

Short Breaks

for Children and Young People with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities

2020



Short Breaks
for Children and Young People
with Special Education Needs
and/or Disabilities



Essex County Council



Contents

Contents

Welcome
Introduction
Areas covered
Q and As

2	Fee paid Short Breaks Foster Carers	60
3	Essex Libraries	62
4	ECL Sensory Service	64
6	Young Carers Support	66
7	SEND Young Commissioners	68
	Talk Listen Cuddle (TLC)	69
11	Essex Outdoors	70
12	Essex Youth Service	72

Our Core Offer

Action for Children
Light Touch
Crossroads
Children and Family Support Services
Short Breaks Tickets and Max Cards
Special events
Registrations and on-line bookings
Caravan breaks
Beach huts

21		
22		
23		
27		
28		
29		
33		

News

Harlow Inclusive Fun Day
Riverside ice & Leisure Centre
Updated Information on SEND Schools
Brentwood Inclusive Play Space
Short Breaks Capital Scheme
Inclusive Play Spaces
Autism and Nature

22	Other Services	73
23	Inclusive Communication Essex (ICE)	74
27	Essex Family Forum	76
28	All Together	78
29	Sport for Confidence	79
33	Provide	80
	PACT For Autism	81
35	Special Needs And Parents (SNAP)	82
36	Essex Advocacy Service	83
38	Purple	84
40	Families in Focus (Essex)	85
42	Upwards with Downs	86
44	The MAZE Group CiC	87
47	The Essex Carers Network	88
48	Spectrum	89
	Dolphin Mobility Trampoline and	
49	Swimming pool hoists	90
50	De-Bug and Landeez all-terrain wheelchairs	91
52	Changing places locations and access	92

ECC Services

Essex Local Offer
SEND in educational settings
Essex SEND IASS
Early Years and Childcare
Children and Young People with
Disabilities Service

54		
55	Directory	97
56	Index	98



Welcome

to the 11th and final printed edition of the **Short Breaks for Disabled Children & Young People** brochure.

For 2021 we will be having a new website which will contain information contained in this brochure. We may produce a more simple leaflet of information but not a full printed brochure. Further details of changes can be found in the brochure.

We hope the information contained within the brochure will help you identify support and activities available to you across Essex.

Section 25 of the Children and Young Persons Act requires local authorities to provide short breaks for families with disabled children. Each local authority has to produce a **Short Breaks Services Statement** so that families know what services are available, the eligibility criteria for these services and how the range of services is designed to meet the needs of the families with disabled children in this area. The requirements of the **Short Breaks Statement** are incorporated in this brochure and will be reviewed on an annual basis.



Introduction

We are committed to:

- Listening to all disabled children and young people, acting on their views, and providing them with choices.
- Supporting disabled children and their families to take part in and enjoy local community life.
- Providing a wide and varied range of Short Breaks which allow all children and young people with disabilities the same opportunities as all other children and young people.
- Ensuring that parents and carers are supported to become equal partners in making decisions about service development and priorities.
- Working with children, young people and their families and carers to develop and change the support and services we commission and provide so that they meet needs and wishes.

During the next year we will be looking at our commissioning options for the future and reviewing how we respond to local need. We will be during this time holding engagement sessions and asking for feedback with parent/carers, providers and young people themselves where possible to help inform our future commission options and ensure the funding we have is utilised in the best possible way for those children and young people accessing our services. Please look out for invites to take part via email, our Facebook page, local support groups, Essex Family Forum or your school.

Our aim is to continue to deliver a range of services that support the individual needs of children and young people with disabilities and their families across Essex.

During 2019 Action for Children our lead provider for clubs and activities across Essex continued to

work with children, young people and their families to ensure that the range and specialism of clubs and activities on offer meet the needs of those attending and are fun and enjoyable for all those taking part. This year there are 30 providers offering a range of short breaks across Essex, for a range of needs. Action for Children also uses a development fund to offer additional activities and opportunities where there is a need for additional capacity or it has also been used to test and develop new provision. They regularly attend coffee mornings and support groups to meet with families to gather views which help build the range on offer and meet the growing demand on these services.

Their e-newsletter and 'Hot Off the Press' announcements give families regular updates about the range of providers, what they offer and how to book a place. 2019 saw the third inclusive fun day for children, young people and their families and this year it was held at Harlow Town Park. The day was led by Action for Children alongside Harlow Council and short breaks providers and coincided with the official opening of the Inclusive Play Space located next to Pets Corner. The event was a great success and a wonderful way to celebrate the work that has been taking place between short breaks and Harlow Council over the last two years. Further details can be found within the brochure on pages 12-19.

We have now registered and issued (correct at time of print) around 2900 passport id numbers meaning that those families are able to access all the short break offer and book and apply for things directly via our website. The passport id numbers are also used to access clubs and activities and has meant that we can respond to requests much quicker than working off manual forms or emails. We hope to announce further improvements to the booking systems which would include a log in and passport id recovery option as well as being able to update contact information later in 2020 early 2021.

