

WE SAID, **WE DID**

Delivering for Essex

**EVERYONE'S
ESSEX**



INTRODUCTION

It's been a year since we launched Everyone's Essex, our ambitious strategy to level up the county, with four important aims:

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

Whilst maintaining the excellence of our service delivery, we have made a great start to delivering on our commitments to residents in Essex and I am proud of what we have accomplished so far.

We are actively addressing the long-term impacts of the pandemic through approaches such as the Essex Year of Reading to support impacted pupils with tailored resources and visits from famous authors. We have made great progress on our Levelling Up work – moving from strategy to delivery – with 23 new projects started in our most disadvantaged places. And we have continued to lead the way on our climate ambitions.

Our successes have been recognised on the national stage too. This year we won awards for our social work – winning both social worker of the year and social work employer of the year, for our communication campaigns, for our Kickstart youth employment scheme and for many other areas of business. Perhaps most pleasingly of all, our bold

leadership on environmental action meant we were the only county council awarded an 'A' rating by the Carbon Disclosure Project this year and one of only 122 councils in the world to reach that level.

We have continued to provide our services in an increasingly challenging and volatile economic context.

We have welcomed and supported an unprecedented number of refugees from Afghanistan, Ukraine and others seeking asylum. Still recovering from the Covid-19 pandemic, and as a result of the war in the Ukraine, record-high UK inflation has driven a big increase in the cost of living for our residents and has seriously impacted on local businesses and organisations. I am pleased that we were able to respond so quickly with a £50 million comprehensive support package.

**ONLY COUNTY COUNCIL
AWARDED AN 'A' RATING
BY THE CARBON
DISCLOSURE PROJECT**

This report highlights the progress we have made to building the county our residents want. Taking a moment to reflect on what we said, and what we did, I hope will inspire us to keep up the momentum into next year. There is no room for complacency as we accelerate our efforts to deliver Everyone's Essex.

Councillor Kevin Bentley
Leader, Essex County Council



A STRONG, INCLUSIVE, AND SUSTAINABLE ECONOMY

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



- launched a new network to support female entrepreneurs: Ambitious Women in Essex
- secured investment in Tendring and Harlow for skills, local business, and community groups to support people into employment from the national Community Renewal Fund
- published our Digital Connectivity Strategy to drive the further expansion of digital infrastructure and wider adoption of digital technologies and completed the next phases of the Superfast Broadband rollout connecting 12,000 homes and businesses
- launched the Sector Development Strategy, supported by District and Borough councils, universities, and business groups to unlock growth in five sectors
- secured £7.9 million through the national Multiply programme to support thousands of residents to improve numeracy skills and gain a qualification
- launched three free programmes with the North Essex Economic Board to give Essex residents skills training to help them into jobs
- safeguarded and created more than 650 jobs through our 'Backing Essex Business' service and supported businesses to access more than £1.6 million of investment
- published the Green Skills Infrastructure Review in response to the Essex Climate Action Commission to set out what green skills residents will need to meet business demand
- partnered with the Retrofit Academy to identify demand for and help residents to access new retrofit jobs

**SECURED £7.9M
TO SUPPORT
THOUSANDS OF
RESIDENTS TO
IMPROVE NUMERACY
SKILLS AND GAIN A
QUALIFICATION**

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**

LAUNCHED A NEW ARTS AND CULTURAL FUND WHICH ALLOCATED £500,000 TO 47 ARTISTS AND CULTURAL ORGANISATIONS

- invested £100,000 in the Electric Vehicle Centre at Harlow College, where 50 Automotive Technicians will gain professional qualifications in electric vehicle repair and maintenance, and community learning workshops will provide 100 electric vehicle owners opportunities to understand more about their vehicle including safety awareness
- doubled the number of employers signed up to the Essex Family-friendly Employers Charter - promoting flexible, family-friendly working arrangements - to over 30 employers covering over 41,000 employees
- approved the Essex Renewal Fund, which will support our commitment to good jobs, future growth and investment, green growth and levelling up the economy. Over the next 20 years, the fund aims to invest over £100m, supporting 1,500 jobs and bringing to market enough land to deliver 1,000 new homes
- delivered the Essex Summer of Culture which brought together projects, programmes, and activities from across the county for the benefit of residents and amplified the value of the creative sector
- launched a new Arts and Cultural Fund which allocated £500,000 to 47 artists and cultural organisations to re-invigorate the creative and cultural sector post-pandemic
- retained Arts Council England National Portfolio Status for Firstsite, Essex Cultural Diversity Project, and The Mercury Theatre with an additional £1 million to promote diversity and inclusion

