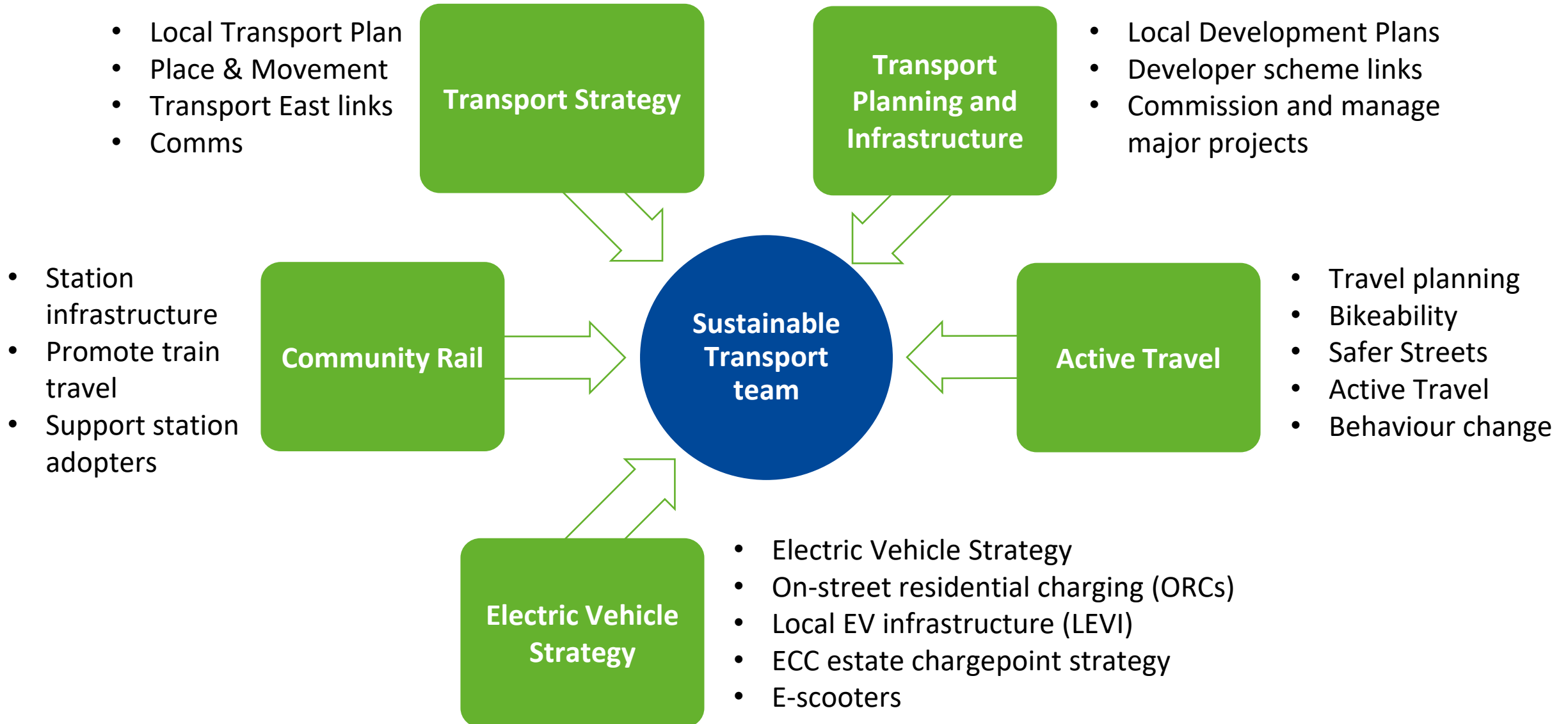
Provides mainstream transport (**9,288 children**) and SEND transport (**4,937 children**).

2026/27 budgets are **£14.8m mainstream** and **£53.1m SEND**.

Safeguarding is a priority for ECC, and we set contractual standards and issue guidance to transport operators, supporting them to ensure staff are properly recruited and trained.

Sustainable Transport

Sustainable Transport



Examples of recent activity

WEST

- Harlow Gilston Garden Town
- Harlow Sustainable Transport Corridors

NORTH

- Dovercourt public realm
- St Botolph's & East Hill public realm
- Garden Community