Introduction

The beach huts continue to be one of our most popular breaks for families and 2019 saw the addition of a much needed second hut at Walton due to having a plot donated to us. All huts were fully booked during peak times and even the cold weather or sometimes rain did not stop people from using them. Further details on booking can be found on pages 33-34.

Our range of 9 adapted and un-adapted caravans have again been hugely popular this year and have had very heavy usage. This does mean that there is a lot of maintenance to be carried out while they are closed over the winter, so they are all ready for next season, this will include replacement flooring and sofa re-covering, new mattresses in some of the caravans as well as other repairs and maintenance. For financial reason we would not be able to carry this out at every caravan in one year so over the next few years this will be carried out to try and keep holiday costs as low as we can. More information on how to book is on pages 29-31.

We have again been able to invest in a number of capital projects including a small grants process where new and existing providers or community groups like scouts are able to apply for grants to assist with adaptations to premises or for specialist equipment to increase inclusivity. We successfully awarded 12 providers across Essex with funding to help towards a range of equipment including accessible mini busses, mobile hoists, adaptations to premises, accessible pathways and a range of sensory and soft play equipment. Further details on Capital projects and how organisations can apply can be found on pages 44-46.

Tickets for days out at local attractions, the Max Card discount scheme and competitions for Circus Starr and relaxed theatre performances will continue to run during 2020. Details on how to apply are on page 23.

We have continued to invest in Changing Places and Assisted Facilities across Essex and also the fourth inclusive play space to be located in Brentwood as part of a large scale three year plan for King Georges playing fields. Phase one is due to be built in the Spring of 2020 and will include the first of two changing places on site. We have also assisted with the re-development of Riverside Leisure Centre in Chelmsford by providing funding for sensory elements and equipment for the new swimming pools including a pool pod entry system and second changing places within the centre. Further details about everything above and more can be found within this brochure.

Part of improving the services on offer is feedback we receive from you. We welcome all of your feedback on our short breaks brochure and on the range of services on offer for you and your family. We use this feedback to build and improve services and facilities available so please do take the time to feedback to us via shortbreaks@essex.gov.uk or via the 'contact us' tab on our website shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk

Best wishes

Christina Pace

Head of Commissioning for Vulnerable People

Joanne Mason

Senior Commissioning Officer

Contact us:

Email: shortbreaks@essex.gov.uk

Web: shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk

Telephone: 03330 139889

 www.facebook.com/ShortBreaksECC

Short Breaks for Disabled Children
& Young People
Essex County Council
PO Box 11, County Hall
Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 1QH

Areas covered

Please note the Essex Short Breaks offer is open to those families living within the borders of Essex County Council. For families on the borders of Essex like Southend or Thurrock who are unitary authorities and hold their own budgets, you should contact as below to discuss support available to you.



Southend

Tel: 01702 215007

Email: council@southend.gov.uk

www.southend.gov.uk/info/200225/children_with_disabilities

Thurrock

Sunshine Centre
Civic Square, Tilbury, RM18 8AD

Tel: 01375 652 200

Email: sunshinecentre@thurrock.gov.uk

www.thurrock.gov.uk/disabled-children-and-their-families/getting-help

Facebook: [@sunshine.centre.tilbury](https://www.facebook.com/sunshine.centre.tilbury)

Please note: Southend and Thurrock will also have their own Local Offer regarding services and information in your area. Details of their local offer can be found via their web links.

Q and As

Who are Short Breaks for?

The Essex short breaks programme is open to all children and young people who:

- Are aged between 0-25 (Please note some services post 19 will require a personal budget or be self-funding)
- Have a diagnosis of Special Educational Needs and/or a Disability
- Live within the borders of Essex County Council (excluding Southend and Thurrock as they offer their own short breaks scheme)
- Please note children and young people fostered in Essex but still looked after by another Local Authority would not be eligible for a Short Breaks passport id number. They can still access any of the short breaks clubs but their Local Authority would need to fund this through their care plan and pay the provider directly for sessions attended.

We want to enable children and young people with Special Educational Needs and/or Disabilities, and their families to join in with safe, entertaining and interesting activities, while allowing family members/carers the opportunity to have a break from their normal caring routine.

There is no limit (subject to availability of places) to the number of short break activities your child can take part in, and you can mix and match activities to suit your family need and the things that your son or daughter would like to do.

Action for Children continues to be our lead provider of clubs and activities with an on-going commitment to increase the choice and range of activities available within our short breaks offer. They work with and fund a range of voluntary

organisations to provide short breaks including: outdoor learning and activity centres, inclusive dance and drama groups, organisations and special schools that provide school holiday, after school and weekend clubs and play schemes.

