

# HIGHWAYS HIGHLIGHTS

**HELPFUL  
TIPS AND  
INFORMATION  
FOR LOCAL  
COUNCILLORS**

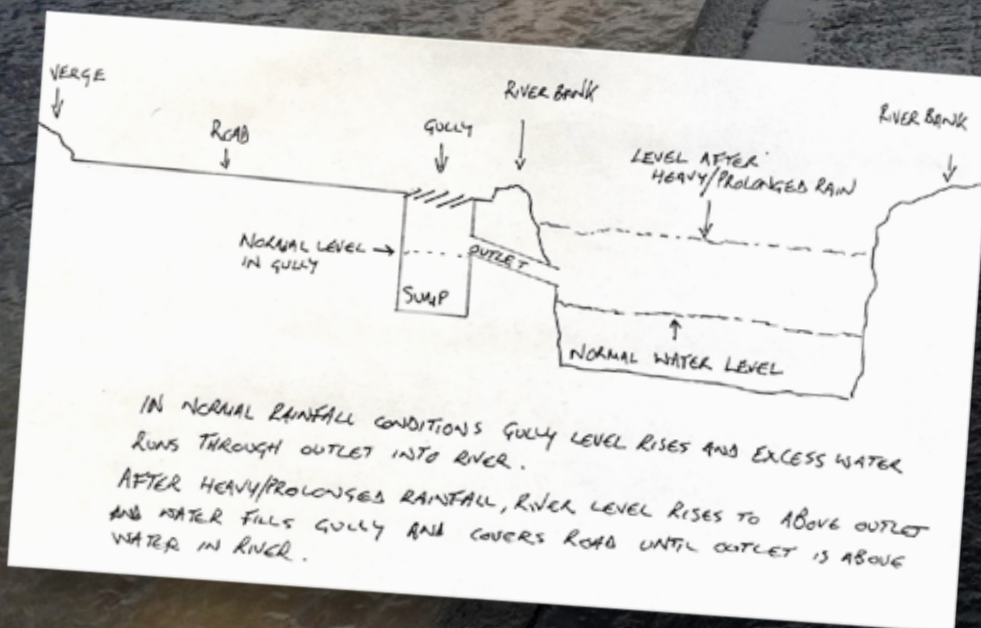
## FLOODING AND HIGHWAYS: THE CONNECTION

In January Essex escaped the worst of Storm Christoph, but at other points since the start of the year we have suffered persistent heavy rain, which has led to flooded roads in a number of places both urban and rural.

It's worth knowing that highways crews cleaned over 126,000 road drains in Essex last year, and this helps keep flooding to a minimum. However when prolonged or very heavy rain falls, or snow melts on to already saturated ground, it runs off raising ditch, brook and river levels above the height of road drain outlets. Then the water has nowhere to go. Often, time for the water to drain away naturally is the only solution.

Unsurprisingly, members of the public see the flooded road and blame the road drains. In fact it is often simply the volume of water overcoming the capacity of the drains and pipe networks. These cannot then clear the water into larger non-highways drain systems or rivers. Often private ditches not kept clear by landowners are the problem. Then run-off of soil from fields acts to block the drains.

Anything councillors can do to encourage private ditch-clearing and, when there is a flood, to discourage motorists from driving through them would all be very helpful.



### REPORT BLOCKED DRAINS ONLINE

We record water levels and debris or other issues removed from each drain, so we now have a database of the higher-risk drains to clear them more often. We concentrate on main roads, but clean drains on local roads too. **Please report any blocked drains online.** Thank you.



## COMMENT COUNCILLOR KEVIN BENTLEY

### DEPUTY LEADER, ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL AND CABINET MEMBER FOR INFRASTRUCTURE

It's that time of year when we see many more potholes on our roads. They are either new ones or existing ones made larger and all due to heavy rain, ice and snow and we certainly have had a lot of rain!

We are repairing them as quickly as possible including your Member led top 50 potholes, although I always emphasize that our teams are not immune to COVID and they are having to work under different conditions. Nonetheless they are out and out again driving gritters and are also very much keyworkers. It is important that we are all patient while they get to these defects and as you know we fix the really critical ones first.