COUNTYWIDE

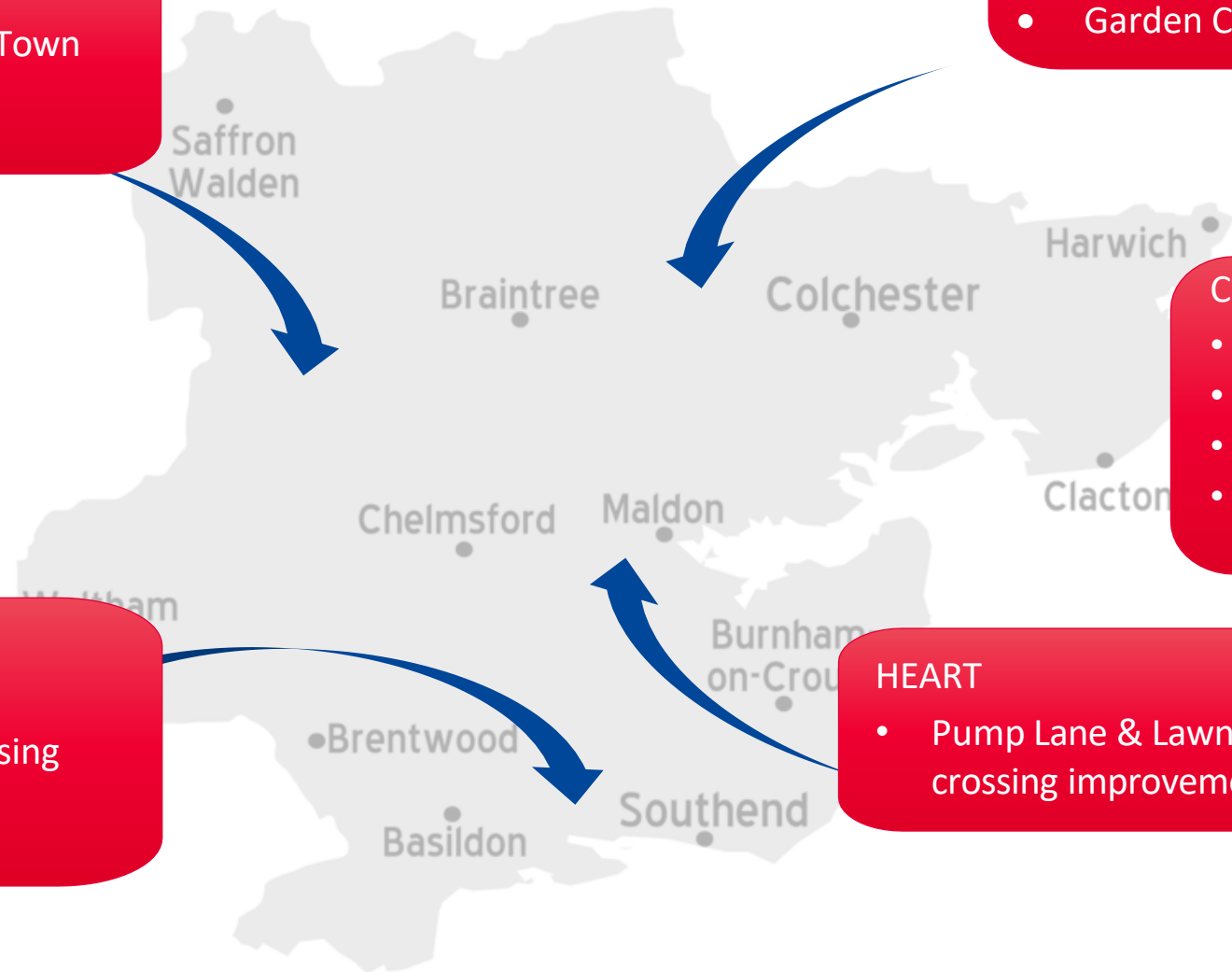
- Transport strategies
- EV chargepoint installations
- Bikeability
- Walking & cycling network improvements

SOUTH

- Basildon Masterplan
- Canvey additional crossing
- South Mayne Crossing, Basildon

HEART

- Pump Lane & Lawn Lane crossing improvements



Future Highways Programme

Programme of Work

ECC's present highways maintenance contract is with Ringway Jacobs and is set to expire on 31 March 2028.

The Council needs to have lawful arrangements in place from 1 April 2028 to ensure continuity of service.

The Future Highways Programme (FHP) sets out to ensure procurement of a new contract following the expiration of the present one.

The FHP has been established to procure a modern, resilient highways service that:

- Keeps residents safe, and the network legal, at all times.
- Is robust through Local Government Reorganisation.
- Can be safely inherited and operated by future Unitary Authorities.

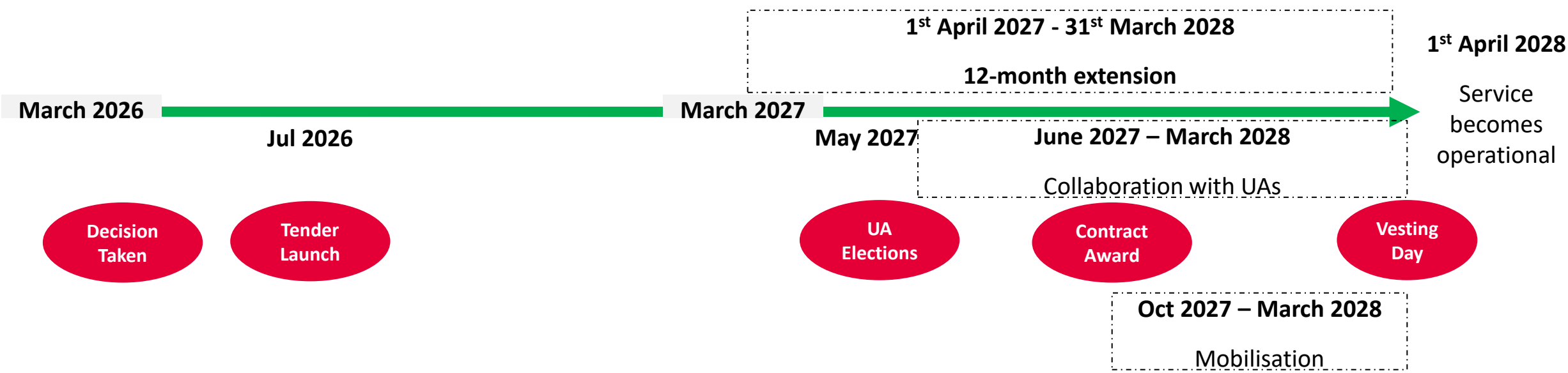
Market engagement is currently taking place with seven potential bidders.