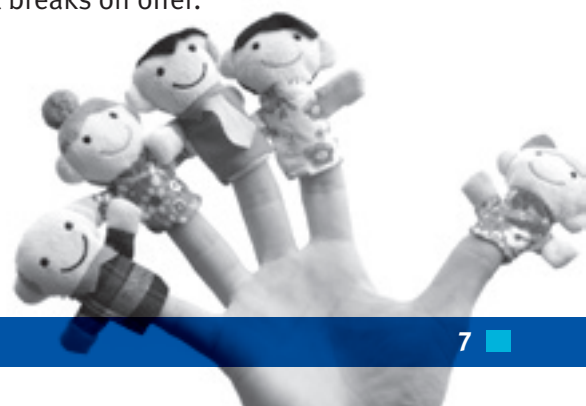
Action for Children continues to improve services using a development fund. They engage with families across Essex through coffee mornings, meetings with support groups and at education settings to hear what children, young people and their families would like to see on offer.

Where available we are helping universal settings to become inclusive through our small grants capital funding programme that assists with equipment costs or minor adaptations.

We continue to invest and develop universal/inclusive services so that they are equipped to enable disabled children and young people to enjoy the same activities and opportunities as their friends, siblings and peer groups.

We work with district and town councils, leisure centres etc. to continue our work delivering Changing Places across Essex.

All children and young people with a disability should have the opportunity to socialise, have fun, develop skills and make and maintain friendships just the same as any other child or young person. We continue to explore new ideas to develop the range of short breaks on offer.



Q and As

What is a Short Break?

- A Short Break can be anything from a couple of hours to overnight stays.
- A Short Break can offer children and young people with special education needs and/ or disabilities the opportunity to have fun and take part in enjoyable experiences that contribute to their personal and social development away from their parents.
- A Short Break helps children and young people with Special Education Needs and/or Disabilities to develop new interests and take part in different activities.
- A Short Break can give opportunities for children and young people to have something to do and build new skills – especially after school at weekends and during the school holidays. They can see their friends and make new friends.
- Some Short Breaks have been developed to give the family as a whole the opportunity to enjoy a break or activity together.
- Short Breaks can be opportunities for disabled children and young people to have enjoyable, life enhancing experiences with or without their primary carers, which contribute to their social inclusion and their personal and social development.
- Short Breaks enable parents and families to have a break from their caring responsibilities. This helps families catch up with everyday activities such as sleep, cleaning, shopping as well as having more time with their other children, their friends and hobbies.
- A Short Break can offer choice to children and young people with disabilities and their families - offering activities and opportunities they may not otherwise have considered.
- A Short Break can support and enable children and young people with disabilities to access community based provisions.
- Short Breaks have been uniquely designed because it is recognised that there is an impact on everyday life if a child has a disability. This impact is as individual as each child and their family is unique.

How can my child or young person take part?

You will firstly need to register with us before you can access any of the short breaks services on offer.

To register you will need to provide proof of diagnosis/disability. This can be in the form of a diagnosis letter, EHCP or letter from a medical professional confirming that the child and young person has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities.

Link to register shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk/applications-and-bookings

Once you have successfully registered with us you will be issued with a unique passport number per registered child which will be the one number you use for your time with short breaks.

You will need this number to apply for caravans, beach huts, tickets, Max cards, competitions, clubs and activities and also Light Touch Care Hours (if applicable).

The link to register and or sign in will be on our main website and Facebook pages.



Q and As

What is on offer?

Clubs and activities can be accessed by contacting our lead provider Action for Children. Further details on how to access and apply can be found on pages 12-19.

Care hours are split into those meeting the threshold for social care support and those who do not.

To see what help might be needed from social care you would need to request an assessment from social care and one of the Children with Disabilities teams. They will discuss with you your family's needs and identify support and services if this is assessed as necessary.

This type of service is targeted at families with the most complex needs offering an individual support package. Further details can be found on pages 55-58 of this brochure. For those who do not meet the criteria for social care assistance (including direct payments) but still feel some care support would be beneficial for them, please see details of Light Touch on page 20-22.

We also have a varied range of community activities including, adapted and un-adapted caravans located at two Essex holiday parks, Beach huts located on Walton and Clacton seafronts, days out at local attractions and a Max Card discount scheme.

Is there a cost?

- Families are expected to pay the same as anyone else for all the general leisure activities, sports clubs, hobby-based activities, out of school activities, art and drama clubs and uniformed groups like Scouts.
- Families will not have to pay for any additional support their child receives to help them participate in their chosen leisure activity.
- Families will be asked for a financial contribution towards attending the clubs and holiday activities. This could be in the form of either an hourly rate or session fee. Please contact Action for Children or any of the clubs directly for further information.
- Families will not have to pay for the regular support from an individual carer who comes to your home and either supports your child at home or takes your child out and about if this is as an assessed need and referral from the Children with Disabilities Social Care Teams.
- Families will not have to pay for the individual support that is a few hours, not necessarily regular or frequent, from an individual carer who comes to your home and either supports your child at home or takes your child out and about for up to 28 hours over six months. Families will have to pay for the cost of any activity for their child – such as going swimming.



How we define disability

The definition of disabled children and young people is set out in the 'Equality Act 2010' that is a child and young person who has a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long-term adverse effect on their ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. This would include:

- Sensory Impairments
- Learning disabilities
- Communication difficulties
- Physical impairment
- Chronic or life limiting condition
- Complex health care needs.



