



**WE SAID,
WE DID**

Delivering for Essex

**EVERYONE'S
ESSEX**

INTRODUCTION

Setting ambitious goals for Essex is important – we place no limits on the aspirations we have for our county. But it is also important that we follow through on what we say we’re going to do – that’s how we build trust with the people of Essex and create a better future for all our residents.

To hit the ground running we set out our ambitions in a ‘100 Day Plan’ based on the core principles of **Renewal, Equality, and Ambition**.

The 100 Day Plan set out the actions we would take as a Council to kickstart real change in the county. Since then, we’ve launched our 4 year strategy, *Everyone’s Essex*, which outlines the long-term focus of our work with 20 commitments across 4 aims:

- **for a strong, inclusive, and sustainable economy**
- **for a high-quality environment**
- **for health, wellbeing, and independence for all ages; and**
- **for a good place for our children and families to grow**

Central to these commitments is action to tackle climate change and to level up the county, which underpin everything we do.

I am a great believer in two things: first, that everyone should have the chance to reach for the stars, it doesn't matter if they touch them but they should have the opportunity to do so; and second that a society is judged by the way it cares for its elderly and most vulnerable members.

In both cases we have an outstanding record, but that doesn't mean that we can be complacent. We are facing up to huge challenges – particularly in the short term – around inflation and the cost of living crisis that will make things difficult for many of our residents. We will continue to work day and night to do what we can to offset these pressures. But that makes us even more determined not to be distracted from our long term commitment towards climate change and levelling up the county. Economic prosperity, educational opportunity, strong communities, efficient infrastructure, and good and joined-up public services remain the core ingredients needed to help our people and places thrive.

I said at the outset of this administration that I intend to be open and transparent about the progress we are making towards our ambitions. That is why, following the letter I published in January, I'm pleased today to be able to provide a more complete report on what we said we would

do, and what we have done. Our work over the past year to deliver our ambitions in Everyone's Essex has been a down-payment on creating the future we want for this county. We can't achieve all our ambitions in one year or maybe even four, but we have started the process of delivering real change. There is more to come. More hard work will be needed. No doubt there will be more challenges and maybe some setbacks. But we will remain alongside our residents every step of the way, building the county we want together, so that everyone in Essex has the chance to fulfil their dreams.

Councillor Kevin Bentley
Leader, Essex County Council



STRONG, INCLUSIVE AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

Aiming to build a stronger, inclusive and more sustainable economy for the county, we've been proud to have delivered a wide range of projects working with our partners including business. We have:



- Supported local businesses through the impacts of Covid restrictions, providing £14.6 million funding via our Business Adaptation Grant Scheme and £1m via the Government's Coronavirus Business Interruption Loan Scheme to more than 5,000 local businesses - safeguarding over 1500 local jobs and creating over 500 new local jobs
- Invested £900k in a service to support local business over the next 3 years, providing expert advice and guidance as well as help to access finance which will safeguard and create over 1000 local jobs
- Launched an Economic Growth Fund of £100m for investments that will deliver both commercial returns and economic growth for Essex, creating 1500 new jobs and bringing forward land to develop circa 1000 new homes
- Committed £10m to support economic growth and the creation of new jobs for future years - supporting skills and training for residents, regeneration of our most deprived places,

support for high streets and businesses, generation of new employment spaces and jobs

- Launched our Levelling Up programme in four locations across the county (with three more to follow) and committed investment in programmes for priority areas - including £2m in affordable business units and market space in Jaywick; a training skills programme for Electric Vehicles in Harlow; a new digital hub in Clacton; a £500k community fund; social supermarkets; a community hub; literacy corners in our libraries and a new employers hub in Basildon

**INVESTED £900K
IN A SERVICE TO
SUPPORT LOCAL
BUSINESS
OVER THE NEXT
3 YEARS**

Our 4-year commitments to build an economy that works for local residents:



Good Jobs



Infrastructure



**Future growth
and investment**



Green growth



**Levelling up
the economy**

SECURED £20.5M OF EXTERNAL INVESTMENT TO BRING SUPERFAST BROADBAND TO OVER 146,000 MORE PREMISES

- Established a £1million Arts & Culture Fund to encourage all forms of artistic and cultural activity – with nearly 200 applications received to date
- With our partners, we have secured substantial sums of government investment in Essex: £120m to fund long term regeneration projects in Colchester, Harlow, Tendring, Braintree and Basildon; and an additional £4.35m for community renewal programmes in Tendring and Harlow
- Supported recovery of Essex's vital tourism industry by investing £750k in marketing campaigns that have generated additional business worth over £5m to the local economy
- Secured £20.5m of external investment to bring SuperFast Broadband to over 146,000 more premises, including 3700 homes that would have been excluded without our intervention
- Helped Essex residents into work: over 100,000 Essex residents have used a new website that provides access to local job vacancies, careers and training programmes; we have created over 600 new Kickstart roles for local unemployed young people; and we have supported 351 new apprenticeships
- In the last 12 months, Adult Community Learning have delivered training to 3,357 local residents to gain the new qualifications that will help them to get good jobs; we have launched the Nightingale Bursary Scheme which has supported over 140 Health & Care sector employees to access higher