Timescales

The tender will be launched in July 2026, followed by the contract award in October 2027.

Mobilisation will take place between October 2027 and March 2028.

Operational “Go-Live” for the new arrangements will take place on 1st April 2028.



Customer Services

Suzanna Shaw

Customer Services Director

June 2026

Customer Engagement

A **central hub for all customer access and engagement**, bringing together Contact Essex, Blue Badge, Customer Systems and Digital Engagement to deliver **consistent, efficient and insight-led services** across the Council.

Scale and Reach

- Acts as the **front door to residents including critical statutory services** (ASC, Children's, Registration, Coroners etc.)
- **~420k–450k calls** via Contact Essex per year
- **~1k proactive social media posts → reaching 150k unique residents each month**
- **~50k Blue Badge applications/year** (+86% since 2020)
- **82k active Blue Badges** supporting residents with mobility needs

Impact and Outcomes

- **75–80% calls resolved at first point:** reduces pressure on services
- **49% efficiency gain** in Contact Centre wrap time
- **92%+ customer satisfaction** (consistently high performance)
- Blue Badge **applications turnaround: 40 → ~5 days (-87%)**
- **Complaints reduced ~80%** in Blue Badge
- Increased **digital engagement** by 20%+ across local library social media accounts through new processes and capability

Strategic Role

- **Manages telephone demand** into the Council covering most areas to reduce impact on frontline services
- **Protects/prioritises** access for vulnerable and complex customers
- Enables **digital-first and prevention approach**
- **Builds social media capability driving significant audience engagement growth across services**
- Provides **customer insight to shape policy and transformation**

Key Challenges / Decisions Ahead

- **Rising and more complex demand** across all services
- Balancing **voice, digital and face-to-face access**
- Scaling **digital self-service and automation**
- Managing **workforce resilience and wellbeing**
- Handling **appeals and policy constraints (e.g. Blue Badge)**

Summary

"The Customer Engagement Hub is the Council's front door — handling high volumes, protecting vulnerable residents, and using insight and digital to reduce demand and improve services."

Complaints and customer enquiries

The Complaints function ensures complaints are handled **fairly and efficiently**, turning customer issues into **actionable service improvements**.

Scale and Reach

- **Council-wide** manages **over 6000 corporate, statutory complaints** pa, including general enquiries and Ombudsman
- Works across **all services** (e.g. Education, Highways, Social Care)
- Manages ECC relationship with the **Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman** (LGSCO)
- Provides support for **complex/unreasonable persistent customer behaviour**

Strategic Role

- Provides **independent oversight and assurance** of complaint handling
- Ensures the Council meets **statutory requirements and best practice**
- Translates customer feedback into **insight, learning and change**
- Supports **reputation management and risk reduction**
- Enables a **customer-focused culture across services**

Impact and Outcomes

- **High resolution volumes maintained** despite increasing demand
- **85% of corporate complaints resolved within timescale**
- Strong focus on **quality, fairness and learning** (not just speed)
- **AI and digital tools introduced** to improve efficiency and consistency
- Drives **service improvement by identifying root causes of complaints**

Key Challenges / Decisions Ahead

- **High and volatile demand**, particularly SEND (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities) complaints
- **Reputational risk** linked to Ombudsman findings
- Decision on **adopting national complaints handling standards**
- Need to **modernise systems and improve digital capability**

Summary

“Complaints function provides independent assurance, manages organisational risk, and uses insight from customer feedback to improve services and strengthen trust in the Council..”

Libraries

Libraries deliver large-scale, **community-focused services** that support learning, **wellbeing and digital inclusion**, while strengthening **community connections** and **access to services** across Essex.

Scale and Reach

- **Statutory service** under the Public Libraries and Museums Act 1964
- **2nd largest library service in the UK**
- Network of:
 - **74 libraries**, including community and mobile libraries
 - **3+ million visits and ~4 million book issues annually**
- Workforce of **400+ staff and 300+ volunteers** supporting delivery

Impact and Outcomes

- Supports **learning, wellbeing and community** connection across Essex
- Delivers **18,000+ events per year** generating social value (£7m+)
- Provides **digital access, skills and inclusion support**
- **Strong partnerships** (e.g. NHS, Home Office, community organisations) enhance services
- Libraries act as **community hubs**, not just book lending spaces

Strategic Role

- Provides **inclusive access to information, learning and digital services**
- Supports **prevention agenda** (health, wellbeing, early help)
- Enables **community engagement and resilience**
- Uses **partnerships to maximise value of public assets**
- Contributes to **economic activity and local inclusion**

Key Challenges / Decisions Ahead

- Balancing **statutory duty with financial pressures** (e.g. funding and charges changes)
- Maintaining and investing in a **large estate of library buildings**
- Responding to **changing customer expectations and digital demand**
- Managing **anti-social behaviour and safe public access**

Summary

“Libraries are a vital community service — providing inclusive access to learning, supporting wellbeing, and acting as trusted local hubs for residents.”