There is other support available from Children's Services and other organisations for Children and young people with additional needs resulting from abuse or trauma for example, but who do not have a disability.

Will my child's complex needs stop them from having a Short Break?

There is a team of specialist nurses qualified to train the carers who work within the short break clubs and activities and other short break opportunities to carry out many of the additional health care tasks that your child or young person may need. This team is called the Specialist Healthcare Task Training Team. There is now specific training available for short break providers. Further information on the Specialist Healthcare Task Training Team can be found on page 80.



How do I keep up to date?

Website Our website will be undergoing further updates and changes through 2020. You will still be able to register and apply for tickets/Max cards in the normal way and also book and pay for your caravan break or day at one of the beach huts directly via **shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk**

Facebook Like our Facebook page to keep up with everything that is on offer as well as any other relevant information from other providers, support groups etc. You can also link directly to the booking forms on the website by clicking the blue book now button **www.facebook.com/shortbreaksecc**

Email Once you are registered you will be added to our mailing list to receive any important

updates. We have listened and reduced the number of emails sent and most information is shared via our Facebook page. We will still share important updates via email. Please contact us at **shortbreaks@essex.gov.uk**

Brochure 2020 will be the final year that we print a full brochure. We may continue to print a small leaflet but with changes due to our website during 2020 information will move more towards a digital format

Telephone Call us if you have any questions or queries **03330 139889**.





Our Core Offer

Our core offer is open to those families who have registered for short breaks via our website and received their passport number enabling them to access the following services:

- **Action for Children** – Offering Specialised clubs and activities across Essex
 - **Light Touch** – Available to those families who do not meet the assessment criteria for support via the Children with Disabilities Services
 - **Crossroads**
 - **Children and Family Support Services**
 - **Short Breaks Tickets and Max Cards**
 - **Special events**
 - **Registrations and on-line bookings**
 - **Caravan breaks**
 - **Beach huts**
- 

Time for a break

*Action for
Children*

We are proud to be the lead provider of short breaks clubs and activities for children and young people with special educational needs and disabilities in Essex.

Short breaks clubs and activities give children and young people the chance to take part in fun activities, experiences and life skills. Helping them to develop their independence, make new friends and try new things. It also gives families time to do things they may not otherwise be able to do together.

You may already be accessing Short Breaks, Clubs and Activities through holiday and after school clubs, activities at your local community centre over the summer or stay and play sessions for the very young. Action for Children support providers across Essex to develop specialist and inclusive services.

Support and Development

All our clubs are run by specialist carers. They get to know you and your child or young person before the club or activity starts to make sure they feel welcome and safe as soon as they arrive. Staff also have training, if needed, to support individual children's needs be it communication methods, medication, feeding or specialist care.

To give you peace of mind, Action for Children Quality and Development Officers carry out formal and informal visits to clubs and activities to see them in action and meet the children, young people, parents and carers who attend. We work closely with our service providers to support them and quality assure organisations in a 'traffic light' system, checking safe recruitment processes for staff and their competency, engagement with children and safety of their environment.



“Offering a wide range of clubs and activities including sensory activities and play groups for early years, friendship groups, dance and drama activities, sports and outdoor activities, social groups and outings, after school clubs, life skills and workshops, complimentary and music therapy sessions, holiday clubs. Please contact us to discuss your child in more detail and we will be able to advise what is available in your area as not all activities are available in all areas.”

Working with amazing providers



Shorefields School, Clacton



Southview School, Witham



BOSP, various locations



SNAP, Brentwood



The Ark Centre, Harwich



Discovery Club at Columbus School, Chelmsford



Mistley Kid's Club, Mistley



Accuro, various



Epping Forest District Council's Inclusion Project



PARC, Braintree



Mushroom Theatre Company, Rayleigh



Glenwood School, Benfleet



Stepping Stones, Colchester



SHARE, various



Harlow County Council Sam's Place



Trailnet, Brentwood



The Lambourne End Centre, Epping



InterAct, various



Havens Hospices, Chelmsford



The Royal Association for Deaf People, various



The Mercury Theatre, Colchester



Butterflies Clubs CIC, various



diddi dance North Essex and South Suffolk



Oakview School, Loughton



Market Field School, Colchester



Families in Focus, Chelmsford



Cedar Hall School, Benfleet



Phoenix Amateur Swimming Club, Colchester



Edith Borthwick School, Braintree



Sport for Confidence

Our website has links to each of our current providers and details of the full range of clubs and activities on offer. Go to services.actionforchildren.org.uk.

Sometimes clubs may be underattended or change provision in response to families' needs, others may have waiting lists and need our support to develop further. We have a development fund to allow us to respond to changes, developing existing services and supporting new providers to run pilot activities.

