

REPORT FOR PARISH COUNCILS REGARDING ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL

October 2018 - Cllr Penny Channer

Highway Matters

Over 250 miles of Essex roads have been improved this summer with surface dressing techniques which prevent potholes forming.

Surface dressing techniques future proof the road surface to prevent potholes forming but can only be done in warm, dry weather. This summer the 250 miles of road have been covered in 3,652 tonnes of binder and then 38,000 tonnes of stone chippings, which are rolled in to form a new top layer. The technique can be viewed at www.essex.gov.uk/surfacing.

With this work, other surfacing techniques and regular pothole-fixing crews, the number of potholes on our main roads has come down from 988 in June to 407. That's a major improvement for the safety and comfort of drivers and riders on our faster roads where most of the traffic is.

ECC/Essex Highways will now work to keep that figure low, while shifting our crews' efforts to fixing more potholes on local roads, whether in villages or town estates."

Councillor Bentley however is not content with our progress so far, he wants to accelerate the work, so he is pleased to report that successful trials have been undertaken with different pothole-repair machines. When all the trials have been completed he will decide how to combine the various repair techniques to get the most potholes fixed providing best value for money for Essex residents.

Works continue into the autumn for Resurfacing, where the top layers of the road are planed off and replaced with entirely new material; and Microsurfacing which adds a thinner new surface on top of the existing road. The right technique is carefully chosen according to each road condition.

A point of information Pothole-fixing crews are currently patching over 1,000 potholes every month in Essex.

Councillor Bentley has also introduced a new initiative which involves all County Councillors being able to nominate, through liaison with their Parishes, their top 20 potholes that need repairing. Ten will be done as soon as possible with the other ten later. This is in addition to other potholes that will be repaired, not instead of. It allows County Councillors to fast track 20 potholes within their Divisions.

Council launches new fees for Essex foster carers

Essex County Council Fostering service is launch its new fee structure on Monday 1 October 2018 which significantly increases its fees, support and training package for foster carers.

This exciting new change will allow fostering to become a more financially viable option for people across Essex and brings the county into line with fees paid by neighbouring local authorities and independent fostering agencies.

The increased fees, when combined with the weekly allowance which foster carers receive for each child in their care, mean that from today, fosters carers could receive up to £479 a week for each child they care for. Foster carers on the specialist therapeutic scheme will receive up to £579 a week.

As well as increased fees, foster carers will also benefit from an increased support system and training. Support will include dedicated resources to manage initial enquiries, specialist therapeutic support for all foster carers, clinical psychologists and mental health coordinators in each local area of the county and respite and peer support for foster carers.

We have seen a lot of interest in our new offer and applicants have been keen to explore the increased levels of support that Essex now offers to Foster Carers.

We know that stable foster placements provide the best experience for children in care and this investment in our in-house fostering service allows us to continue to support carers to provide the best outcomes for local children.

Demand is increasing and we need more local carers so we can meet the needs of children in Essex to provide well-matched placements for our young people.

As part of this development, Essex County Council Fostering service will also be launching the Oasis Network – a new support scheme for foster carers providing support, respite and advice directly from an experienced carer or mentor. The Fostering Service is currently recruiting Oasis Network carers and mentors for all areas of the county.

For more information about the new scheme and to find out how to register your interest to become a foster carer please visit www.essexadoptionandfostering.co.uk or call 0800 801 530.

Essex Records Office (ERO)

On Saturday 10th November, ERO will be reflecting on the end of the First World War at its The Last Night event . Ahead of the event, the Archivists are working on cataloguing a large collection of First World War papers from the Saulez family, which were purchased for the ERO collection by the Friends of Historic Essex as part of the Essex Great War Archive Project. The papers include lots of letters exchanged by three brothers all serving in the forces, and other records including a

pocket diary which belonged to Arthur Travers Saulez, which still has the pencil marking the spot where he made his last diary entry before being killed in April 1917. Some of the Saulez papers will be on display at The Last Night alongside other original First World War records from ERO's collections.

Contact the Essex records Office for details.

Essex Trading Standards - Rogue Traders

As autumn approaches Trading Standards is warning Essex residents about leaflets through the door offering gardening and tree services. It is widely recognised that this is not the best way to advertise if you're a legitimate trader and Trading Standards are becoming more concerned about the circulation of leaflets with fake or incomplete address details that are often associated with very poor workmanship and distraction burglaries. Trading Standards are regularly publishing leaflets that concern it on its social media pages, follow Trading Standards on Facebook and Twitter and feel free to share. If you have any concerns 03454 040506 Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline

Essex Libraries - PressReader

PressReader is an exciting new online service available to all Essex Libraries customers. It provides free access to a wide range of newspapers and magazines from the UK and around the world. This includes most of the UK daily tabloids and broadsheets as well as local publications such as 'Essex Life'.

There are 100s of magazines covering everything from homes and gardens to sports and entertainment just as they appear in print.

Simply visit pressreader.com on your PC or laptop or install the app to download newspapers or magazines to your smartphone or tablet. Search for Essex Libraries and enter your library card number to read or listen to a wealth of publications free of charge.