Coroners

A **statutory service** supporting **independent investigations into deaths**, ensuring **legal compliance** and public safety, while providing essential support to **bereaved families** and contributing to learning that helps **prevent future deaths**.

Scale and Reach

- Statutory service supporting **independent Coroners for Greater Essex**
- **5,200+ deaths reported annually** across a large and complex geography
- One of the **largest coroner services in England and Wales**
- Works across health system, police, courts and other agencies
- Support **court hearings (inquests)** to establish cause of death

Strategic Role

- Supports the justice system through **independent death investigations**
- Provides **public protection and learning from deaths**
- Enables **multi-agency working across complex systems**
- Ensures compliance with **national legislation and coronial duties**
- Contributes to **wider public safety and accountability**

Impact and Outcomes

- Ensures all deaths are **investigated lawfully and transparently**
- Provides **answers and support to bereaved families**
- Identifies risks and issues, including **prevention of future deaths**
- Increased use of **digital and non-invasive methods (e.g. digital autopsies)**
- Maintains national standards despite **rising complexity of cases**

Key Challenges / Decisions Ahead

- Increasing **complexity and volume of inquests**
- Demand for **additional court capacity**
- Rising costs of **post-mortem and mortuary services**
- Potential impact of **new legislation** (e.g. Hillsborough Bill)
- Workforce and system pressures across **health and justice partners**

Summary

“The Coroner Service ensures independent, lawful investigation of deaths, providing answers to families while identifying risks to improve public safety.”

Registrations

A large-scale **statutory service** delivering life event **registration and ceremonies**, combining **legal compliance** with **income generation** and customer service.

Scale and Reach

- Statutory service recording **births, deaths, marriages and civil partnerships**
- **2nd largest Registration Service in the UK** and delivers annually:
 - ~**40,000** statutory appointments
 - **6,000+** ceremonies
- Network of **15 locations** across Essex
- Generates **£5m+** annual income

Strategic Role

- Delivers **statutory compliance on behalf of the Council**
- Supports residents **through key life events (birth, death, marriage)**
- Generates **income through ceremonies and services**
- Enables **digital transformation and modernised customer access**
- Works closely with **national regulator (General Register Office)**

Impact and Outcomes

- Ensures **timely and accurate legal registration** of life events
- Provides **compassionate customer service at key life moments**
- Significant **income generation supporting council finances**
- Improved performance through **digital booking and system transformation**
- Among the **top performing services of its size nationally**

Key Challenges / Decisions Ahead

- Managing **declining demand for ceremonies**
- Responding to **legislative changes and reforms**
- Implementing **Digital Registration Service nationally**
- Balancing **statutory requirements with income generation pressures**
- Ongoing **property and service transformation**

Summary

“Registration Services ensure every life event is recorded accurately and delivered with care, while supporting income generation and modern, accessible services.”