In Essex you can join Short Breaks activities:

- If you are aged between 0 and 18, or 19 to 25 and have a personal budget or are self-funding
- have a diagnosis of special educational needs and/or a disability
- live within the administrative boundaries of Essex County Council (excluding Southend and Thurrock)
- please note children and young people fostered in Essex, but still looked after by another Local Authority, would not be eligible for a Short Breaks passport id number. They can still access any of the short breaks clubs, but their Local Authority would need to fund this through their care plan and pay the provider directly for sessions attended.

Children and Young People can access short break activities using their Essex Shortbreaks 'Passport number'. Register online at <https://shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk/> to access short break services including clubs and activities, beach huts and caravan bookings and Max cards.

Costs and Assessments

All clubs will ask for a parental contribution in the same way that any mainstream club would. Costs can vary as the range of activities offered is very broad. All contributions are in addition to the funding we provide, which is intended to provide the additional support needed for children and young people registered with Shortbreaks, a parental contribution is expected in the same way as any other young person to attending sports or social clubs.

Have your say on the shape of current and future services

Action for Children are committed to providing the clubs and activities that are needed. We value your feedback about clubs and activities you have tried and what you thought of them, as well as suggestions of what you would like to see developed in the future. We use this information to source additional services and bespoke activities in areas of identified need.

You can email us directly, meet our Quality and Development Officers at one of the coffee events throughout the year or feedback to us via our online survey or Facebook page [www.facebook.com /short.breaks.clubs.activities.essex](https://www.facebook.com/short.breaks.clubs.activities.essex)



You said, we did!

It was identified through meetings with Parents at Parent Coffee Events and our liaison work with Partner organisations, charities, parent advocacy, Mainstream and Special Schools within Essex that parents of children with complex medical needs were more likely to struggle finding a suitable club during the School Holidays, particularly in Mid and West Essex. Following this feedback, we put together a working group with some of the parents of children with complex needs in Chelmsford to arrange a holiday session which would meet their additional needs. A suitable accessible and inclusive environment, with the necessary changing places was identified and we provided the services of two professionals who offered an interactive, sensory craft activity and a music session run by one of the Music Therapists working within short breaks services.

Parents commented on how good it was to have something which catered for the needs of their children, providing then with a fun day out where they could meet and make new friends.

“All the parents who attended said how lovely it was. It was just so wonderful to watch them all so totally engaged in the activities and Emily worked her magic in making sure they were all included and expectations were adapted to their individual needs”

Working closely with the Children with Disabilities Team in West Essex, we held a number of joint events for families, young people and children with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities. Through working in partnership and tapping into an existing provision at the Ongar Youth Centre, we were able to offer music therapy and interactive craft activities for the children and young people to enjoy. Families attended from across the West of the county including Harlow, Epping and Dunmow and engaged with the activities on offer within the support network of the venue and social care team that they knew well.

“While my son is having lots of fun with the staff and volunteers in the centre, I can relax and share experiences with staff who are so knowledgeable and most importantly other families who can share their experiences with me. It is the highlight of our holidays!”





Following the positive feedback from previous Family Engagement Events, including Family Beach Day at Clacton and our Celebration Day at Hylands Park in Chelmsford, families told us they would like another inclusive event in the summer, where they could play together and try new activities. Action for Children worked closely with Harlow District Council and Essex County Council Short Breaks to organise a Family Day at Harlow Town Park in August 2019. The park had recently developed a new Inclusive Playground, adding to their inclusive areas such as Pet's Corner, Sensory Garden, Changing Places and the Sensory facilities within the Learning Centre.

Harlow Town Park was selected as the venue for this summer's family event so that families could visit who may not have been aware of these facilities. It was a very successful day with families both known and new to Essex Short Breaks coming along to join in the fun. As an Inclusive event, whole families and their friends could take part and have a go at some inclusive activities together, including inclusive cycling; non-contact boxing; sensory crafts, toys and stories; dance, music and lots of bubbles, delivered in partnership with our providers and partners. This provided an opportunity for parents to speak to staff and find out more about the Clubs and Activities available in Essex.

“After school club had had a great impact on us as a family, when our elder son was out of school it was the only place he could go where he was well supported and the only chance we had for respite. The service is perfect!”

Perhaps you have some ideas for our next family event? Look out for details of future events on our Facebook page or join our mailing list.

Be part of it

Our Quality and Development Officers meet with parents and carers. Attending coffee events at schools and support groups across Essex, often bringing together a group of providers and partners to share information about what's on offer locally.

We signpost families who are looking for activities or support in their area and talk about what's on offer. While meeting parents, carers and their support teams we get a clear idea of what works and what you would like to be developed. We also meet with new and existing clubs, enabling organisations to become more inclusive and promote inclusive events.

Details of our events can be found on our Website and Facebook page. We look forward to meeting and hearing your views on new or existing clubs and activities. If you are part of a school PTA or attend a local parent group, why not call or email us the details? We would be happy to come along to meet you and talk about what we do.

Perhaps you know or are part of local services which could benefit from our support, your local knowledge is vital. Why not contact us to discuss access to our flexible or annual funding schemes?

“The staff and volunteers are remarkable, it is heartwarming to see the joy in those with and without disabilities sharing experiences with equal enthusiasm.”





