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Coronavirus update

Stay alert and continue social distancing

Residents are being urged to continue following social distancing guidelines. This is particularly important as shops and other services start to re-open across the county from Monday.

Keep a minimum distance of two metres between yourself and another person. This greatly reduces the chance of spreading or catching COVID-19 – even if the other person is showing symptoms.

If you have not been within two metres of someone who is being investigated by the [NHS Test and Trace service](#) they will not regard you as a contact and you will not need to self-isolate.



Let's talk social distancing with the Young Essex Assembly

Social distancing has been hard for lots of us over the past couple of months and for some children and young people it might still be something they are finding difficult.

If your child is struggling with social distancing, members of the Young Essex Assembly have [shared some tips](#) which could help. For more information about how you can support your child during the coronavirus pandemic, [visit our website](#).



Changes to our services

Our [website](#) includes information on what you should do, the latest changes to our services and how you can get help in your community.

Country Parks

We are pleased to confirm that [Essex County Council Country Parks](#) are back to normal opening hours. All parks will be open from 8am to dusk.

The parks, car parks and toilets will be open to the public. However, the children's play equipment, visitor centres and cafes will remain closed, in line with government guidance.

Libraries

We are now preparing a phased approach to re-open libraries in line with government guidelines. From Monday 6 July 2020, sixteen libraries across Essex will re-open.

See our [latest news release](#) for more information.

Schools

Following the wider opening of early years settings, infant, junior and special schools last week, some secondary schools and colleges in Essex will begin to open to more pupils from Monday.

We've been pleased to see the fantastic response of schools and settings to wider opening now being possible. We'd like to thank staff in schools and settings for their dedication and commitment to the children and young people of Essex.

You can find the [latest education news and updates](#) on our website.

Investing in key city centre locations to make social distancing easier

Work is underway to provide bigger, safer spaces in key locations for city centre shoppers, residents, workers and visitors to social distance in. Existing cycle lanes and pavements will be enhanced as well as new lanes and pavements created.

The first urban areas to see these measures introduced are [Chelmsford](#) (started on 8 June) and [Colchester](#) (starting on 15 June).

Further details of the [Safer, Greener, Healthier scheme](#) can be found on the Essex Highways website.

Don't call, click!

We're currently experiencing a large volume of calls, which include those concerning [adult social care and health](#) and [birth registrations](#).

Please [visit our website](#) for changes to our services. It's the quickest and easiest way to find the information you need.

Checking online will save you time and help to free up our phone lines for those who don't have access to the internet or may be more vulnerable.



New support to give families a little extra help

The [Family Innovation Fund-Xtra](#) offers a range of early support services. These are available to help children, young people and families during the pandemic.

The early support services include key areas such as:

- children's mental health
- healthy relationships
- coping with change

The services are available to children and young people aged between 0 and 19 years (up to 25 years for young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities) and their families. They are aimed at those who are not already receiving specialist or statutory support.

Are you a carer and need advice and support?

You may be caring for a loved one who is ill or has additional needs as they grow older. This year, when carers have the additional worry of how to keep themselves, and those they care for, safe during the coronavirus outbreak, it is important that carers have the information, guidance and support they need



We recognise caring can leave you feeling lonely and isolated. If you or someone you know needs support visit the [Essex Welfare Service website](#) or call 0300 303 9988.

