

ECC report July 2020

A133 Ipswich to Harwich Rd improvements team saves months of future disruption

Ipswich Road (south) was opened ahead of schedule as piling works were completed sooner than expected. Harwich Rd (south) re-opened on the 30th June to allow key construction works to be completed.

All the engineering work on the A133 St Andrews Avenue and Harwich Rd roundabout, to widen the road to two full lanes in both directions, will be finished during the summer as planned.

Work to strengthen the retaining wall at the south-west side of the Ipswich Road roundabout follows on from the piling to join to the Cowdray Avenue rail bridge.

Whilst completing these works, Engineers have found issues with the bridge that will require fixing.

Essex Highways are currently carrying out further investigation work, with a view to completing further remedial measures to the railway bridge. This can be done without the need for further road closures using the existing traffic management around the Ipswich Rd roundabout.

Whilst finding this issue isn't helpful to the works on site, it is good news that this was discovered now as the project team is best placed to absorb this extra job within the scheme and create the necessary space to resolve this issue without future significant road closures.

Unfortunately, this does mean that the Ipswich Road roundabout section cannot be completed until the bridge issues have been resolved.

Structures engineers will now carry out urgent investigations and start repair work on the railway bridge, following arrangements made with Network Rail. Depending on precisely what works are required on the bridge, the whole project is expected to be finished, with improved traffic flow through the whole area towards the latter part of 2020. Harwich Road roundabout up to Ipswich Road roundabout is still planned to be completed this summer.

Council wins ruling over Basildon waste plant

A High Court judge has concluded that the ongoing issues with the Tovi Eco Park at Courtauld Road in Basildon are due to flaws in the owner's original design.

Essex County Council always alleged this rather than the type of waste it processes, as the owner alleged.

The facility, a private finance initiative, began processing the county's waste in 2014.

Due to the complex nature of the plant, a lengthy commissioning or testing period during which any issues could be addressed was always envisaged.

However, during this commissioning period, it became apparent that there were several performance issues and ECC was in ongoing contractual discussions with the plant's owner in an attempt to resolve these.

Viable solutions to these issues were not found and in 2017 ECC referred matters to the High Court for resolution to protect taxpayers' interests.

The case was heard in May-June 2019 and the judge handed down his decision on 18th June 2020. Mr Justice Pepperall concluded that the ongoing commissioning issues were the result of the plant's original design rather than due to the type of waste it processes as was alleged by the owner.

This result does not in any way affect the collection of household waste across the county which will continue as normal.

Since it began operating in 2014, the facility has been receiving and processing a considerable amount of the county's residual (black bag) waste.

While next steps are being considered, household waste will continue to be collected across the county and disposed of appropriately.

he court will publish the full judgment on <https://www.bailii.org/>

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Essex County Council underlines importance of social distancing and regular hand washing as £5.78m funding for track and trace support is announced

Health experts at ECC are underlining the need for social distancing and regular hand washing as new funding to support the track and trace service is announced.

Local authorities are central to supporting the new track and trace service across England, with the government providing a new funding package of £300 million to authorities across the UK.

The Council has been allocated £5,780,000 (£5.78m) from this funding package.

The authority is now using this funding to develop tailored outbreak control plans, working with local trusts and other partners.

This local provision is in addition to the national activity and is specifically to deal with particular local situations.

However, ECC is clear the message remains for county residents to maintain two metres of social distance and to keep washing hands at every opportunity.

Dr Mike Gogarty, Director of Wellbeing, ECC's Public Health and Communities said: "Social distancing is more relevant to people than ever.

"If you do not come within two metres of anyone you will never be regarded as at risk under track and trace and will not be asked to self-isolate"

"Although track and trace is now being implemented, and new processes to act upon it are being created, it is vital to remember it is a complementary system when it comes to halting the spread of the COVID-19 virus.

"Track and trace is not a cure and it won't halt the spread of COVID-19 by itself.