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**

- succeeded in a joint bid for over £1 million from the UK Creative Growth Fund to support emerging creative businesses in the South East
- established a new dedicated Film Office to represent and market Essex as a film-friendly location and support interested production teams to work here
- through Essex Housing we have:
 - » invested towards the delivery of a five-year programme of house building that will deliver over 1,000 homes and community assets
 - » invested to replace poor condition temporary accommodation with new permanent buildings and deliver carbon neutral and energy efficient buildings
 - » progressed construction works for four schemes that will deliver a renewed community asset, 117 private sale units and 16 units for either affordable or specialist uses
 - » provided a temporary library at Bishops Hill to facilitate construction work starting at the new Shenfield Library together with nine new homes
 - » designed, consulted on and submitted a planning application for a new library and community hub alongside 38 new homes at Loughton Library
 - » got approval of a masterplan for the former St Peters College site in Chelmsford for over 200 private, affordable and specialist homes
 - » secured £3.4 million of external capital funding to address abnormal costs on four schemes across Essex for the Greater Essex One Public Estate partnership
 - » started work at the former Shernbroke Hostel in Waltham Abbey to create 26 homes, including nine homes for adults with disabilities and one carers unit
 - » been shortlisted for two categories at the Inside Housing Development Awards 2022: Best Development Team and Best Partnership (Essex County Hospital site)

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**

- agreed a new property strategy and committed to review our property assets to ensure they can continue to support our services and enable growth for residents, businesses and visitors
- completed an option agreement with Countryside Homes which could see future provision of over 1000 new homes, extra care housing, community and business space in South Woodham Ferrers
- completed Junction 7a of the M11 motorway ahead of schedule in June, providing significant congestion relief on north-south links through Harlow and opening up housing and business development opportunities
- begun trialling a new strengthening compound added to traditional road surfacing material on public highways which could increase the lifespan of roads by up to double, greatly reducing future maintenance - and the associated traffic delays - as well as halving the carbon footprint associated with such work
- revised the concessionary bus fare scheme and launched a new TravelEssex identity to unify the bus network in Essex, help the transport network build back from the pandemic and encourage people to swap from car to bus
- launched our Safer, Greener, Healthier campaign which promotes the money-saving benefits of sustainable travel

**COMPLETED
JUNCTION 7A OF
THE M11 MOTORWAY
AHEAD OF SCHEDULE,
PROVIDING
SIGNIFICANT
CONGESTION RELIEF**

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



Good Jobs



Infrastructure



**Future growth
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Green growth



**Levelling up
the economy**

HIGH QUALITY ENVIRONMENT

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



- applied for funding from Government's Countryside Stewardship scheme to help maintain a high standard of green space in our country parks and provide the best environment for wildlife
- maintained green flag award status across seven country parks welcoming one million visitors during the year
- supported the physical and mental wellbeing of 130,000 school children and young people at Essex Outdoors sites where they learned a range of skills through outdoor pursuits
- hosted over 20 events, including Love Your Library/Climate Day, to share with residents upcoming projects, climate action already taking place in the county and available funding
- ran a series of bi-monthly webinars for Essex Association of Local Councils members on themes including energy, land use, green infrastructure and community engagement
- delivered a bespoke carbon zero workshop to give members of the Rural Community Council for Essex hints and tips on reducing energy usage, protecting valuable natural resources, like water, and saving money
- awarded over £300,000 from the Climate Action Challenge Fund to more than 30 local organisations and schools taking action on key climate change issues
- composed an anthem for climate action, titled Restoration, with Chester Tribble, performed live at Saffron Hall at the Essex Youth Orchestra and Essex Young People's Orchestra Summer Concert