Our 4-year commitments to build an economy that works for local residents:



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level qualifications; and through the COVID Recovery Academy, 200 recently unemployed adults are being trained for jobs in key sectors

- Launched a new social value campaign aimed at our £1billion supplier base in Essex, designed to amplify the money we spend in the county to deliver wider employment, social and environmental benefits for our residents
- Delivered the redevelopment of Junction 7A of the M11 that will improve connections for Harlow and beyond, and approved the new roundabout design for the Army and Navy Roundabout to ease congestion in Chelmsford and along the A12
- Completed a roads maintenance programme to repair over 1 million square metres of roads and 40,000 square metres of footpaths and cycleways

- Held the first ever Essex High Streets' summit and provided ongoing support for our districts and boroughs to mount their own summits
- Delivered 48 new long term homes for people sleeping rough with £450k funding secured from central government

**SUPPORTED ESSEX'S
VITAL TOURISM
INDUSTRY BY
INVESTING £750K IN
MARKETING CAMPAIGNS
THAT HAVE GENERATED
ADDITIONAL BUSINESS
WORTH OVER £5M TO
THE LOCAL ECONOMY**

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**Levelling up
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HIGH QUALITY ENVIRONMENT

Achieving our long-term goal of becoming a net-zero council and county is a key priority, as well tackling the environmental challenges our residents are facing today. We've made great progress in the past year. We have:



- Supported the ongoing work of the Essex Climate Action Commission which published the 'Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral' report on how everyone can help make the county carbon neutral by 2050. In response we've established a £200million climate action plan to deliver on the recommendations made by the Commission
- Launched a new £500,000 Climate Action Challenge Fund to support community action on climate, offering grants of up to £20,000 to support voluntary and community projects tackling climate change in the county – with over £100,000 already awarded
- Installed more than 27,000 LED streetlights through year 1 of a 3 year programme to replace street lighting across Essex
- Undertaken a pilot programme to expand three secondary schools using construction methods designed to deliver net-zero, future-proofed, inclusive school buildings. We've also helped install roof mounted solar panels at 29 schools across the county
- Enabled over 350,000 e-scooter journeys as part of our Department for Transport funded pilot
- Campaigned to promote Sustainable Warmth funding for energy efficiency improvements which has seen 82 Essex homes benefit from £800k to date – with over £20m funding still available
- Developed three climate action advice packs, for residents, schools, and businesses to provide guidance on what they can do to help the county become net zero by 2050
- Successfully launched DigiGo, the brand new, on-demand minibus service which is one of the first of its kind in the country. Using 6 fully electric and disability-friendly vehicles, the service

**WE'VE ENABLED
OVER 350,000
E-SCOOTER
JOURNEYS**

Our 4-year commitments to ensuring that Essex has a high-quality environment today and for our children and grandchildren to enjoy:



Net zero



**Transport and
built environment**



**Minimise
waste**



**Green
Communities**



**Levelling up the
environment**

will cater to students, families, the elderly, and people travelling to work providing flexible and environmentally-friendly transport for people who do not live close to main public transport routes

- Delivered a series of events to promote Essex's climate achievements such as the Electric Road to COP26 and Carbon Battle Bus event and a Climate Action Conference
- Joined the East of England Plastics Coalition to add our weight to addressing the challenge of plastic waste and pollution
- Re-opened all Essex Outdoors centres for schools and groups to benefit from outdoor education, alongside our new Country Parks Outdoor Education Programme to expand and enhance the forest school and outdoor education provision across our country parks to connect young people with nature
- Commenced construction of the West Mersea temporary flood defence barrier scheme

- Completed work on a sustainable drainage and surface water flooding alleviation scheme on Canvey Island
- Launched the Walking Strategy to get more of us walking on our network of footways and paths in our rural areas, towns, cities, and neighbourhoods to reduce congestion, air pollution and increase levels of activity
- Worked with groups across five towns (Braintree, Brentwood, Chelmsford, Colchester, and Basildon) to deliver local walking and cycling plans (LCWIPs) supported by investment of more than £7.3 million from the Department for Transport
- Worked with bus operators across Essex to produce our Bus Service Improvement Plan to improve public transport accessibility and services to our residents
- Launched the Travel Essex App to make it easier for residents to plan their journeys on public transport

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**Transport and
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**Levelling up the
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HEALTH, WELLBEING, AND INDEPENDENCE FOR ALL AGES

Looking after the most vulnerable in society is one of the most important things we do as a council. Over the last year we've been working hard to deliver the right care, and wellbeing support to everyone who needs it – as well as helping everyone in Essex lead healthier lives. We have:



- Launched the Active Essex “Find your Active” campaign supported by a £1.25 million fund to enable hundreds of local clubs and organisations to take part in the campaign to provide activities for local people
- Launched the Active Essex “Fit for the Future” Strategy aimed at levelling up the playing field across Essex by supporting those who are already active and tackling head on the inequalities that currently prevent others from accessing the life changing impact of an active lifestyle
- Launched Essex Pedal Power, a £2.7 million community-based project being piloted in Clacton and Jaywick Sands. The scheme is the first of its kind in Essex and will provide more than 1,500 local residents with a free quality bike to get them more active and travel for work, school, college, shopping, and leisure
- Launched the new Essex Care Technology Service to support people with care needs access and use the latest technology to help them to live as independently as possible and improve their quality of life, already benefiting over 3,200 residents
- Worked with the NHS to implement a shared care record, enabling health and care professionals to take faster and more informed decisions and save people the need to repeat basic information to health and care organisations

**WE LAUNCHED
A £2.7 MILLION
SCHEME PROVIDING
1,500 LOCAL
RESIDENTS
WITH A FREE
QUALITY BIKE**

Our 4-year commitments to ensure the best quality health, care, and wellbeing for all the parts of our population:



**Healthy
lifestyles**



**Promoting
independence**



**Place-based
working**



Carers



**Levelling
up health**

WE HELPED 2,500 OLDER PEOPLE TO ENJOY MORE INDEPENDENT LIFE OUTCOMES AND HELPED AVOID 2,000 HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS

- Opened the Community Initiatives Fund 2021 for applications for individuals, groups, and voluntary organisations to apply for grant funding of up to £10,000 for projects that benefit their local community and the 2022 fund will be opening soon
- Completed implementation of the 'Connect' programme, working with the NHS to transform outcomes for older people, helping 2,500 older people to enjoy more independent life outcomes and helping to avoid 2,000 hospital admissions
- Launched a new model of care and life coaching through micro-community enterprises
- In collaboration with the NHS and the Digital Innovation Zone (DIZ), we have upgraded the connections of 51 GP surgeries in West Essex (and 26 in Herts) to ultrafast broadband, which will enable 300,000 (Essex) patients to access improved digital health care services

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**Healthy
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**Place-based
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Carers



**Levelling
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A GOOD PLACE FOR OUR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES TO GROW

Ensuring that the children and families of Essex are supported to achieve their potential is a crucial priority for the Council. It has been particularly important to support children and families through the pandemic and to address its impacts. We have:



- Announced a £1million investment in reading through the Essex Education Task Force, to support children and young people affected by the loss of learning and missed opportunities during the Covid-19 pandemic. This investment is targeted at the Essex Year of Reading 2022 which launched in February and is already building real enthusiasm
- Published our 10 year plan to deliver 8,000 new primary school places and 5,600 secondary school places, including the first 3 new net-zero carbon schools
- Delivered school improvement with 89.5% of schools across Essex judged to be good or outstanding by March 2022
- Trained over 360 Disadvantage Champions across Essex schools who will support the delivery of the Essex Disadvantage Strategy, aimed to raise educational outcomes for pupils
- Launched a Family Friendly Employers Charter which sets out a series of principles on how employers can help parents and carers manage their work and caring commitments – and to date 15 firms employing over 37,000 employees have signed the charter
- Started a new holiday outdoor education programme working with the Essex Boys and Girls Club, commissioned through the Education Recovery Taskforce
- Established a Safety Advisory Group for women’s safety in Essex, which is undertaking research into local needs and issues, which will inform recommendations on changes to help make Essex a safer place
- Agreed new investment to provide additional support for children and young people who are victims of domestic abuse, which will be used alongside additional funding to help victims be able to lead lives free from the impacts of domestic abuse
- Organised the “It’s My Life Festival” for children and young people receiving services from our

Our 4-year commitments to boosting the safety and prosperity of local families:



Education outcomes



Family resilience and stability



Safety



Outcomes for vulnerable children



Levelling up outcomes for families

Children and Families service. This includes children in care, care leavers, children with disabilities, and unaccompanied young asylum seekers to meet new friends and enjoy a range of free fun, stimulating and creative activities

- Launched the Essex Early Years and Childcare Strategy 2022-2027, which sets out six key aims for achieving the best possible start in life for every child in Essex
- Invested in our libraries, with Shenfield Library being rebuilt to a high standard and Harlow preparing to reopen in July following refurbishment
- Entered into a strategic partnership with Barnardo's to help support our engagement with young people in the design of future residential care provision
- Successfully moved our Tendring Multi-Disciplinary Team pilot (MDT) into an extended phase of delivery, providing early intervention and wrap around support to over 190 vulnerable children and 75 families

- Developed a strategic approach to Anti-Racist Practice within Children's Social Work, including the appointment of a specialist SME to work with our teams to develop an Anti-Racist Practice Framework
- Hosted a national conference about children's social work during COVID and the learning for the future. This was funded by DfE as part of their Partners in Practice programme, involved 5 other local authorities, was joined by nearly 200 delegates to the conference
- Launched an Inclusion Framework pilot within Education to support a change of practice in settings, which will enhance and improve inclusion, whilst supporting schools and settings in early identification of need
- Delivered an Education pilot within Tendring schools, to enhance communication and language outcomes for our Children and Young People

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Education outcomes



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Outcomes for vulnerable children



Levelling up outcomes for families

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