

ECC Report September 2020

Play the Essex Lottery to support good causes recovering from lockdown

Play the Essex Lottery to support good causes across Essex facing financial hardship following the lockdown AND have a chance to win a weekly £25,000 jackpot.

The Essex Lottery is an online lottery created by Essex County Council to support local causes across the county.

Since the Essex Lottery launched in 2017 over £215,000 has been donated to good causes in the county. This is thanks to the thousands of players who buy a weekly £1 ticket – with 60p of every ticket they purchase going to good causes.

Many of the good causes supported by the Essex Lottery have done great work supporting communities during the lockdown, but at the same time are now struggling due to events being closed down by social distancing protocols.

Currently more than 260 charities and good causes are signed up to benefit from The Essex Lottery – supporting a diversity of causes across Essex from animal welfare, education and arts groups to organisations supporting children, disadvantaged groups and the elderly. Local good causes include community groups, sports clubs, brownies or scout's and school PTAs. Players are able to select the good causes they wish to support.

Now is the time to support these charities and good causes by buying tickets for the Essex Lottery. One such charity supported by the Essex Lottery is Essex Retired Police Dogs Fund.

Linda Belgrove, founder of Essex Retired Police Dogs Fund, said: "Regular funding streams are so important to us. The monies we receive from The Essex Lottery go directly towards vet and welfare costs of retired police dogs.

"Last year we paid out over £8,000. This year an emergency op for stomach blockage was £2,400; then there are the regular payments for debilitating arthritis. We are so grateful to be part of The Essex Lottery and how it helps our retired police dogs."

Causes which can be supported by playing the Essex Lottery include The East Anglian Railway Museum, South Essex Wildlife Hospital and Colchester Foodbank.

Prize draws take place every Saturday night when a 6-digit winning combination is picked. Prizes will be given to players with tickets that match the first or last 2-6 numbers from the winning combination. Match all 6 and you win the JACKPOT, won for the first time in January 2019.

Every week there are prizes to be won of free tickets and cash prizes of £25, £250, £2,000 and £25,000 - to players whose numbers match the winning number combination.

To find out more visit: essexlottery.co.uk or call the Essex Lottery support team on 0300 302 32 32

Notes: A total of 20p from each £1 ticket goes to the prize, with 60p going towards funding good causes (nominated causes receive 50p from each £1 ticket brought via their page on the lottery with a further 10p funding local good causes and initiatives via the Central Fund). The remaining 20p is used to administrate the lottery.

Secondary School Admissions Round Open

As schools across Essex start their autumn term, parents of Year 6 pupils are being reminded that it will soon be time to apply for their child's September 2021 secondary school place.

Parents and carers can now apply online for their child's Year 7 secondary school place. Applications must be made by the national closing date of 31 October 2020.

Applications can be made at www.essex.gov.uk/admissions with the website also holding information on different schools and their admissions criteria.

Cllr Ray Gooding, Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Education, said: "I strongly urge all parents of year 7 students to correctly complete their child's secondary school place application by the national closing date of 31st October 2020.

"This has been an unprecedented year, presenting challenges to education which have been admirably met with courage, hard work and resilience.

"Despite these challenges we remain committed to maintaining our excellent record of securing first choice places for year 7 pupils in Essex.

"Last year, Essex County Council investment in school places meant that 85.45 per cent of Essex pupils were offered their first preference of school.

"For such a large county that is an impressive level, we've held it at that level for several years now and we want to provide a similar excellent service next year.

“But we can only do this if parents complete their child’s Year 7 secondary school place application correctly, by the national closing date of 31st October 2020. Please help us and get those applications in.”

The 31st October deadline for applications is a national deadline and applications made after this are considered once all on-time applications have been determined. Applying late could reduce the chance of a child being offered a place at their preferred school.

Parents are advised to carefully consider each school’s admissions criteria, consider how their child will get to and from school, and use all six preferences on their application www.essex.gov.uk/admissions

A120 Upgrade Drives Forward

Campaigners have applauded news that Highways England is to progress a major road scheme in Essex.

They say the upgrade of the A120, from Braintree to the A12, to a dual carriageway will deliver a valuable boost to the county economy, benefiting businesses, creating jobs and unlocking growth in the area.

Cllr Kevin Bentley, Deputy Leader of Essex County Council and Cabinet Member for Infrastructure, said it remained crucial that the A120 was upgraded as quickly as possible.

