

ECC Report October 2024

LED streetlight upgrade project nearly complete



Essex Highways' LED streetlight upgrade programme is nearing completion.

So far, 131,254 streetlights have been upgraded across Essex. There are around 700 left to go.

The programme is expected to save £39 million in energy running costs over the next 25 years. The new units save around 80% in energy costs.

They also have a lifespan of 20 years. This will save taxpayers' money as lamps need to be replaced less frequently.

Any older LED units have been made available to parish councils in Essex.

Residents can [report issues with streetlights](#) to Essex Highways.

Find out more about the [LED streetlight replacement programme](#).

Expression of interest for devolution in Essex



We have submitted an expression of interest to the government for a devolution deal for Essex.

This marks the beginning of a dialogue with the government about what devolution for Essex would mean.

Devolution would let local councils make important decisions closer to where residents live and work.

This means powers moving away from Westminster and towards local places.

Decisions would be tailored to the needs of Essex residents, places, and businesses. This could result in stronger economic and productivity growth across the region.

The government has not yet set out its focus for devolution. However, benefits could include:

- a stronger transport network based on local needs
- investment to put priorities of local businesses first
- a skills base suited to business needs
- development of more homes and infrastructure

We are now working closely with Southend-on-Sea City Council, Thurrock Council and the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner (PFCC), alongside our city, borough and district councils, to explore what a devolution deal could look like.

[Stay up to date](#) on devolution for Essex.

Clacton business prosecuted for selling alcohol to a child



A Clacton business owner and his staff member have been fined for selling alcohol to a child.

Guvenc Cocelli, owner and Designated Premises Supervisor of Best Supermarket, in Rosemary Road, Clacton, was charged with selling alcohol to someone under the age of 18. He appeared at Chelmsford Magistrates' Court on Thursday 19 September.

Mr Mevlit Zorba, who sold the alcohol, was also charged with the same offence.

Cocelli pleaded guilty and was fined £346 for the offence. He must also pay a victim surcharge of £138, as well as being ordered to pay £2,000 costs.

Zorba also pleaded guilty and was fined £153, with a £61 victim surcharge and costs of £200.

In January 2023, Trading Standards Officers visited Best Supermarket and provided advice and guidance on the law regarding underage sales.

In April the same year, an alcohol test purchase was attempted and a sale was made to a 16-year-old girl. A warning letter was sent following this test purchase.

The following month, on 31 May 2023, another test purchase was undertaken. Another sale of alcohol was made, this time to a 14-year-old female volunteer test purchaser.

Councillor Mark Durham, Essex County Council Cabinet Member responsible for Essex Trading Standards, said:

This is the latest prosecution secured by Essex Trading Standards against a business for selling age-restricted products to children and shows that where necessary we will not hesitate to take legal action against irresponsible traders.

We hope it sends a clear message that business owners must obey the law and cannot sell harmful products to children, or they will face the consequences.

If you are concerned that a shop might be selling age restricted products to children, you can report this to Trading Standards. This can be done by the Citizens Advice Consumer Service. [Visit the website](#) or call 0808 223 1133.

Apply for your child's secondary school place



Parents and carers of Year 6 pupils can now apply for secondary school places for September 2025.

Applications opened on today Thursday 12th September and are open until the national closing date of 31 October 2024.

Our [admissions website](#) includes information on different schools and their admissions criteria.

When submitting their applications, parents are encouraged to:

- visit their preferred school
- carefully consider each school's admissions criteria
- consider how their child will get to and from school
- use all six preferences on their application

Applications made after 31 October will be considered once all on-time applications have been determined. This means applying late could reduce the chance of a child being offered a place at their preferred school.

Councillor Tony Ball, Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Education Excellence, Lifelong Learning and Employability, said:

Parents of Year 6 students across Essex are now able to submit their applications for secondary school places and I would urge them to do so before the national closing date of 31 October.

We're keen to maintain our excellent record of securing preferred places for Year 7 pupils in Essex, but we can only do this if parents complete their child's secondary school place application correctly and by the deadline.

[Apply now](#) or find out more.

Exciting refurbishment for Harwich Library



Harwich Library will receive an exciting refurbishment with upgraded facilities.

The refurbishment will include a larger mezzanine floor with two new adult community learning classrooms.

These will be able to support 40 learners from Adult Community Learning Essex (ACL Essex).

New community spaces will be available for residents. These could be used for meetings, workshops and collaborative projects.

Harwich Library's transformation is part of the [Dovercourt Capital Regeneration Projects](#). We are delivering this with Tendring District Council. The funding was secured by a joint bid between ECC and TDC's previous Conservative Administration.

As well as the Harwich Library refurbishment, the project will improve the highway between Dovercourt Station and the seafront. Milton Road car park and derelict land in Victoria Street will also be developed.

The Harwich Library refurbishment will start in September 2024. It is expected to finish in early summer 2025.

In the meantime, the library will relocate to Harwich Arts and Heritage Centre, in Main Road, from Thursday 26 September 2024.

Find out more on the [Essex Library Service website](#).

Support to upgrade household heating ahead of cold winter months



You can [register your interest](#) in making your home's heating more efficient and eco-friendly with reduced cost.

Air source heat pumps can cut carbon emissions by 44% each year. Their efficiency ratings also typically reach 300%.

As a result, air source heat pumps can save on energy bills over time. However, they can also come with a high upfront cost.

Switch Together is able to keep the cost down for Essex homeowners through group buying. This involves:

- [Register your interest](#) for free and without obligation by 1 November 2024
- A list of vetted installers compete by bidding to work with interested local residents. They offer their most competitive price without compromising on quality
- Receive a personalised offer via email. This details all costs and specifications tailored to your home. There is still no obligation to proceed
- Review the offer at your own pace. If you choose to proceed, the installer will schedule a survey and complete the installation
- Telephone and email help desks are available throughout. This helps you make an informed decision in a hassle-free environment

We are helping deliver Switch Together in partnership with iChoosr. They are behind the successful Solar Together programme.

Councillor Peter Schwier, our Climate Czar and Cabinet Member for Environment, Waste Reduction and Recycling, said: “Household heating accounts for about 14% of the country’s CO2 emissions. Considering how energy bills have risen, it is in everyone’s interest that modern and efficient air source heat pumps are made more accessible to Essex homeowners.”

You can significantly reduce your carbon footprint by making the switch to more efficient heating and water.

You must be a homeowner in Essex to benefit from Switch Together. [Find out more and register your interest](#).

You could make further savings with a £7,500 grant from the [Boiler Upgrade Scheme](#) towards a new heat pump installation. Heat pump installations are also currently VAT-exempt.

Essex farmers on high alert due to bluetongue disease risk



Positive cases of bluetongue disease have now been confirmed in Essex and the movement of animals has been restricted. Cases are confirmed elsewhere in East Anglia too.

Bluetongue does not affect people or food safety. However, it can be fatal for animals.

This includes livestock such as sheep, cattle, goats and camelids.

Farmers should [follow restrictions](#) and [guidance](#) on spotting bluetongue in animals.

Any suspicions must be reported to the Animal and Plant Health Agency on 03000 200 301.

More information about bluetongue is available on the [Ruminant Health & Welfare website](#).