Come and join us

We're a friendly, experienced and dedicated team who are here to help you:

You can call us for advice or support on: **07540 919616 / 01376 555260**

Or email: **essexshortbreaks@actionforchildren.org.uk**

You can follow us on Facebook: **www.facebook.com/short.breaks.clubs.activities.essex**
for news and events

Or via our website: **services.actionforchildren.org.uk/essex-short-breaks-clubs-and-activities/**

Registration

Register for short breaks services at **<https://shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk/>**

To find out more about clubs and activities or to join our mailing list email:
essexshortbreaks@actionforchildren.org.uk

Or write to us at:

Action For Children
Essex Short Breaks, Clubs & Activities,
Seesaw Children's Centre, Lancaster Way,
Braintree,
Essex CM7 5UL

Registered families can 'opt in' to receive our regular newsletter, invitations to local events and 'Hot Off the Press' announcements about additions to the service and new providers joining us.

Safe and happy childhood



Action for Children protects and supports children and young people, providing practical and emotional care and support, ensuring their voices are heard, and campaigning to bring lasting improvements to their lives.

Light Touch

Light Touch is an amount of care hours available to those families and carers who do not meet the social care assessment criteria or qualify for social care support packages via direct payments, personal budgets, respite care, but would still benefit from some support.

Families can access up to 28 hours of care which will normally be offered as a block of 4 hours once a month (although this may not always be possible, depending on carer availability). Please discuss this with the care agency as they may be able to be more flexible. I know some families may like to use more hours during school holidays and less in term time. Please note however you use your hours your entitlement will only be for 28 hours over 6 months.

Light Touch may be used in some or all of the ways below:

- Work with the child/young person in their own home
- Support them in attending a club or leisure activity
- Take the child/young person out to maintain their social networks and friendships
- Help support them to participate in universal services.

This is not a childcare or babysitting service. Care hours are to be used in an outcome focussed way to best meet the needs of the child or young person.

To access the service the following criteria must be met:

- The child/young person is aged between 0-18
- The child/young person is registered with Short Breaks and in receipt of their Essex passport id number
- The child/young person lives within the borders of Essex County Council (excluding Thurrock and Southend)
- The family is not in receipt of any other social care funding i.e. direct payments, overnight respite or a personal budget
- The child/young person will be subject to a 6 month review to see if re assessment by social care is needed or the service is still appropriate for the family needs.

At the end of the 6 month period the provider who has been working with you will undertake a review to see how the support is working and to make sure that it is still helping for your family. A further 6 months support can be put in place. Families who meet the above criteria and would like to access Individual support can self-refer by contacting the providers on pages 21-22.

We are aware that there is currently a shortage of care staff (in Essex and elsewhere) and we are working with both Crossroads and Children and Family Support Services to offer assistance where possible. As 2020 is the start of our re-procurement year we are also looking into alternative options to support families who have not been able to access a carer through light touch as well as our other services. We are still working on this and further updates will be given as soon as we can. We do advise all families not able to access care through Light Touch to speak to Action for Children to see what clubs and activities are available to you so your child and family are still getting a short break.

If you have any problems in accessing light touch or would like to feedback to us this can be done via email to shortbreaks@essex.gov.uk or via our website shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk/light-touch-care and selecting short breaks provider from the drop down list.



Crossroads

Crossroads was first established in 1974 from a donation of £10,000 made in regards to the Crossroads Motel programme. The donation was given to set up services for carers to have a respite service, since that date Crossroads has grown to become a nationwide service. We offer consistent, reliable support through long trusted relationships. The support can be used flexibly to suit the needs of the individual and their family. We provide the following support which can be used flexibly within the family home or out and about in the community.

- Individual Support (light touch)
- Regular Support
- Outcome Focussed Support
- Overnight Care

From quality respite care to expert personal and social care for those children and Young people with complex needs and associated health needs.

We offer one to one regular visits with the same trained and experienced care support worker, same day, same time. This is a flexible service which is led by the family and caters to their individual needs allowing them to spend time with other children, family members, to get on with jobs or to recharge your batteries. Services can be funded by social services or purchased with direct payments or privately.

“It is always the same care support worker who comes which is great she has got used to my and son and my son has got used to her. She visits after school and my son uses Makaton and can now sign her name. Not only is she brilliant at stepping into my shoes and caring for my son she had also become a friend to me.”



“Really good service, very kind and reliable service.”

How to get in touch:

MID

Braintree, Chelmsford, Maldon District Areas
Tel: 01376 529985
Email: braintreexroads@btconnect.com
Web: www.braintreexroads.wixsite.com/supporting-carers

WEST

Epping Forrest, Harlow, Uttlesford, Brentwood District Areas
Tel: 01708 757242
Email: info@carerstrustcrossroadsehhr.org
Web: www.carerstrustcrossroadsehhr.org

NORTH

Tendring, Colchester District Areas
Tel: 01255 860960
Email: tendcrossroads@btconnect.com
Web: www.crossroadstc.co.uk

Children and Family Support Services

Our philosophy – Supporting positive outcomes

Our mission is to provide high quality, personalised and responsive interventions to Local Authorities, children and families in order to deliver the best outcomes for children and their families.