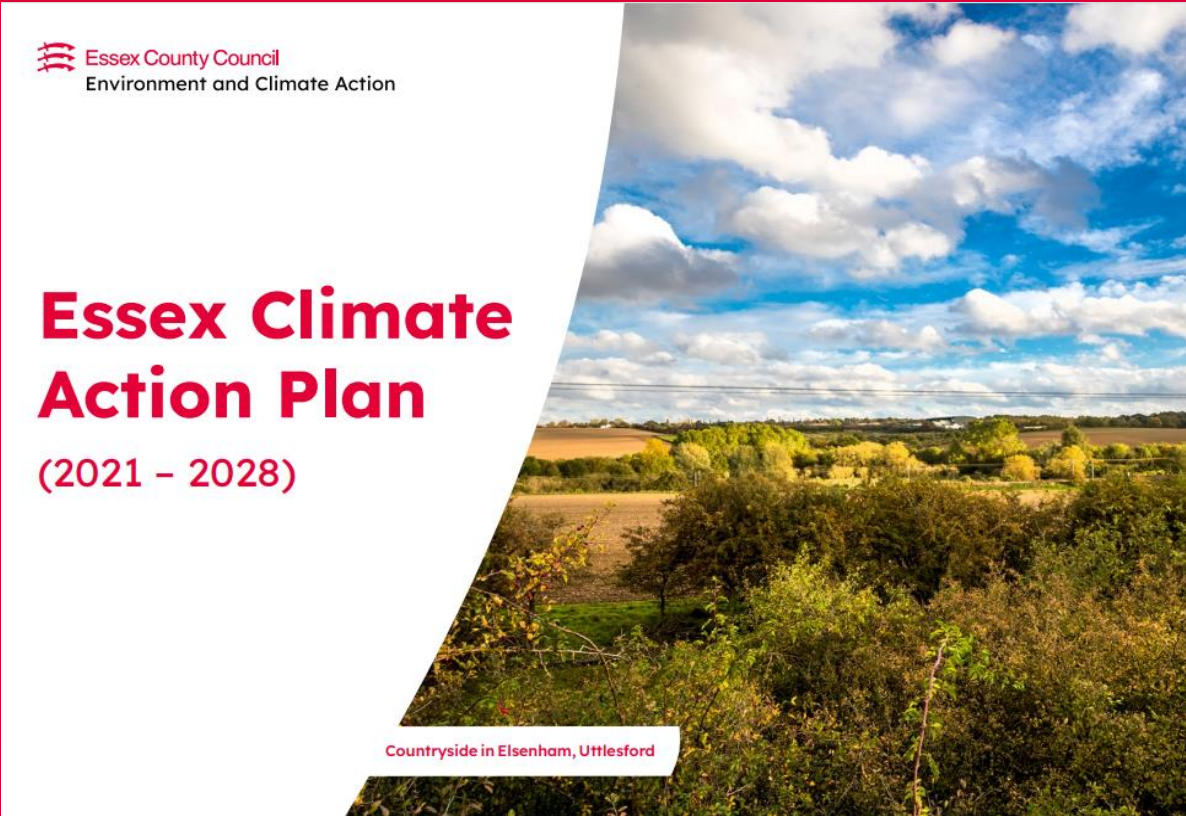
Environment & Climate Action

Director Samantha Kennedy

June 2026

Strategic Lead on Climate Action

Cabinet Member Cllr Benn



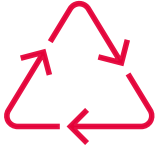
Waste Management

Essex County Council is the statutory
Waste Disposal Authority (WDA)

We are responsible for arranging the treatment and disposal of waste collected by the 12 District, Borough and City councils in Essex and providing public waste disposal facilities – recycling centres

Cabinet member Cllr Benn

What we do



Operate 21 Recycling Centres for Household Waste enabling residents to dispose of their bulky household waste



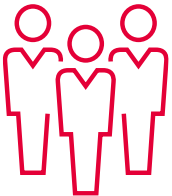
Operate 4 Waste Transfer Stations enabling waste to be bulked and transported efficiently for disposal



Develop and manage multi- million contracts to ensure safe, legal and efficient waste treatment and disposal



Provide funding and technical support to councils and communities to ensure continuous improvement, effective services and embed local action.



Deliver education, communication and research to increase participation in reuse and recycling services, encourage community participation and promote economic growth



Monitor and manage 13 closed landfill sites providing public open space, increased biodiversity and energy generation through methane capture

Waste Strategy

Developed jointly and adopted by all Essex Councils in 2025 it details our joint approach to waste management, ensuring efficient and effective services that protect the environment.



2026	Ensure all homes have a recycling collection for paper, card, plastic, metal , food and garden waste
2027	Ensure all homes have a kerbside recycling collection for plastic film
2030	Stop using landfill for residual waste
2035	Reuse, recycle or compost at least 65% of waste (ambition to achieve 70%)
2042	Halve the residual waste produced per person to 110Kg per person per year
2050	Reduce greenhouse gas emission contributing to our statutory net zero target

Flood Management

**Essex County Council is the statutory Lead
Local Flood Authority for Essex (LLFA)**

We are responsible for managing local flood risks from
surface water and cooperating with other Risk
Management Authorities in their area

The Environment Agency are responsible for flooding
from the main rivers and the sea.

Cabinet Member Cllr Webster

Flood Management

New flood risk management strategy (statutory)

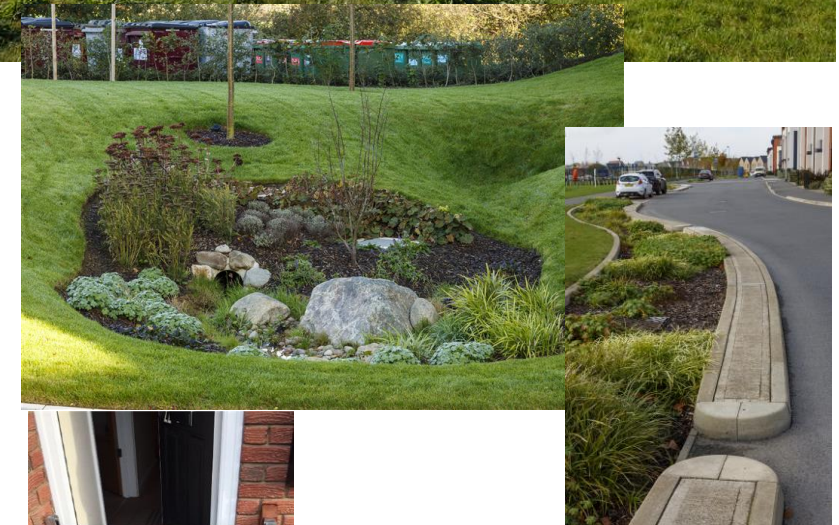
- A requirement under Flood and Water Management Act
- Current strategy is out of date; new data released by EA in 2025
- We are drafting a new Integrated Local Flood Risk Management Strategy and working towards a public consultation in December
- The strategy builds on the **Local Nature Recovery Strategy** and the **Essex Water Strategy** to promote 'integrated water management' - tackling flood risk, water scarcity and water quality together

Technical advice on major developments (statutory)

- Comment on all major developments across Essex; and Local Plan consultations
- Minimise flood risk by limiting runoff using sustainable drainage systems (SuDS)
- SuDS use green features to capture water, slow flows and cleanse water. Features include swales, rain gardens, attenuation basins and rainwater harvesting.

