

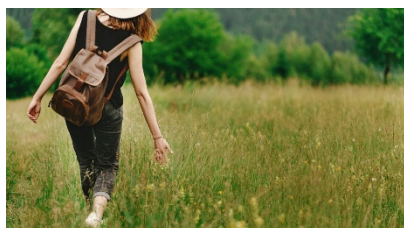
I am pleased to announce that Great Bardfield bridge is open and all routes are back to normal. Highways are grateful for your patience whilst this work was carried out.

Government Funding: The Chancellor has announced a number of funding opportunities for Local Government for the forthcoming year. In Essex this means an extra £33million for Social Care, Education is to see significant investment, especially for special needs students. Public Health too, will see an increase. There will be inflation level increases for our proportion of Business rates.

Further details have yet to emerge, and of course in these somewhat unpredictable times, things may change!

Despite these increases the ECC Budget remains significantly challenged and will still be facing funding gaps over the next few years.

Put your best foot forward



Walking has lots of benefits, not just for our health, but also in reducing congestion on our county's roads. That's why we want you to help us encourage more people to get out walking, particularly for shorter journeys.

We've drafted a walking strategy which sets out how we'd like to make walking a more attractive option for more people. It explores what is needed – from footpaths and infrastructure – to achieve this, as well as how we can improve our streets for people using wheelchairs and mobility scooters.

Levels of walking across the county have dropped over the last 30 years and it's important we understand why so that we can ensure walking for short trips, or even as part of a longer journey, becomes a natural choice for people.

Our aim is to not only reduce congestion, but also help people to become more active and healthier, within a safer, cleaner environment.

Share your views on our [walking strategy](#) before 18 October. Responses will inform the final Essex walking strategy 2019 -2025.

Nominations open for the 2020 Essex Teaching Awards



Nominations are now open for the 2020 Essex Teaching Awards. The aim of the annual awards is to shine a spotlight and celebrate the exceptional teaching, school and early years colleagues, who go above and beyond to support children and young people across the county.

Everyone spends time in the formal education system and it's the actions of individuals working in schools and early years settings that can influence some of the biggest decisions we'll ever make.

Anyone working or volunteering in an education or early years setting in Essex can be nominated, including teachers, teaching assistants, school support staff, governors, childminders and other early years professionals.

Visit the [Essex Teaching Awards web-page](#) for more details and to make a nomination before the deadline on 3 November 2019. You can also follow [@EssexTeachAward](#) on Twitter for the latest news.

New-look Essex Lottery promises more cash prizes



Since the Essex Lottery launched in 2017 over £135,000 has been donated to good causes, thanks to the thousands of people who buy a weekly £1 ticket – 60p of which is donated.

Currently 180 charities and good causes are signed up to benefit, supporting diverse causes across Essex, from animal welfare, education and arts groups, to organisations supporting children, disadvantaged groups and the elderly.

There are also opportunities for players to win big and this summer we have introduced a new prize structure, with guaranteed weekly wins for people who match the winning number combination, no matter how many tickets are sold. The prizes on offer are £25, £250, £2,000 or £25,000, as well as free Essex Lottery tickets.

If you want to be in with a chance of winning and to support a local cause that's close to your heart, visit the [Essex Lottery website](#) now.

