

# Essex Climate Action Commission



**Powering positive change**

## Essex is going solar together



Essex County Council's solar panel group buying scheme "[Solar Together Essex](#)" launched on the 15th February.

The scheme helps buyers through the process of purchasing high quality solar panels, offering lower prices than the open market and pairing up residents with trusted suppliers. Solar Together Essex helps residents to save money on both installation and future energy bills. Battery storage is also

available under the scheme.

Our 2018 campaign resulted in 305 installations in Essex, with 1MW of extra solar capacity installed. These installations will deliver over 7,000 tonnes of carbon reduction over the lifetime of the systems installed. The 2021 campaign is funded by the EU project [Empower 2.0](#) (Interreg North Sea Region Programme). The aim of Empower is to accelerate the empowerment of local communities to become active energy market users.



## More residents are switching to green tariffs with the Essex Energy Switch



More than 8200 residents joined the [Essex Energy Switch](#) this winter - 58% more than previous campaigns. It means that more people in Essex will switch to 100% renewable electricity tariffs and save on average £230 on their energy bills.

Last year 1,644 switched and each household reduced their carbon footprint by an average of 1.16 tonnes CO2 per year. In total for the whole scheme this equates to 1,906 tonnes of CO2, which is equivalent to removing 1,059 cars from the road.

A successful auction was held on 9th February and residents started receiving their personal offers from the 22nd February. Residents can still join the scheme until the 23rd March.

## A chance to win an eco hamper

Courtesy of ECC's Environment and Climate Action Team, Essex residents are in with a chance of winning one of ten eco hampers, each filled with goodies to help reduce waste.

To be in the running to win a hamper, all residents need to do is complete a short survey providing their views - good or bad - on waste and recycling.

The survey can be found by [clicking here](#). Terms apply.



## Public hire e-scooters arrive in Colchester



Spin, the micromobility unit of Ford Motor Company, has [launched its public hire e-scooter trial](#) in Colchester – making it Spin's third location in the county.

Spin's Everyday Heroes programme will be available immediately for Colchester's NHS workers to benefit from free 30 minute e-scooter rides to get to work and home with a socially distanced means of transport as they tirelessly and courageously work on the frontline throughout the national lockdown.

The e-scooters are currently aimed at local residents needing to make essential trips, but once the lockdown lifts all residents will be welcome to enjoy this new means of transport.

Riding will cost 20p per minute with no "unlock" fee. Daily, weekly, and monthly passes will be also available to those who would like to ride regularly when government restrictions ease about essential travel.

For more information on where Colchester's e-scooters will be located and the operations area please [click here](#).



## Celebrating 10 years of busting waste in Essex

Essex County Council's award-winning WasteBusters volunteer scheme is celebrating ten years of helping Essex residents in 2021. Thanks to the hard work of committed volunteers, we have attended over 250 events, talks and workshops and spoken to over 20,000 residents to help them find ways to reduce waste and save money.



After a very quiet year due to the impact of Covid-19 on public events in Essex, the Love Essex team is updating the scheme to allow us to work with even more people and share our messages with new audiences. We will run a pilot of the updated scheme – now known as Love Essex Champions – in the spring and summer of 2021.

If you have any questions about this scheme please contact volunteer manager, [Carla Johnson](#).

## Love Essex, love cloth nappies



Cloth nappies provide a great alternative to disposable nappies and can offer great cost, health and environmental benefits. On average each baby in Essex will need one tonne of disposable nappies, or 25 - 30 cloth nappies.

By using cloth nappies you could also save up to £1000 per child. If you have more than one child, you can use the cloth nappies again and again.

Love Essex offer a [£30 refund](#) on the purchase of any cloth nappies; including new or pre-loved cloth nappies.

We are also looking at how we can expand this scheme to help support more parents. [Take part in our short survey](#) to tell us what you think.

## Try composting at home

Despite the recent cold weather, spring is not too far away. That's why it's a great time to think about composting at home.

[Watch the Love Essex video](#) on how to compost at home to turn your food and garden waste into quality soil improver for your garden.

Don't forget you can buy a [low-cost compost bin](#) today to get started. But be quick - after March, the prices may go up.



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## Our commissioners



This month, Commissioner and Councillor, Robert Mitchell was [interviewed](#) by the Essex is Green team about the launch of the county's Solar Together scheme to enable residents to bulk purchase solar panels and batteries for their homes. Taking part means residents can get solar installed for the best price possible. With Councillor Mitchell's experience of already having solar panels installed, he is a fantastic advocate for the scheme.

We are now reaching the end of our list of Commissioners who volunteered to be interviewed by the Essex is Green team. If you didn't volunteer to take part in our 'Getting to Know You' series first time round, please consider whether you would like to take part and if so, let us know by emailing us on [climate.commission@essex.gov.uk](mailto:climate.commission@essex.gov.uk).

## Communications update

After the launch of the [Green Homes Grant Local Authority Delivery Scheme](#) in January, much work has been done this month to promote the scheme. Various social media posts, press releases, newsletters and adverts have been sent out, leading to media coverage from a number of outlets including the [Daily Gazette](#) and [Essex Live](#). The benefits of the scheme were also mentioned in [ITV Anglia's](#) evening news story regarding fuel poverty on 24 February.



Aran Insulation, the contractor ECC is working with to carry out the energy efficiency improvements, has said that there has been an increase in interest for the scheme as a result of all the promotional activity.

Elsewhere, work has begun on the structure of the new Commission website, and planning for the event to mark the launch of the Final Report is now underway.

