

# ECC Report April 2016

---

## **The Safer Essex Roads Partnership funds new life-saving and enforcement vehicles**

The Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP) has funded the purchase of two new partnership vehicles. The Essex Air Ambulance received a new Rapid Response Vehicle (RRV) and Essex Police has received a new unmarked covert motorbike.

SERP has donated funds to allow the partners to continue delivering the best service possible to the people of Essex.

The Air Ambulance's Skoda Scout is a dedicated 4 x 4 vehicle which brings their fleet of RRVs to four, giving the life-saving Charity greater ability to reach more patients across Essex, whatever the weather or time of day. It also enables the Air Ambulance to mobilise extra teams should a major incident occur.

Essex Police has received another unmarked high powered motorcycle with the latest video recording technology. This will help combat unsafe riding and driving behaviours on Essex Roads. We have hidden the motorcycle in the picture above to keep the vehicle as covert as possible.

Adam Pipe, Casualty Reduction Manager for Essex Police said that this bike will allow Essex Police to detect and video incidents of dangerous driving and riding behaviour and will enhance the ability to detect offences such as the use of a mobile phone whilst driving. The on board video evidence also provides comprehensive footage of any offence thereby reducing potential court time.

The Safer Essex Roads Partnership (SERP) launched in September 2015 and aims to reduce the number of deaths and serious injuries on Essex roads to zero.

Partners include Essex Air Ambulance, Essex County Council, Essex Fire and Rescue Service, Essex Police, Highways England, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council, Thurrock Council, East of England Ambulance and NHS Trust and the Safer Roads Foundation.

The Chairman of SERP, Nicola Foster, was delighted to be able to provide these two vehicles to their partners to support its vision of having zero deaths or serious injuries on Essex roads. The lifesaving work of the Air Ambulance and the engagement and enforcement work of the Essex Police motorbike team will support the educational activities delivered by the partnership.

It has been a long standing priority for Essex County Council Highways to reduce accidents on all Essex roads and Cllr Eddie Johnson, Cabinet Member responsible

for Highways and Transport Delivery and chairman of the Safer Essex Roads board, said that this is a great example of different organisations in Essex working together.

To find out more go to: [www.saferessexroads.org](http://www.saferessexroads.org)

### **Essex top pictures are picked**

The Red Arrows at Clacton, the peace of Mersea Island, and a fire eater in Maldon are the subjects which won the top three prizes in the #InstaEssex photography competition, a countywide contest set up to encourage residents and visitors to take photos of what Essex Culture means to them.

There were a huge number of entries, whose quality and range were excellent, said Cllr John Spence, Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Finance, with responsibility for Heritage, Culture and the Arts, with the range of subjects being tremendous. All three winners demonstrated the rich diversity of culture which Essex has to offer and highlighted the very diverse geographical make-up of the County and its range of activities.

The finalists' panels will be up at Liverpool Street Station from Thursday, 24 March 2016 until the end of May and at branch line Stations from Saturday, 9 April.

The competition was organised by Essex County Council's Cultural team in partnership with Essex & South Suffolk Community Rail Partnership, Abellio Greater Anglia and Network Rail's London Liverpool Street Station. It was supported by Thurrock and Southend unitary authorities and the Essex Chronicle newspaper.

First prize winner was Chrissie Westgate, who won £1,000 with a photo of the Thames sailing barge 'Kitty' at the West Mersea Town Regatta. The judges decided to choose her image because they really appreciated the balanced composition, both horizontally with the line of boats and vertically with the reflection in the water. The image also illustrates a walk through history, from the old Thames Sailing Barge once common on the Essex coast, to the more modern fishing vessels.

Second prize (£500) went to Matthew Mallet who won £500 for his photograph, Fun in the Sun on Clacton Beach. He impressed the judges with the bright vivid colours of this piece and ability to catch the summer atmosphere at Clacton. At first glance it appears as if the Red Arrows might have been edited in, however, on closer inspection you can see sunbathers looking up to see what the roaring noise is and enjoy the display and colourful clouds.

and Third Prize (£250) went to David Dodd for his photograph of a fire eater at the Maldon Mud Race. The judges awarded this image third prize as they thought it was a striking image of a uniquely Essex event. It conveys the essence of needing to be in the right place at the right time to capture a fleeting moment. This fun event has been running for over 40 years and has become part of Maldon's heritage over time.

They were chosen from over 100 entries; the shortlisted 15 photographs went on public display on the 24 March at Liverpool Street Station.

For copies of the images of all 15 finalists please contact:

[debbie.nicholson@essex.gov.uk](mailto:debbie.nicholson@essex.gov.uk)

#InstaEssex

The #InstaEssex campaign gave people the opportunity to show what Essex culture means to them. They shared buildings and architecture, artwork and theatres, street art as well as local festivals and events. With diverse images from beautiful sunsets, locals at work to people enjoying themselves at music events, each celebrated the breadth of culture in Essex and within its communities.