He said: “The A120 is the only single-carriageway road in the UK with a major international airport, Stansted, at one end and a major international seaport, Harwich, at the other.

“It is, therefore, in urgent need of an upgrade, a project that will add £2.2 billion in gross value to the local economy through new jobs, business and housing while dramatically improving road safety.

“I am, therefore delighted to see Highways England’s commitment to including the road in their programme.”

Together with Witham MP, Priti Patel, Cllr Bentley headed the campaign to secure funding for the road. This was supported by local businesses with more than 500 signing a petition to back investment in an upgraded A120.

In addition, the campaign saw overwhelming public support for an improvement scheme with four out of five of the 2,795 responses to public consultation in 2017 agreeing that there was a need to upgrade the A120 to a dual carriageway.

Priti Patel MP said: “The case for dualling the A120 is strong and compelling and I have raised it directly with Ministers in Government.”

“Upgrading the A120 will provide huge economic benefits to the region, will reduce congestion, improve journey times and make this road safer.”

“I have been pleased to work with Essex County Council to get this scheme brought forward and will continue to work with them and Highways England to develop the plans further. We will carry on working with businesses and local communities to highlight the importance of this infrastructure improvement and to get the funding for the scheme secured.”

In conjunction with Highways England, Essex County Council developed the A120 improvement plan, while campaigning for Government funding for the work.

As a result, the Government’s latest Road Investment Strategy RIS2, covering April 2020 to March 2025, includes the A120 Braintree to A12 as a ‘pipeline’ scheme to be taken forward by Highways England, with the road scheme being further developed between now and 2025, for subsequent construction.

Essex County Council is currently in the process of handing over to Highways England all work to date on the project, including the authority’s favoured route option for the new road, known as Option D, running from Galleys Corner at Braintree to a new junction with the A12, south of Kelvedon.

Surge in demand for mental health support prompts new campaign

A countywide campaign to tackle declining mental wellbeing in the county as a result of coronavirus was launched on Wednesday 16th September, by Essex County Council (ECC).

Latest figures show the number of assessments by adult mental health practitioners have increased by around 50% and referrals to mental health professionals have increased significantly.

The [Essex Mental Health and Wellbeing Team](#) is also seeing its highest number of referrals since it was established.

In response, ECC is launching *Mental Health Essex*, a targeted, countywide campaign that aims to reach those most at risk of suffering with mental health issues as a result of Covid-19, providing information and support.

Director of Public Health, Dr Mike Gogarty said: “Early data reveals that as a country, anxiety has risen and wellbeing has fallen as a result of Covid-19, and Essex is no different, which is obviously very concerning.

“Our own research suggests that the rates of depression for adults in the county may rise from affecting 11.1% of the population to 22.6% with anxiety levels possibly rising from 18% to 21.6%. This would take the total population of those with common mental health concerns from 128,000 individuals to 195,000 individuals. We must do

all we can do to stop this happening by reaching out to these people and ensuring they are aware of the support available to them.

“Whether you are worried about money, have lost loved ones, have been feeling anxious about the pandemic, feeling depressed, stressed or isolated, we understand and we are here for you.”

Since March, coronavirus restrictions have meant families, individuals, and groups in shared households have been living in isolation from their friends and families. This will continue following [new rules](#) put in place this week, whereby the number of people allowed at social gatherings has decreased from thirty to six.

Along with many feeling isolated, others have lost loved ones or not been able to say goodbye to those who have died during the pandemic. Schools and businesses have had restricted openings and for many people working patterns have changed.

Additional pressure has been caused by people needing to juggle home working, home schooling, caring for children, financial uncertainty, job losses, working in restricted conditions or being on the front line in supporting the fight against the virus.

Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Cllr John Spence said: “Mental illness is a scourge. Once someone’s life is blighted by it, it is so hard to shake free. So let’s do the things that stop us getting ill. Getting exercise, meeting people as far as we are allowed to and eating well all make a real difference. Let’s remove the shame of mental illness, so that when people are struggling, they don’t hide it but quickly seek the help they need, so what starts as a problem does not become an emergency.”