MAINTAINED GREEN FLAG AWARD STATUS ACROSS SEVEN COUNTRY PARKS

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**

SECURED A 100% RENEWABLE ELECTRICITY SUPPLY FOR SIX YEARS

- received an A-rating from the Carbon Disclosure Project for action on climate change for our climate adaptation plan (1 of only 122 councils in the world to reach this level) and published climate action plan
- launched our first Annual Climate Action Report in November 2022 which tracks our progress against our aim to achieve net zero carbon emissions by 2050
- agreed to join UK100 and to sign up to its net zero pledges
- demonstrated commitment to our net zero targets in our procurement function by:
 - » developing a climate action through procurement action plan
 - » reviewing the Procurement Policy and looking for opportunities to include climate measures and standards, including best practice of total cost of ownership for climate decisions
 - » educating the supply chain on what good climate practice looks like for ECC suppliers
- offered carbon literacy training to all employees to increase their knowledge of climate change and encourage them to take action both at work and home
- completed several retrofit projects on the ECC estate to install Air Source Heat Pumps, large solar panel arrays and LED lighting systems at the Essex Records Office, Witham Adult Community Learning centre and Goodman House
- procured new six-year energy supply contract for ECC, securing 100% renewable electricity supply
- led an oversubscribed solar panel purchasing scheme for Essex residents, securing a significant discount on solar panels and storage from a reliable supplier

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**Green
Communities**



**Levelling up the
environment**

- supported a network of community energy social enterprises to set up an Essex Energy Community Interest Company, connecting 20 community and parish-led networks of local energy groups
- won £200,000 from the Homes Decarbonisation Skills Training competition to fund retrofit skills training in levelling up areas
- secured £2.5 million for energy efficiency and retrofit measures for low-income households in social housing as part of the Social Housing Decarbonisation Fund
- secured £17.2 million jointly with partners to provide fuel-poor households with grant funding of up to £10,000 to improve energy efficiency and heating systems in their homes, administered by the South East energy hub
- worked with CAE and Cadent to secure £125,000 from the gas network provider to fund advice and support to vulnerable residents
- carried out a renewable energy resource assessment and developed a pipeline of feasibility studies for local renewable energy schemes working with local community groups and parishes
- launched the Essex Local Nature Partnership (LNP) and quickly established four strategic targets and working groups
- published Essex Green Infrastructure Standards to ensure the Green Infrastructure Strategy is delivered by Essex Planners
- planted 110,000 trees with Essex Forest Initiative, exceeding a target of 75,000, to achieve a total of 250,000 trees planted in three years

**PLANTED A TOTAL OF
250,000 TREES
OVER THREE YEARS
WITH ESSEX FOREST
INITIATIVE**

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**Transport and
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**Minimise
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**Green
Communities**



**Levelling up the
environment**

- reviewed 850 planning applications and lowered the flood risk on 62,500 properties
- delivered eight major Capital Flood Programme schemes which will protect 215 properties
- supported a new North Essex Farming Cluster which will support information sharing across the farming community, helping farmers move to more sustainable farming methods and protect sustainable agriculture
- ensured a cost-effective and fit-for-purpose recycling centre network by bringing the service in-house and reduced congestion and queuing at larger centres with a new booking system
- procured new medium-term contracts for residents' kerbside-collected food and green waste to continue managing the service in a cost-effective and environmentally sustainable way
- led a pan-Europe project to provide training, support and guidance for individuals, business, and public bodies to reduce waste and improve sustainability
- created a Circular Economy Directory listing businesses and charities actively working to accelerate a circular economy
- won two national awards for best communications campaign and team of the year for the 'Love your Period' campaign, supporting use of sustainable period products
- provided micro grants to over 40 organisations through our Love Essex programme to deliver small scale grassroot projects in local communities to enable positive action to reduce waste and its impacts

DELIVERED **8 FLOOD SCHEMES** **WHICH WILL** **PROTECT** **215 PROPERTIES**

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**Transport and
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Communities**



**Levelling up the
environment**

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:



- enhanced the Essex Wellbeing Service, an alliance of partners working together to deliver a range of health and wellbeing provision. This includes not only lifestyle services but community support to help people make positive social connections, addressing loneliness and social isolation
- provided free workplace health and wellbeing support for businesses, supporting over 500 organisations and training more than 1000 mental health first aiders
- responded to nine avian influenza outbreaks, an unprecedented number, and our methodology has now been adopted as national best practice
- received 3,676 responses to our 2022 Young People's Relationships and Sex Education Survey with work now underway to ensure that the voice of the young people captured through the survey is used to develop the services and support available to them
- participated in independent research commissioned by DfE comparing five Local