What can we provide for you and your family?

We can provide all sorts of services to children, young people and families. For example:

- Activities out in the community
- Support for children and young people with additional needs and disabilities
- Help at home before and after school or college
- Support to attend social clubs and activities
- Light Touch hours.

“...today my son has been out of the house for the first time in three months with the worker you sent to support him...thank you...”

Our Values

We put the needs of children, young people and their families at the heart of everything we do. The views of children and their parents or carers are vital to securing positive outcomes and are incorporated into the planning of each activity. Our team are specially selected to support each child based on their experience and personal fit. We embrace diversity and ensure that services are accessible to all. Communication is clear and straightforward, ensuring that children and/or those with learning difficulties are able to understand them.

Children and Family Support Services is a Care Quality Commission (CQC – 1-1750965029) registered provider and delivers a range of tailored home care, personal care and support packages; particularly focusing on children and young people with complex needs.



“...when we first starting dealing with CF, we were so impressed with the professionalism of the organisation, its staff and carers. For us this was the first time we had used any form of carers that we did not know and it was a daunting thought, however we had nothing to be concerned about...”

Our expectations are high regarding staff conduct, punctuality and customer engagement and we monitor these closely through supervision, appraisal and staff training.

For any more information please call the office on 01473 233994 and speak to one of the team.

www.cfsupportservices.co.uk

Children and Family Support Services
Unit 11, Three Rivers Business Centre
Felixstowe Road, Ipswich
Suffolk IP10 0BF

Email: **info@cfsupportservices.co.uk**



Short Break Tickets

We are pleased to be able to offer Short Break Tickets for the 7th Year running.

We are again able to offer tickets for Colchester Zoo, Marsh Farm, South Woodham Ferrers and Paradise Wildlife Park, Hertfordshire. Each ticket will admit one registered child/young person up to their 19th birthday with a disability and an accompanying adult free of charge.

They are one off use tickets and can be used anytime during the year up to the expiry date on the ticket with the exception of a few special events like Christmas experiences which the tickets will not cover. If in doubt you can always contact the attraction to check to see if your ticket is valid.

If you would like to request tickets to any of the attractions or request a Max Card you will need to apply via our website using your registered email address and unique passport id number. If you have more than one registered child you will need to complete a form per child using their passport id number **shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk/applications-and-bookings/max-cards-and-tickets**

Please note each ticket will only cover the registered child and one accompanying adult, any additional tickets for non registered children will need to be purchased directly from the attraction. Due to the number of families now registered with us it is expected we will only be able to issue one ticket per child per year. If we have any surplus tickets will ask families to apply again on a first come first serve basis.

Max Cards

Short Breaks for Disabled Children and young People are also offering free Max Cards to children and young people aged between 0-25 and in receipt of their Essex passport id number. Max Card is a national, local authority commissioned discount scheme for children/young people with special educational needs and/or disabilities. This again can be applied for via **shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk/applications-and-bookings/max-cards-and-tickets**

using your registered email address and passport id number.

If you lose your Max card or it expires you can again apply for a replacement card via our website.

The card is property of the registered child or young person, so in order to obtain the discount the child must be present. In many cases the discount is extended to carers and accompanying family members, but this varies between the venues. Venues reserve the right to ask for you proof of identity upon presentation of the card.

You will need to check the Max Card website for details of where your Max Card can be used before you visit as some attractions may require pre-booking and you can also see what discounts are on offer.

Merlin passes and associated attractions will require pre-booking and you will also need to present you Max Card on the day you visit so please remember to always carry your card if you have pre-booked any tickets or your discount will not be valid.

There are over 1100 attractions listed on the website including larger attractions such as Merlin Entertainments, Go Ape! and Tenpin Bowling as well as hundreds of small local attractions. A full list of all attractions is available and details of where you can use you the Max Card and also what discount and if pre-booking is needed can be found by clicking the link below and there is also on-line offers including merlin passes **www.mymaxcard.co.uk/browse**

maxcard







Marsh Farm with Changing Place Facility

www.marshfarm.co.uk



www.mymaxcard.co.uk



Special events

We try to run a couple of competitions during the year to win other tickets. We have been lucky enough to work with Circus Starr and the Mercury Theatre in Colchester who put on several relaxed performances throughout the year.

Both venues work really hard to make the shows inclusive and Circus Starr have a great interactive app. Mercury Theatre creates a wonderful visual story to accompany each relaxed performance and can also arrange a tour of the theatre in advance.

For 2019 we held an Inclusive fun day at Harlow town park to celebrate the official opening of the inclusive play area. We also had some of our amazing providers there on the day to give families a taster of what to expect if they come along to any of the Short Breaks clubs.

Any competitions and fun day events will be advertised on our Facebook page, details of what's on offer and how you can take part will also be emailed round to everyone on our mailing list.

www.facebook.com/shortbreaksecc



Registrations and on-line applications/bookings

To access any of the Short Breaks provision you need to register with us and receive a unique per child passport id number.