The campaign uses local insight to target specific groups that have been identified as being most affected by the pandemic, and who may be suffering more with their mental health. These groups are:

- Those with employment issues (furloughed, newly unemployed, at risk of redundancy)
- Those with young children (those with children age 0-4 higher risk, but also increase in MH issues for those with 0-15s)
- Women (due to caring responsibilities)
- Younger adults

ECC and partners across the county offer a wide range of support to those struggling with their mental health. More details about support available throughout the county can be found here- www.essex.gov.uk/mental-health

Notes:

- AMHP (Adult Mental Health Professionals) are seeing a significant surge in demand – referrals in July 2020 were nearing 300 whereas in July 2019 referrals were 184.

- Demand for existing provision fell during the initial stages of lockdown. However, we're now seeing an upturn, particularly in previously unknown cases, borne out by data from police, 111 and internal provision.
- Adult Social Care have seen an increase in the number of assessments by Adult mental health practitioners by around 50%.
- Health Mental Health and Wellbeing Team are seeing an increase in demand; referrals are high 50s consistently in last 3 months which are the highest numbers since the service was established.
- ECC research shows that factors effecting Working Age Adults include bereavement, unemployment, effects on front line staff and additional development of mental ill-health due to lockdown
- ECC research shows that for all adults that rates of depression may rise from affecting 11.1% of the population to 22.6%. Anxiety levels may rise from 18% currently to 21.6%. This would take the total population of common MH concerns from 128,000 individuals to 195,000 individuals (of which some will reach out for support)
- ECC research suggests that 18% of those in unemployment will experience mental health conditions because of the pandemic (4,460 people in Essex)

Prime Minister announces new rules in the fight against coronavirus

The Prime Minister announced Wednesday 9th September new rules on how people can socialise amidst rising cases of coronavirus across the country.

The new rules mean that from Monday, the number of people allowed to meet socially, both indoors and outdoors, is now a maximum of six, from multiple households.

The rules apply at home, in restaurants, public spaces, indoors, parks or outdoor spaces. Anyone ignoring the "rule of six" runs the risk of prosecution and a fine.

Even with gatherings of six or fewer, the advice is to still remain two metres (three paces) apart wherever possible. If this is not possible, people should take other steps to protect themselves and others, such as wearing a face covering or facing away from others not in your household.

However, there are exceptions to this rule where social gatherings of more than six people will be allowed. These include:

- When a household or support bubble is more than six
- Gatherings for work or education purposes
- Weddings and funerals. Under existing guidance up to 30 people are able to attend (depending on the capacity of the venue)

- Team sports organised in a way limiting the spread of coronavirus

Face coverings will remain compulsory on public transport and in shops.

COVID-secure venues can hold more than six people but no one group can be larger than six. Venues must take people's contact details for contact tracing and could be fined if they fail to maintain COVID-security.

The Prime Minister also announced stronger enforcement, including "Covid Secure Marshalls" to enforce social distancing in town centres.

Plans to allow larger audiences in venues are being reviewed.

With these measures the Prime Minister said schools and workplaces would be able to remain open and colleges to welcome students back this month. But if an outbreak occurs in a college they are asked to isolate the students at the college, not send them home.

Director of Public Health at Essex County Council, Dr Mike Gogarty said: "The new rules that will come in to place are no surprise. Nationally there has been an increase in coronavirus cases, and Essex is no different. This is obviously concerning and urgent action is required to halt this increase. I welcome the new rules announced today.

"Coronavirus isn't going away and we must all continue to follow this guidance to reduce the spread.

"As well as only meeting in groups of six or below, I can't stress enough the importance of keeping at least two metres from others, washing your hands regularly, wearing a face covering when in enclosed or crowded spaces and of course self-isolating if you have symptoms and booking a test as soon as possible."

Cabinet Member for Health and Adult Social Care, Cllr John Spence said: "We know that these new rules may cause upset, but they are completely necessary.

"We cannot be complacent. The virus is still very much present within our communities with cases continuing to rise. We must all continue to make sacrifices to protect ourselves and others.

"We repeat the messages, keep your distance, wear a face covering if you can't, and if you have symptoms, please self-isolate to avoid onwards transmission."

Notes:

1. Anyone with symptoms of Coronavirus should self-isolate straight away and get a test as soon as possible.

Symptoms include:

- new continuous cough
- high temperature
- loss of, or change in, your normal sense of taste or smell

2. Coronavirus tests are quick and easy to book and can be made by calling 119 or booking online on the NHS [website](#).

3. Anyone with a positive test must complete the remainder of their 10-day self-isolation.

4. Anyone this person lives with should self-isolate for 14 days (from the time symptoms started).