Authorities, including Essex, which had integrated services towards improving children's wellbeing outcomes. Essex came out top, described as 'having a mature hub model, embedded measurement outcomes framework, shared case management data' and 'taking a data-driven approach to identifying needs and measuring outcomes at the individual, area and systems levels'

- put Essex residents at the heart of making decisions about what to fund to support better outcomes for those suffering from drug and alcohol problems by giving them greater control of all the necessary resources through the creation of an independent charity, The Essex Recovery Foundation
- begun testing and rolling out specialist services to support Essex residents struggling with multiple and complex needs from homelessness, mental health, drugs and alcohol to achieve their goals and improve their lives

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**

- launched a £50 million Cost-of-Living Support for Households and Communities' Plan, a six-point plan focused on: paying for essentials, keeping warm, eating well, money management, information, advice and guidance and well-being. This includes:
 - » An additional £9.4 million additional support going into the Household Support Fund (HSF) to focus on essential costs and support with energy hikes for our most vulnerable residents. This is in addition to the £9.4 million that was distributed earlier this year from the HSF
 - » Launch of the new Community Winter Warmth and Welcome Programme – a new programme supporting community organisations, partners, and our own services to provide additional activity in local places so that people can keep warm whilst doing something useful. This includes a new £100,000 grant scheme to be made available to community groups to come forward with ideas which we will grant fund up to £1000
- » Information, Advice and Guidance: funding Citizens' Advice and other support services, providing a central signposting resource with advice and guidance for residents, and collaborating with HSBC to provide free webinars and financial health checks
- managed high and changing patterns of demand, including 14,719 hospital discharges and four residential care home and two nursing home closures which affected 136 people, 31 of those funded by ECC (as of November 2022)
- established three new integrated care partnerships with the NHS, local government, and voluntary sector partners which will lead work to improve health outcomes and reduce health inequalities

LAUNCHED A £50M COST-OF-LIVING SUPPORT PLAN FOR HOUSEHOLDS AND COMMUNITIES

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



**Healthy
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working**



Carers



**Levelling
up health**

- expanded the successful Nightingale Care Bursary, enabling it to support hundreds more people from low-income backgrounds over the next three years. The scheme has already funded 195 people to access care training and qualifications and the new expanded scheme will support over 400 more
- co-designed and begun implementing a new countywide mental health supported housing model which will enable people with mental health needs in Essex to live more independently and be more involved in their communities
- supported people with learning disabilities and autism through Our Meaningful Lives Matter programme with excellent results:
 - » our inclusive employment service has achieved 107 job outcomes this year
 - » MLM has launched 'Bfriends' - a peer support and mentoring service aimed at connecting people to their communities
 - » early intervention and prevention work has resulted in a 24% increase in the happiness index of the people supported
- continued to grow the care technology service, which is now supporting over 4,700 people to live more independently
- won the national Municipal Journal award for health and care integration for the Connect programme, recognising the great work of ECC and NHS partners to improve outcomes for around 8,000 older people and introduce new ways of working across Greater Essex
- supported the adult social care workforce by embedding a new approach to wellbeing and introducing a range of flexible work patterns which has reduced staff turnover rates
- one of our social workers won the Social Worker of the Year award and Adult Social Care won the Social Work Employer of the Year award

**OUR CARE TECHNOLOGY
SERVICE SUPPORTS OVER
4,700 PEOPLE TO LIVE
MORE INDEPENDENTLY**

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**

- undertaken three equality, diversity and inclusion Quests within our workforce (race, disability, LGBTQIA+) and shared our findings and methodology with local and national partners
- maintained our Lifeboat crew of staff to respond to emergency situations in the care market who have been deployed on 15 occasions to support the safety of individuals
- supported development of 100 Community Micro Enterprises – small, local, niche providers of care and support providing personal, flexible and culturally-sensitive services to Essex residents
- distributed over 500 of 3100 free bikes in deprived areas through our flagship programme, Essex Pedal Power, to increase physical activity levels and provide opportunities for Active Travel
- managed the relationship with London Marathon Events to deliver Ride London Essex in May, a cycling festival combining 3 different events: a 100-mile charity ride, 3 elite women rides and a free cycles community ride
- engaged with local stakeholders, businesses and communities to help them maximise the benefits and reduce any adverse impacts of Ride London Essex
- received £790,000 from London Marathon Charitable Trust to invest in Essex following the success of Ride London Essex, to date we have awarded 94 small grants to the value of £155,060 projected to impact 3,256 residents to help lead active and healthy lives
- helped children and families from 31 schools to overcome barriers to travel actively to school through our £100,000 Essex School Active Travel Grant
- supported levelling up with:
 - » Beat the Street - a game encouraging more physical activity to help address health inequalities, promote active travel, and improve mental wellbeing. 3614 children and adults took part covering 38,019 miles over a six-week period