Property Protection

- **Property Flood Resilience (PFR) grant:** EA funded grant scheme to install property flood resilience measures in 'at risk' homes for 3 years, installed over 120 measures
- **Flood capital programme:** Since 2015, has delivered 54 projects, resulting in over 2200 properties being better protected from flooding to date. 50% external grant funding.
- Maximises use of natural flood management measures as these are cost effective and can deliver a range of wider benefits for local nature, amenity and water quality



Nature Recovery

Essex County Council is statutory lead for the Essex Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS) and has a legal duty to protect and enhance biodiversity (Biodiversity Duty)

The LNRS was developed working with Local Nature Partnership and wider partners including all relevant local authorities, national agencies, businesses, farmers and landowners and wildlife charities.

Cabinet Member Cllr Benn

Local Nature Recovery Strategy

Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)

- New system of spatial strategies for nature in England, made mandatory in Environment Act 2021
- **Secretary of State Adopted statutory LNRS for Greater Essex in July 2025.**
- LNRS highlights areas where nature is thriving, opportunities for habitat creation/enhancement, and actions that can be taken to carry out creation/enhancement and deliver wider benefits (e.g. improved public access to greenspace, reduced flood risk, better drought resilience & water quality)
- Delivery on going with partners

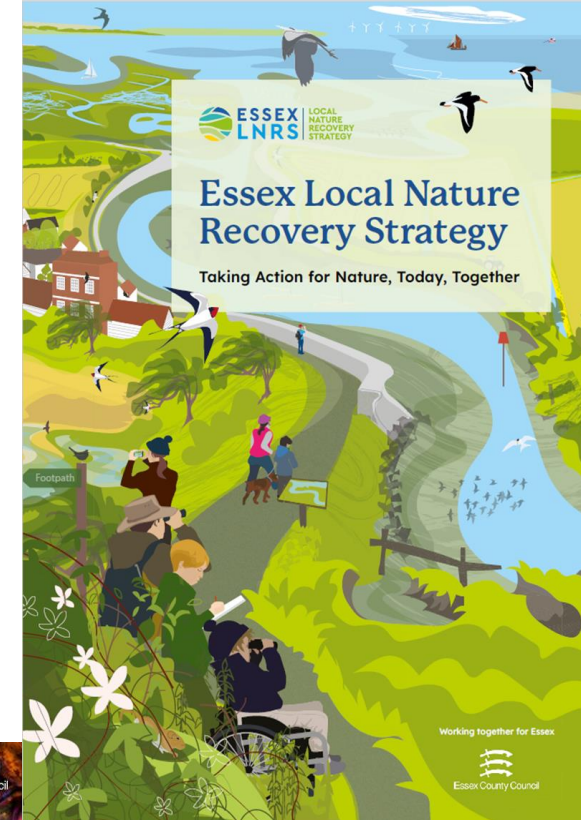
Targets

- ***“To have green and blue habitats covering 25% of the county by 2030”.***
- ***“To create 18,000 hectares of new woodland across Essex... right tree, right place”.***

Biodiversity Duty

- recently published our first Biodiversity Duty Report, summarising progress on ECC's actions under **statutory duty** to conserve and enhance biodiversity

<https://www.essex.gov.uk/about-council/plans-and-strategies/environment-and-planning/local-nature-recovery-strategy>



Energy

**Essex County Council works with local authorities and businesses to support planning for energy company investment, unlocking economic growth.
We run multiple schemes to cut residents energy bills.**

Cabinet Member Cllr Benn

Key duties and responsibilities

- New Statutory responsibilities: Local authorities mandated by the [Energy Act 2023](#) to act as **Heat Network Zone Coordinators**, responsible for **identifying, designating, and enforcing heat network zones**. They are responsible for driving local heat network delivery, covering new and existing buildings, ensuring low-carbon compliance, and coordinating mandatory connections for large buildings. Referenced in the Warm Homes Plan
- Requirements to engage with the National Energy System Operator (NESO) under the Energy Act 2023 – Local Authorities are expected to collaborate with NESO to develop **Regional Energy System Plans**.
- Under the UK Government's Warm Homes plan [Warm Homes Plan - GOV.UK](#), tasked with managing funding to retrofit existing homes aiming to reduce energy demand and combat fuel poverty under the Government's Warm Homes Plan
- Under the [UK government's Local Power Plan](#), tasked with working in partnership with Great British Energy to enable and develop local renewable energy projects through proactive planning, land/rooftop availability, and forming partnerships to secure investment and deliver community benefits
- Requirements under National Planning Policy guidance (in draft) for regional and local area energy plans to inform Planning policy and Local Plans

Retrofit Homes : Grants

Warm Homes Grants

Essex County Council run a £6m scheme, grant funded by Government.

Residents in Thurrock, Southend and 11 District, Borough and City Council's can apply for a grant at [Energy Efficiency Grants | HEAT Essex](#).

Basildon Borough Council run their own scheme : details [here](#)

Households with:

- an EPC of D, E, F or G (hard to heat)
- a household income below £36k

Can apply for new insulation, and heating systems, including heat and solar panels

Switch Together: solar panels & battery storage

The bulk purchasing scheme saves c30% discount on the typical market price for an equivalent system at that time.