"The key things everybody in Essex needs to do to stop the spread of COVID-19 is maintain two metres of social distance from people outside of your household and family bubble and keep washing your hands."

Plans drawn up by the authority to respond to track and trace focus on identifying and containing potential outbreaks in places such as workplaces, housing complexes, care homes and schools.

ECC is now working to ensure testing capacity is deployed effectively to high-risk locations. The council will work closely with the test and trace service, local NHS and other partners to achieve this.

Data on the virus's spread will be shared with other local authorities through the Joint Biosecurity Centre to inform local outbreak planning, so teams understand how the virus is moving, working with national government where necessary to access the track and trace capabilities of the new service.

New Family Innovation Fund-Xtra gives Essex families a little extra help

A new range of additional support has been launched by Essex County Council to help children, young people and their families during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Family Innovation Fund-Xtra (FiF-Xtra) services, offer early support across a number of key areas including children's mental health, healthy relationships and coping with change. They are available to children and young people aged between 0 and 19-years, and up to 25-years for young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities (SEND).

The services are aimed at helping young people and families who are not already receiving specialist or statutory support. They can be accessed directly by families, through referral from a professional such as a teacher, via the Essex Welfare Service, the Getting Help in Essex Directory, or by calling one of the organisations themselves.

ECC is working with the voluntary sector and community partners who will deliver the services locally so that families receive help when and where they need it most.

Cllr Louise McKinlay, Essex County Council's Cabinet Member for Children and Families, said: "We are pleased to build on the current support available in Essex to offer families a little extra help at this challenging time.

"We know that the effects of the pandemic will be felt for a long time, even as the world gradually returns to normal. It's therefore vital that we have early support in place to help families address any concerns they face now, but also so that they are better equipped to face potential challenges later down the line.

"I would encourage any young people, parents and carers to find out more if they feel like they need a little extra help."

The launch of FiF-Xtra follows the existing support already available in Essex through the established Family Innovation Fund (FiF).

Support can be delivered one-on-one, through group work, as a family group, or as a couple, around understanding Coronavirus; managing and coping with change; separation and loss; managing and coping with anxiety; healthy family relationships and staying active and curious.

To receive support via the Family Innovation Fund-Xtra service, young people and their families can contact one of the organisations listed below, depending on their needs.

- [**Wilderness Foundation**](#) – offers counselling and therapeutic support, and may bring nature, art and other creative tools into sessions. Appointments are

available 9am-5pm Monday - Friday. Evenings and weekends by appointment. Contact 0300 1233073 or info@wildernessfoundation.org.uk

- [Renew Counselling](#) – an experienced and accredited counselling service for all ages. Appointments are available Monday – Friday 10am – 5pm and Monday-Thursday 5pm-8pm. Saturdays by appointment. Contact 01245 359353 or hilary@renew-us.org
- [Open Door](#) – offers coaching, counselling and mediation. Appointments are available Monday-Thursday 9am-7pm, Friday 9am-5pm. Saturday and Sunday by appointment. Contact 01375 390040 or Fifxtra@opendoorservices.org
- [Relate](#) – offer accredited mediation and counselling. Appointments are available 9am-9pm Monday- Friday and 9am-5pm on Saturdays. Contact 01245 676930 or 01708 441722 or enquiries@relatelinee.org.uk
- [YMCA](#) – can help families identify beneficial strategies and solutions for their needs in individual, group or family sessions. Appointments are available Monday – Friday and Saturdays by agreement. Contact 01245 355677 or sarah.daniels@ymcachelmsford.org.uk
- [Evolve Intervention](#) – provide early intervention for children and young people through mentoring, coaching, group work and tuition. Appointments are available Monday -Friday 9am to 6pm, with some availability between 6pm- 8pm and on Saturdays 10am to 4pm. Contact us on 01245 526069 or info@evolve-intervention.com

Further information:

- The Getting Help in Essex Directory is available here: <https://www.essex-gethelp.uk>
- More information about Essex Welfare Service can be found here: www.essexwelfareservice.org.uk

Essex Welfare Service expands with new support services now available

The Essex Welfare Service (EWS), established by ECC, is now enabling access to more support services across the county.