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**

- » encouraging active, healthy and greener communities in Lee Chapel, Laindon and Five Links
- » a disability cycling project for Tendring which saw over 7,500 people with disabilities and long-term health conditions start cycling regularly and independently with a free bike of their own
- » Ready 4 School in Canvey Island - new pre-school physical literacy breakfast clubs for 300 of the most disadvantaged children and their families
- » Flying Start and Beyond - a programme for early years foundation stage and key stage one children to enable them to experience high quality, active story-based physical literacy sessions
- embedded our Find Your Active behaviour change campaign which has supported residents' health and wellbeing, reduced social isolation through new friendships and continued to strengthen communities
- supported 39 organisations to receive funding from the Sport England Together Fund for physical activity delivery projects and for bespoke resilience-building support programmes
- provided 41,063 free places on our holiday activity and food programme across 160 clubs during the Easter school holidays, including 23 SEND clubs and 19 wellbeing hubs
- delivered over 100,000 places across 175 clubs in the summer school holidays, in collaboration with over 100 partners, which engaged and supported 12,000 young people

**DELIVERED OVER
100,000 PLACES
ACROSS 175 CLUBS
IN THE SUMMER
SCHOOL HOLIDAYS**

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**

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:



- delivered our National Lottery Heritage Fund project, 'Communicating Connections: sharing the heritage of the Marconi Company's wireless world', which included training of volunteers, recording and preserving oral history interviews, exhibitions, training young people to create podcasts, development of online heritage walking trails and digitisation of around 14,000 historic photographs
- built City of Sanctuary status across Essex through our libraries to coordinate, support and grow a network of welcome which encourages inclusivity, solidarity and compassion for people from all backgrounds
- turned libraries into safe spaces for those suffering from domestic abuse and became J9 certified - the J9 Domestic Abuse Initiative aims to raise awareness of domestic abuse and assist survivors to access support safely by training professionals and members of the community to recognise domestic abuse and respond to survivors
- trained library staff to become ReadEasy volunteers and support adults to learn to read
- delivered the Essex Year of Reading to support pupils whose education has been affected by Covid-19 and who are concerned about the impact of the pandemic on their future. This included:
 - » A library card for every child
 - » Extensive programme of teacher professional development
 - » Large range of author visits including Dermot O'leary, Frank Cottrell-Boyce, and Michael Rosen
 - » Parent ambassadors in conjunction with ACL
 - » Memory cafes alongside library children's events
 - » Year of Reading app including stories, teaching materials and signposts to other resources
 - » Intergenerational poetry publication

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

- completed St Luke's Park Primary School, a new 210 place primary school and 56 place early years provision, in Runwell
- reused two properties in Essex to provide new regulated accommodation for looked after children to reduce out-of-county placements in unregulated accommodation
- delivered targeted opportunities for young people with a range of different sports and activities in the summer with Essex School Games:
 - » 27 inter-school events
 - » a Birmingham Commonwealth Games 2022 festival, with over 633 pupils from 38 schools taking part in 'develop', 'participate' and 'competitive' sport and physical activity
- encouraged 361 schools to sign up to The Daily Mile - for 15 minutes every day, children run or jog at their own pace with their classmates, making them fitter, healthier and more able to concentrate in class
- refurbished and reopened Harlow Library in June, now home to ACL Harlow, which has seen footfall and membership increase as visitors enjoy new facilities, including a modern, colourful children's library complete with sensory equipment, study space, a café and new events space
- recruited and trained two new members of staff to run the Home Office Visa Application checking service at Chelmsford Library
- launched Warm Welcomes in all libraries in November, offering hot drinks during activities and 23 volunteers to support and signpost customers in need of advice