Installations:

- In 2025: 258 installations were completed in 2025: 237 solar and 21 batteries.
- In total since 2019: 3010 solar systems and 13 MW of generation capacity.

[Switch Together Essex County Council](#)

Community Energy

ECC works with and support a very active network of communities to develop community led energy projects. These are local renewable energy generation and energy efficiency projects developed, owned and delivered by local communities with support from ECC.



Warm Homes Grant Case Study

Older couple in Essex; Mr. M is a former armed forces member living with terminal cancer and supported by Macmillan nurses. Focused on maintaining independence at home.

Grant funded work delivered **£210–£460 annual energy bill savings**

- **£7,983 estimated lifetime savings**
- Increased household income through financial support

Culture, Heritage and Green Space

Cllr Quirk

- Eight country parks – Belhus Woods, Cudmore Grove, Danbury, Great Notley, Hadleigh, Marsh Farm, Thorndon and Weald.
- Four Essex Outdoors centres delivering outdoor education activities and residential visits for schools, families and organisations
- Cressing Temple Barns

Cllr Hossack

- Essex Record Office in Chelmsford is the storehouse of Essex History.

Cllr Bray

- Heritage Assets Jaywick Martello Tower, Thaxted Guildhall and 5 Mills
- Culture Essex supports, promotes and advocates for the arts, cultural and creative sector in Essex.
- Essex Film Office promotes and enables on-location filming across the county, coordinating with district and borough councils.

ESSEX COUNTRY PARKS

With over 1,000 hectares, our eight country parks include lakes, ancient woodlands, wood pasture, grasslands, beaches and thousands of kilometres of trails for all park users.

- Managed by Country Parks Manager with Park Managers, Rangers and café staff
- Volunteers support tasks such as scrub clearance and butterfly counts: c10,000 volunteer hours p.a.
- Rich wildlife; many SSSI, Special Protection Areas, Ramsar and Green Flag status
- Grant funded landscape restoration work underway to boost biodiversity – restoring woodland, encouraging wildflowers and pollinators and introducing grazing
- **870,000 visits a year, mostly Essex residents**
- Free entry, with income from parking, Explorer Pass sales, cafés as well as rents and lettings

www.explore-essex.com

@exploreessex (Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube)

explore.essex@essex.gov.uk



Heritage buildings and venues



Scheduled Monument featuring Grade I listed Barley and Wheat Barns, some of the oldest known remaining timber framed barns in the world and amongst the few remaining Templar buildings in England, along with a restored Tudor walled garden and Tiptree tea room.

Active Friends group and community volunteers. £3m project to replace the large barn roof involves specialist skills and currently out to tender – critical to proceed to preserve asset and adhere to statutory obligations.

@cressing.temple (Facebook and Instagram)



Jaywick
Martello
Tower

Renovated Martello Tower, operating as an arts, heritage and community venue on the Jaywick Sands coastline. One of 29 defences built on the east coast to defend England from Napoleon and his armies.

Active Friends group. Recent closure proposals prompted campaign and petition from residents and plans were aborted.

@jaywickmartellotower (Facebook and Instagram)



Essex County Council maintains five historic mills – Alderford Water Mill, Beeleigh Steam Mill, Finchingfield Post Mill, Mountnessing Post Mill and Stock Tower Mill.

Heavily reliant on Friends groups. Alternative models for future may be viable and currently being explored, but may prove contentious among some stakeholders.

Thaxted Guildhall

Thaxted Guildhall – returned to ECC after 50-year lease with Uttlesford DC. Funded management arrangements need to be identified. To date, Thaxted Parish Council have managed day-to-day on behalf of Uttlesford.

www.explore-essex.com

@exploreessex (Instagram, Facebook, LinkedIn and YouTube)

explore.essex@essex.gov.uk



Outdoor education, council run

Over 140,000 children and young people each year

Essex Outdoors delivers high-quality programmes for schools. We are valued for delivering tailored, learning-focused programmes with a strong SEND offer. Feedback is overwhelmingly positive with repeat visits demonstrating satisfaction.

Four purpose-built centres:

- **Bradwell:** sailing, sea views, RYA training
- **Danbury:** 70 acres of woodland
- **Mersea:** island setting for residential activity breaks
- **Harlow:** day centre for paddle sports, climbing, home of The Lock specialist indoor climbing

Outdoor activities: aerial adventure, archery, BMX, bushcraft, caving, kayaking, raft building, sailing, SUP, zip wire

Fully catered, heated accommodation: indoor beds, lodges, pods, camping.

School residentials, day trips, study breaks and GCSE fieldwork. School Holiday Activity Days and courses for all ages.

Community events for children, families and young people that receive services from social care or those with disabilities - It's My Life Festival (Danbury) and Mersea Island Festival

First aid training, including Outdoor First Aid.

9 out of 10
schools come back

88%
Net Promoter Score



www.essexoutdoors.com
hello@essexoutdoors.com
@essexoutdoors (Facebook, Instagram and X)



Essex Record Office preserves the archives of Essex – forever and for everyone. We are one of the country’s leading local authority record offices with modern facilities and a reputation for excellence and innovation.