# SHORTLIST OF JUNCTION IMPROVEMENT OPTIONS CONFIRMED AS PART OF ARMY & NAVY SUSTAINABLE TRANSPORT PACKAGE



**A shortlist of options for the major Army and Navy junction in Chelmsford has been agreed - as Essex County Council continues to invest in transforming the county's vital transport infrastructure.**

About £700 million will be invested in major transport schemes across Essex over the next six years, with several further projects in the pipeline.

The Army and Navy Sustainable Transport Package will offer people enhanced travel choices in and around Chelmsford and encourage safer, greener and healthier ways of getting around. It will particularly improve shorter journeys, where we want walking and cycling to be the natural choice.

As well as junction layout improvements, the project includes the proposed expansion of Sandon Park and Ride, a new Park and Ride site at Widford, and pedestrian and cycle route improvements.

As a result of our latest option assessment analysis, the decision has now been made to discount the two-way flyover because it would be the worst option for city centre traffic and congestion, encourage more car journeys rather than supporting the Park and Ride, walking and cycling, and would be more imposing than the previous flyover.

It would also have the largest noise and air quality impacts, and the longest and most disruptive construction programme.

The remaining options – separate T-junctions, hamburger roundabout and enlarged roundabout – provide the best opportunity to improve journeys for all transport users and are now expected to be those which go to public consultation in the summer.

More information about the Army and Navy Sustainable Transport Package is available on the **Essex Highways website**.

## E-SCOOTER TRIAL OFFERS FREE TRAVEL TO NHS STAFF

Spin, the Ford-owned company behind trials of legal e-scooters in Essex have offered free travel to NHS staff in Basildon during the pandemic.

Basildon is the first town in Essex to trial the e-scooters, with a good take-up so far despite lockdown. Spin has now generously offered free use up to 30 minute journeys for all NHS staff who register with the scheme.



**SAFER**  
**GREENER**  
**HEALTHIER**  
Transforming travel in Essex

## HIGHWAYS CREWS CONTINUE WORKING TO GET THE JOB DONE - IN COVID SAFE WAYS!

County Councillor Lesley Wagland, Deputy Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, has recorded a video to explain how and why highways repairs and improvements are continuing through lockdown.

**WATCH THE VIDEO** 



## WINTER GRITTING COPING WELL, DESPITE ICE, RAIN AND SNOW IN THE SAME NIGHT

At date of writing, only once so far this winter season have our gritters had to go out 3 times in 24 hours, but a succession of cold nights have kept the drivers busy.

Don't forget the gritter drivers are the same operatives that are out fixing potholes and clearing drains, so they are often working long hours 7 days a week at this time of year.

Sometimes the gritting decision-maker's job is very tricky, with marginal temperatures and the prospect of rain later which would wash all the grit away. Decisions can and do change late into the night!

Check which routes we may grit, on our [gritting map](#)



# POTHOLES, PAVEMENTS DRAINS AND STREETLIGHTS FIXED IN THE MONTH...

The numbers of potholes, pavement defects and streetlights fixed and drains cleared in December 2020 combined are shown below.

Pothole repairs continue where

possible when flooding or gritting work doesn't take precedence, including those nominated for repair by County Councillors.

The cleansing of higher-known-risk drains on main roads in

Braintree is now complete. January sees the continued cleaning of drains on local roads in Basildon and higher-risk drains on main roads in Basildon, Brentwood, Epping Forest, Harlow and Rochford.

DISTRICT	COUNTY ROUTES	LOCAL ROADS	PAVEMENT DEFECTS FIXED	DRAINS CLEARED	STREETLIGHTS FIXED
BASILDON	27	15	81	2058	378
BRAINTREE	41	34	32	1193	358
BRENTWOOD	8	9	8	984	202
CASTLE POINT	3	53	59	0	193
CHELMSFORD	23	55	115	0	320
COLCHESTER	20	45	49	0	358
EPPING FOREST	22	31	173	1377	205
HARLOW	2	44	22	1012	272
MALDON	7	12	6	0	102
ROCHFORD	5	22	17	0	154
TENDRING	22	57	76	0	269
UTTLESFORD	21	11	2	0	106
<b>TOTALS</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>640</b>	<b>6624</b>	<b>2917</b>



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