COMPLETED A NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL WITH 210 PLACES AND REFURBISHED AND REOPENED HARLOW LIBRARY

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**

- worked with Essex Fire and Rescue Service to hold five Firebreak sessions with young people, enabling them to explore the consequences of low-level behaviours which may lead to violence, misogyny and harm towards women and girls, whilst also picking up new skills centred around operational firefighting drills
- collaborated with the Digital Essex Team on Essex Unlocked, a project working with ex-offenders, supporting them with literacy, digital literacy and community integration
- enabled Openreach to work with Clacton Coastal Academy and deliver a STEM event for their students, supporting Openreach to engage with a local community on their work in connectivity
- reset our 10-year Foster Care Strategy, post-Covid, to increase the number of high-quality carers in Essex and generate savings for the authority from higher costs in the independent sector
- launched the Co-Parenting Strategy developing a new approach to how we corporate parent Children in Care in Essex. As part of this all members within the county of Essex signed a Corporate Parenting Pledge to show their support to the children that we care for
- started to deliver our Short Breaks Commissioning Strategy including developing a blended approach to overnight short breaks
- launched a project in Tendring supporting families on the edge of care (as around 30% of children in care are from Tendring) and early results of this pilot have shown the scheme has been very successful
- launched our Early Years and Childcare Strategy in February and providers and partners in Essex signed the Early Years Charter showing that as a sector we have high aspirations for children and that we are listening and working closely with parents and carers

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

RECEIVED FUNDING TO CONTINUE OUR SUCCESSFUL WORK ON REDUCING PARENTAL CONFLICT

- improved our offer for children with special education needs and disabilities to address issues identified in our 2019 inspection by establishing a SEND Partnership Board to be accountable for the SEND Improvement Programme, a new five-year Local Area SEND Strategy and launching our refreshed Local Offer
- improved our offer to care leavers, focusing on supporting more care leavers to stay in education or training or to find fulfilling employment opportunities, and on increasing the numbers of care leavers in suitable accommodation
- participated in a research project with the What Works Centre for Children's Social Care and the DfE, providing social work supervision to

Designated Safeguarding Leads in schools to identify and deliver earlier intervention to children and families

- launched a new All Age Carers Strategy which outlines how ECC and partners will support unpaid carers, including young carers. It recognises their valuable contribution and sets out commitments to better identify carers, ensure their rights are respected, and support them
- received funding from DWP to implement a two-year programme of activity to continue our successful work on reducing parental conflict, including recruiting new 'healthy relationships leads' to be embedded in the Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service
- progressed our Residential Strategy, including working with our strategic partners on the establishment of high-quality residential care
- begun a market engagement exercise to deliver placement sufficiency and set up a solo emergency bed provision to provide an alternative to unregulated provision for those with highly complex needs

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**

LEVELLING UP

We want all Essex residents to benefit from the opportunities and life chances our county has to offer. In the last year we have:



- identified both the key cohorts and areas that would most benefit from levelling up and made significant funding available, with investment of £10 million over the next four years to support economic growth and skills, as well as a separate £11 million Levelling Up reserve
- launched 23 projects so far, including:
 - » the creation of a £250,000 Community Challenge Fund
 - » two new community supermarkets
 - » expansion of the ActivATE holiday club, which over the last two years has provided over 500,000 free meals and supported over 30,000 young people, 30% of which are from low income working families or other vulnerable groups
- focused on literacy to expand Adult Community Learning hubs to areas without provision, such as Harwich and Canvey Island
- funded a food education programme for nearly 400 families, providing them with slow cookers, recipes and ingredients for low cost and nutritious family meals
- generated significant increases in people seeking qualifications through partnership with ACL with over 1000 signups
- donated over 4,100 devices to schools across Essex since 2020 to support the student population to continue learning online. A further 50 devices from our initial scheme were provided to post-16 looked after children to support them in entering further education in September

**THE ACTIVATE
HOLIDAY CLUB HAS
PROVIDED OVER
500,000 FREE MEALS
AND SUPPORTED OVER
30,000 YOUNG PEOPLE
DURING THE LAST
TWO YEARS**

This information is issued by:
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 [Essex_CC](#)

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The information contained in this document can be translated, and/or made available in alternative formats, on request.

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