We hold over **8 miles of shelving** and our oldest document dates from **962**. Access to archive records and civil registration certificate copies are statutory services, and a statutory regulation protects collections from being split through LGR.



Preservation of unique historic collections



Public access (in-person and remote): enquiries, advice and research



Technical services – conservation, digitisation, reprographics, sound and video



Civil registration certificate copies



Venue hire – conference centre, meetings and wedding ceremonies



There is strong potential for greater wellbeing, civic engagement, pride in place and community cohesion through expanded outreach.

Open the Box (NLHF funded project) will help drive this, and we will continue inviting everyone to attend an event, bring a friend or family member, and discover the stories, people and places that shaped Essex.

www.essexrecordoffice.co.uk

ero.enquiry@essex.gov.uk

@essexrecordoffice (Facebook, Soundcloud, X and YouTube)



ECC Cultural Development team supports **placemaking and civic pride** by helping culture, and **creative industries** grow across Essex. Working with cultural organisations, freelancers, and creative businesses Cultural Development helps to build a strong and sustainable sector, offering partnerships, advice, and access to funding.

Culture supports wider goals like economic growth, healthier communities, and making places more vibrant and attractive to live in.

The Cultural Development service commissions research and reports that build a clear picture of the sector and guide future investment. This includes:

- the **Essex Cultural Strategy (2023)**, which sets the overall direction
- **Mapping Creative Hubs in Essex (2024)**, which looks at creative work spaces and infrastructure across the county
- **Creative Health in Essex (2025)**, showing how culture can improve health and wellbeing
- the **Creative Sector Evidence and Action Roadmap (2025)**, which sets out priorities for growth. The sector holds over 6,300 businesses and 36,000 jobs.
- and **Making Space for Creative Growth in Essex (2026)**, which looks at what spaces are needed to support future creative industries.



There are almost 40 Essex Cultural Ambassadors, including celebrities such as Dame Helen Mirren and Olly Murs. [Watch the Ambassadors film](#)



ECC Arts & Culture Funds have enabled over 125 projects and delivered over 2million opportunities for residents of all ages to engage with culture. [See some of the projects here](#)

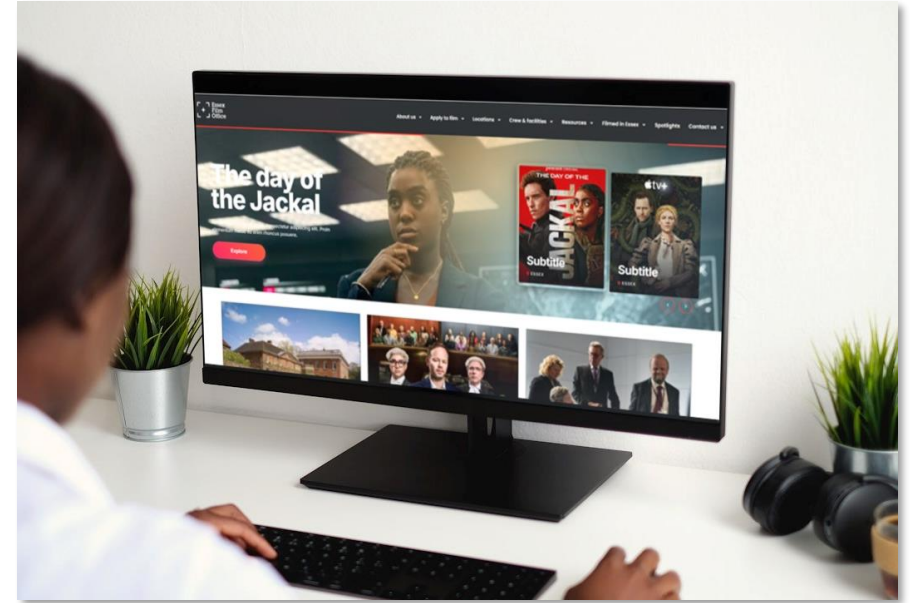


- **The Essex Film Office promotes Essex as a filming destination and supports film, TV and commercial productions to work in the county.** It acts as a single point of contact for production companies, helping them find locations, secure permits, and liaise with local authorities and communities.
- By attracting filming activity, the Film Office brings **investment into the local economy**, creates **opportunities for local businesses** and freelancers, and raises Essex's profile on screen.
- Film and TV exposure **helps showcase Essex to national and international audiences**, encouraging tourism and visitors to explore filming locations and strengthening local identity. VisitBritain research shows that *7 in 10 visitors to the UK have visited a film or TV location during their trip*, underlining the strong link between screen content and tourism
- **Since launch, the Essex Film Office has recorded £7.1m in economic impact for Essex.**

www.essexfilloffice.co.uk

Film@essex.gov.uk

[@essexfilloffice](#) (Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn and X)



www.essexfilloffice.co.uk



[Essex Film Office – Showreel](#)

Questions



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Place and Customer Executive Director



Suzanna Shaw

Customer Service Director



Jon Shortland

Highways and Transport
Director



Sam Kennedy

Environment and Climate Action
Director



This information is issued by:
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The information contained in this document
can be translated, and/or made available in
alternative formats, on request.

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