### **Cowboy builder warning after Storm Katie**

On the back of the recent Storm Katie householders are being warned not to use cowboy builders or rogue traders to clear up damage from Storm Katie.

Essex County Council Trading Standards (ECCTS) issued the advice after high winds swept through the county on Easter Monday bringing down fences and trees and damaging rooves.

Legitimate builders, plumbers, carpenters and other craftsmen will be working at full stretch and Trading Standards is concerned that dishonest traders will take advantage of the situation to rip off vulnerable residents.

Traders who knock on your door or only leave you a mobile number may not have a permanent address or be contactable if problems arise.

Trading Standards advise people to speak to their insurance companies before engaging anyone to carry out repair work and to approach businesses approved by the insurers.

In the case of flood damage, electricity and gas companies may be able to make free inspections and advise on safety work.

ECCTS recommendation to all residents is always use one of our “Buy with Confidence” traders who have been audited and approved by Trading Standards, and they also advise to look out for vulnerable family members, friends and neighbours who can easily fall victim to rogue trader tactics.

You can find a Buy with Confidence trader or obtain advice and guidance by calling the Citizens Advice Consumer Helpline on 03454 04 05 06 or online at [www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk](http://www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk)

### **Anglia Route Study – on the right tracks**

ECC has welcomed the long awaited publication of Network Rail’s Anglia Route Study that will lead to improvements to rail journeys for passengers, businesses and commuters.

The Council has welcomed the fact that the study acknowledges the aspiration to improve journey times on the Great Eastern Main Line, improving services from Norwich, Ipswich, Colchester, Chelmsford and other towns into London and will work with Network Rail and the new train operator to ensure that Essex rail users benefit from these improvements.

The Council has also expressed disappointment that some schemes identified for delivery have slipped and will not now be delivered until later. It is particularly disappointing that the Bow Junction Remodelling scheme will not now be completed to coincide with the opening of Crossrail.

The provision of a passing loop north of Witham will improve journey times and add capacity on the Great Eastern Mainline, while at the same time options available at the new station, Beaulieu Park, will be discussed with Network Rail.

Journey times to Stansted airport only receiving a two minute improvement in journey times is another area of concern. The plans do not provide an adequate solution to the Airports Commission's recommendation for urgent action to improve rail services to Stansted in the short term, and they do not address the issues that passengers face now - day in, day out - in terms of journey times and reliability.

Cllr Rodney Bass, Cabinet Member for Infrastructure said that the Council has worked closely with Network Rail to identify improvements across the Anglia Route and look forward to ongoing collaboration to develop evidence bases for specific options for investment; this was endorsed by Cllr Kevin Bentley, Cabinet Member for Economic Growth who said that this study illustrates the importance of Essex to the

UK economy, and that the improvements specified will help boost economic growth. The planned improvements will reduce journey times and ease congestion across the network for all passengers.

**Essex supports Option C Route 3 Lower Thames Crossing to bring jobs, housing and economic growth**

ECC has re-affirmed its backing for a new crossing, linking Tilbury and Gravesend, following Highways England's Lower Thames Crossing consultation, which closes tonight (24 March 2016).

A unanimous decision was made at this week's Cabinet meeting to back a new Lower Thames Crossing at Location C with route option 3. This is supported by Kent County Council, Suffolk County Council and the vast majority of District Councils and MPs in both Essex and Kent.

Siting the crossing just east of Tilbury and Gravesend (Location C) would create an additional 25,000 new jobs and lead to the construction of an extra 21,000 new homes, unlocking significant economic growth and regeneration potential for the county and would also alleviate congestion at the existing Dartford Crossing.

Cllr Rodney Bass, Cabinet Member for Infrastructure said that it is important that we speak with one voice to ensure that this Lower Thames Crossing gets built reducing journey times and increasing resilience across the strategic and local route network. What is needed now is a swift decision from the Government so that these benefits can be achieved and misery for thousands of motorists and lorry drivers no longer occurs every time the wind blows or a lorry spills its load near the existing crossing.

The proposed Thames Crossing will also boost economic growth through the creation of additional jobs and homes.

ECC believes a number of wider network improvements must be delivered in conjunction with the Lower Thames Crossing to fully realise its benefits.

Improvements would be required at the following junctions:

- M25 J28 (A12 junction) – anticlockwise traffic from the Crossing accessing the A12 would be constrained by the need to navigate a complex, signalised roundabout
- A12/A130 (Fairglen and Howe Green junctions) would be likely to see increased traffic flow from a Lower Thames Crossing

The Lower Thames Crossing will become a nationally important, strategic road link connecting Essex to Kent, southern England and the Channel ports.

The study predicts very significant growth in demand for rail travel across Essex and Network Rail is being urged by the Council to fund the development of its proposals so that they are ready for construction before overcrowding affects confidence in the local economy.