The county council service, delivered by Provide, was set up to help those most vulnerable during the Coronavirus pandemic and has so far seen almost 9,000 vulnerable people across the county receiving support and over 3,000 volunteers helping to make this happen.

This invaluable volunteer support has ranged from help with shopping, medicine or day to day tasks that has enabled individuals to stay healthy and well whilst shielding at home.

The EWS has seen an increasing demand from residents for a number of different types of support. In response to that EWS has expanded to enable access to a range of organisations that can help those who feel isolated or vulnerable.

Leader of Essex County Council, Cllr David Finch said: "I am incredibly proud of the community spirit that has been shown across the county by our wonderful residents, and for this I cannot thank them enough.

"The Essex Welfare Service has played a crucial role in ensuring that those most vulnerable in our communities receive support and I am delighted that we can now build on that. Working together with a number of organisations across the county, EWS will now also be an access point for residents to a range of other services."

The expanded EWS service will now offer help and advice to residents who are feeling isolated or vulnerable, regardless of their age, health or circumstance. Residents can access support on:

- Caring responsibilities
- Mental health
- Learning disability/autism
- Dementia care
- Sensory impairment
- Parenting and family matters
- Keeping physically active

To register, or recommend to friends and family, visit the Essex Welfare Service at www.essexwelfareservice.org.uk or call 0300 303 9988.

A self-help directory will also go live in the coming weeks giving residents an additional offer of support.

Services now offered through the EWS and partners involved:
Specialist Provider Service offer

Carers First

- Delivers support to carers over the age of 18.
- Provides emotional and practical support, advice, information and guidance, and opportunities for carers to access training, online social groups and activities.

Essex Community Learning Sensory

- A one stop shop route to the sensory support pathway.
- Offers support, provision of information, advice and guidance regarding support for people who are sight impaired, hard of hearing, deaf or deafblind.

Sport for Confidence

- A team of occupational therapists and sports coaches currently delivering an 'at home' service to support vulnerable people who are isolating to remain healthy.
- Typically, participants include people with a disability, dementia, poor mental health, or a long term-condition.

Summit

- Offers a range of bespoke services for adults with a learning disability, autism or poor mental health.
- Includes advocacy, outreach work, support through medical assessments and correspondence support.

Royal Mencap

- Provides information, advice and guidance to adults with a learning disability.
- Topics include employment, benefits, referral for mental health support and community activities.
- Also provides a befriending service.

Alzheimer's Society

- Provides dementia support, which includes support, advice and information.
- Also offers peer support and virtual 'Singing for the Brain' sessions.

Realise Futures

- Provides employment support and advice to people with a disability.
- Staff will be available to listen to any difficulties people are facing with employment, offer support and signposting where needed.

Frontline

- Supports adults with a learning disability / autism.
- Offers social isolation support (befriending) and provides supported employment, queries, advice and support.

Community Agents Essex

- Support for vulnerable adults, and their informal carers, to gain and regain

independent living skills.

- No specific age, but particularly those over 65 or those with a learning disability and / or autism.

Royal Association for Deaf People

- Offers support in all sorts of aspects to families who are deaf themselves or have a deaf member within the family.
- Support varies with help and advice, activity ideas, or ensuring they can get essential supplies.

Action for Family Carers

- Essex Befriends service – regular contact (currently telephone only) from a trained volunteer befriender for people at increased risk of loneliness or social isolation: informal carers, older people, people with a learning disability, people with a mental health condition.

Children and Families Group

- A team providing information, advice and guidance for parents with a child / children under 18 years old living in their home and in need of additional support.

Adult social care group (ECL advisors)

- A listening service for vulnerable and at-risk adults with complex needs, problem solving or signposting them to services that might be appropriate.