

County Councillor's Report, May 2017

Cultural organisations can bid for cultural funding

Essex arts and cultural organisations can bid for strategic funding from Essex County Council's Cultural Strategic Fund 2017.

Grants of £2,500 and above are awarded annually to organisations and groups whose work has strategic cultural benefits for the Essex community and who can demonstrate that their work contributes to the strengthening of the cultural infrastructure of the county.

[The scheme is open for applications until 22 May.](#)

Hadleigh-based Open Arts were awarded £14,240 through the scheme in 2016 to support their work helping people improve and maintain their mental health through creative learning sessions with professional artists on visual arts, drama, music and film.

As a result of their work in the last three years, 85 per cent of Open Arts course participants who had previously been admitted to hospital were not readmitted.

Jo Keay, Open Arts Manager said: "The continuing support of Essex County Council has been a great benefit to the Open Arts project. The funding provided by the ECC Strategic Fund has contributed greatly to the running costs of the Open Arts studios as well as our art courses, which help to improve the lives of a wide range of people throughout Essex."

Harlow Art Trust received £13,350 to widen its work with the local community, young people and businesses, using their Strategic Grant to deliver expert workshops with residents, families, schools and young people on such diverse topics as sculpture, dance, printing, set design and film model making.

The Trust's sculpture collection includes works by world-renowned artists such as Auguste Rodin, Henry Moore, Barbara Hepworth, Lynn Chadwick, and Ralph Brown.

Find out if your road is set to be resurfaced this year

The full roads resurfacing programme from April 2017 to March 2018 is now available to check on the [highways information map](#).

The map allows residents to see every road scheduled for an upgrade superimposed on a map. A colour code then shows what type of road surfacing will be used.

You can click on the works to find out more information, including date range or when the works are scheduled take place. Please be aware works are weather dependent and therefore dates for works can change.

Andrew Cook, Director for Highways and Transportation, said: “We have modernised our information for everyone about the road resurfacing programme for this year. You can now see on our website which roads are going to be completed and which type of treatment will be used.

“This is all part of our move to make highways information more easily available online. We often get calls from the public asking when their road is due to be resurfaced - this interactive map will help keep residents up-to-date with our upcoming road improvements at the click of a button.

“More precise dates will also be available on roadworks.org as we get nearer the time and we will continue to directly inform residents living close to the works so you can plan ahead.”

You can also find gritting routes, public rights of way, bus stop locations and much more on the highways information map.

Despite a cold snap creating more potholes over the Christmas and New Year period, the number of potholes on local routes is down from June last year (2016).

The number of potholes on local routes dropped from 4,954 in June last year to 4,733 at the end of March 2017.

You can now tell us about a highways issue quicker and easier thanks to our [newly improved website](#).

Feedback on how this new system works would be useful, please e-mail any comments to me at cllr.simon.walsh@essex.gov.uk

Busy winter for Gritney Spears, Alexander the Grit and other Essex gritters



Gritters have salted more than 100,000 miles of roads to help keep Essex moving during a busy winter.

The figures were released this week as winter officially ended for Essex Highways' hard-working gritter crews.

Drivers were called out 55 times this year (47 last year), with more runs needed further west than in our southern "Thames" area.

Up to 62 gritting lorries go out for each separate countywide salting operation, spreading some 14,554 tonnes (13,400 last year) over the 2,000 miles of Essex's priority roads during the winter.

Andrew Cook, Essex County Council Director for Highways and Transportation, said: "I want to pay tribute to our hard-working gritter crews who deserve a good rest after a busy winter.

"Many had to suspend New Year's celebrations and hold off on enjoying leftovers on Boxing Day to help keep Essex moving.

"After a busy festive period, Essex had a period of intense cold in January into February so we had to grit the roads every night from 12-26 January.

"We are not complacent and will be ready if a late cold snap does hit.

"In the meantime, Gritney Spears, Alexander the Grit and our other gritters will now be parked up for the summer; but we will re-deploy our gritter crews to help fix potholes, install streetlights and improve our highways for Essex residents."

The Highways winter team uses accurate localised weather forecasting, relying on nine weather stations and many roadside sensors, to decide when and where to salt the highways and how much to spread. Road surface temperatures can vary significantly from air temperature.

The gritting crews are back on-call again from Monday, 23 October 2017.

Roads resurfacing Programme.

Many roads are being repaired and resurfaced at the moment. Please be patient with the diversions and delays. This is a much needed programme of maintenance to improve the road conditions across the County. Detailed of programmed works can be found here:

<http://www.essexhighways.org/tell-us/Transport-and-Roads/Interactive-Maps-and-Live-Travel-Information/Highways-Information-Map/Highways-Information-Map-Portal2.aspx>

County Council Election Day on May 4th 2017

The results are in, and I am pleased to report I have been returned as your County Councillor.

Simon Walsh