

ECC

Cllr Simon Walsh – Parish Update

October 2012

1. 39,153 potholes fixed since March this year.

There are currently 13 jet patchers working across the county, and 30 gangs of engineers dedicated to fixing potholes. Please keep reporting defects as they arise.

2. ECC Extends Winter Salt Bag Scheme For Local Communities

More local communities will be equipped to deal with icy conditions this winter, with the extension of Essex County Council's winter salt bag scheme.

Launched successfully last year, the salt bag scheme **provided participating parish and town councils with one tonne of salt – packaged in sealed 20kg bags**. This salt could then be spread by local volunteers on areas of the highway causing most concern in icy conditions.

This year the County Council is extending the scheme to parts of Essex without a parish or town council, giving local county councillors in these areas the opportunity to take responsibility for the salt bags, and identify local volunteers to help with spreading the salt.

160 parish and town councils are already participating in the scheme and will shortly be receiving their salt pallet deliveries for this year. The salt can be used on areas of the public highway that are not covered by the County Council's precautionary gritting network.

3. ECC pass motion on Reducing Red Tape and Financial Burdens for residents and businesses

A motion passed at October's full council meeting set out the council's commitment to ensuring that the Government does not allow increases in the funding of the EU as per current proposals.

The motion called upon the County's MPs and MEPs to encourage the Government and the EU to reduce the UK's contributions to the EU and redirect that money back to the people of the UK, including Essex residents and businesses.

4. Single Government Website

A **single website for public services and government departments** went online this week and includes hidden sensitive information for civil servants in case of emergencies. The new project, www.gov.uk, will allow citizens to do everything from paying council tax and setting up a company to checking when clocks go back. It replaces direct.gov.uk.

5. Joint working to keep Essex residents safe – fireworks night

Essex County Council (ECC) and Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) will be working together this year in the lead up to 5 November to ensure Essex residents are safe when purchasing fireworks for any celebrations.

Officers from both organisations will be carrying out 'inspections at licensed premises' that are selling fireworks to offer advice and guidance on the safe storage and sales of fireworks. They will also be investigating reports of fireworks being sold illegally by traders without the correct license.

"Trading Standards would advise residents to only purchase fireworks from fixed retail premises. Don't be tempted to buy from markets, boot sales and backs of vans, as they may be unsafe. All fireworks must have been tested to meet British Standards, and be marked BS 7114."

Finally, a reminder that the election for the new position of Police and Crime Commissioner takes place on November 15th, and that the present Essex Police Authority will no longer exist.

Simon Walsh
November 2012