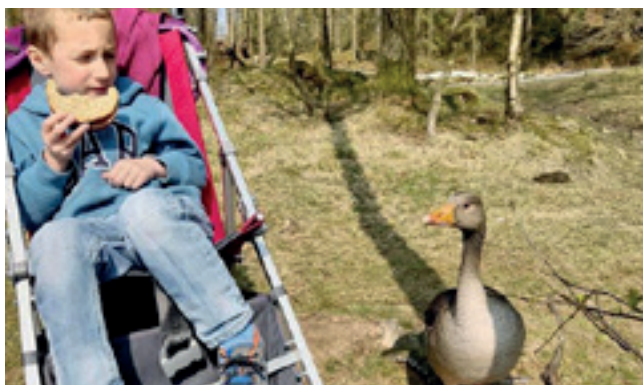
You will need this number to book caravans and beach huts, apply for Max cards, days out tickets and any competitions we run, you will also need this number to access any of our after school, school holiday and weekend clubs and activities and also Light Touch care hours.



When you register on-line you need to complete the registration form and also upload any documents you have that confirm the diagnosis of the young person. You can use the same form to register any siblings with a disability but will need separate forms of supporting documents. Once you submit your form please take a note of the reference number, this is not your passport id number but a reference number that will be used in case of any queries in relation to your registration.

Once your registration has been processed your passport id number will be emailed to the email address used within your form and it will be that email address along with your passport id number

you will need to make any on-line applications. If you lose your id number please email **shortbreaks@essex.gov.uk** from the registered email address and we can re send it to you. If any of your contact details change please again email us with your new details so we can update your record.



To register please use **shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk/applications-and-bookings** and select the orange register button on the right hand side of the page

Further updates to the system are expected in 2020/2021 which we will tell you about when they are due to come into effect.



Caravan breaks

Under the short breaks offer we have a range of caravans located at two seaside locations in Essex. All of the 6 berth caravans are adapted and the 8 berth are un-adapted.

They can be hired to registered families at a reduced rate for either a mid-week Monday to Friday or long weekend Friday to Monday break during the main holiday season of early March to middle of November.

Please note due to health complexities of some guests we do not allow any pets in the caravans.

The two different sites offer different breaks depending on the needs of your family.

Naze Marine Holiday Park in Walton. On this site we have six caravans three of which are 6 berth adapted units and three which are 8 berth un-adapted units.

We have a set of co-located caravans (**SW47 and SW48**) on this site with a 6 berth and 8 berth next to each other. We then have our other 4 caravans (**KP3, KP4, KP5 and KP5**) all located together so you will be part of a short breaks community during your stay. Both areas of the park are all occupied by owners of caravans so we do have slightly larger plots and quieter pitches.

The system will allow any of the caravans to be booked together meaning two registered families with disabled children/young people the opportunity to have a break away together for some additional support and also allowing the children to be away together. These have also been used by families who need the adapted caravans but also have other siblings and would not all be able to stay in one caravan so have brought along siblings and other family members in the caravan next door so they don't miss out on the break.



Naze Marine offers good facilities including indoor swimming pool complete with children's splash pool, club house with entertainment, restaurant, inclusive park area and small shop on site. The site itself is totally flat and is fully accessible to wheelchair users. The beach is over the road from the holiday site with the main town and pier being

around a 5 to 10 minute walk away.

Walton offers a more traditional seaside holiday but still retains a relaxed atmosphere. In 2018 work was completed on the inclusive park and changing places which are located on Bath House Meadow the green space in front of the caravan site just before the beach. This has proved to be a great addition to families visiting the holiday site and those just visiting Walton for a day.

Valley Farm Holiday Park in Clacton offers one 6 berth adapted (**SV2**) and two 8 berth un-adapted units (**SV10 and SV11**). The two caravans that are next to each other are both 8 berth un-adapted units with the 6 berth adapted unit being just a few vans away. All are situated on a very quiet owners section of the holiday site. As with Naze Marine these caravan can also be booked as a double booking via the new system for those families needing the additional support.

Valley Farm is the larger of the two sites and facilities include indoor and outdoor swimming pools, show bar, sports bar, restaurant, chip shop, arcade area, outdoor sports court and also a new inclusive park area. The holiday site is about a 5 minute drive away from the main town and sea front and a bus route is available just outside the site. The addition of a Changing Places and accessible ramp into the swimming pool in 2019 has been a welcome addition and allowed lots more users access to the pool.

We do advise that the double bookings are only for applicable families and that unless they are unable to book a break without the additional support then other friends and family members would be directed to book a caravan via the holiday site to ensure as many short breaks families as possible are able to use our caravans.

Caravan breaks

6 berth adapted caravans will have a similar layout as per below image which includes two bedrooms both with two twin beds, a pull out sofa bed in the living area and a full wet room. The caravans are fully wheelchair accessible and all doorways are widened to allow access.

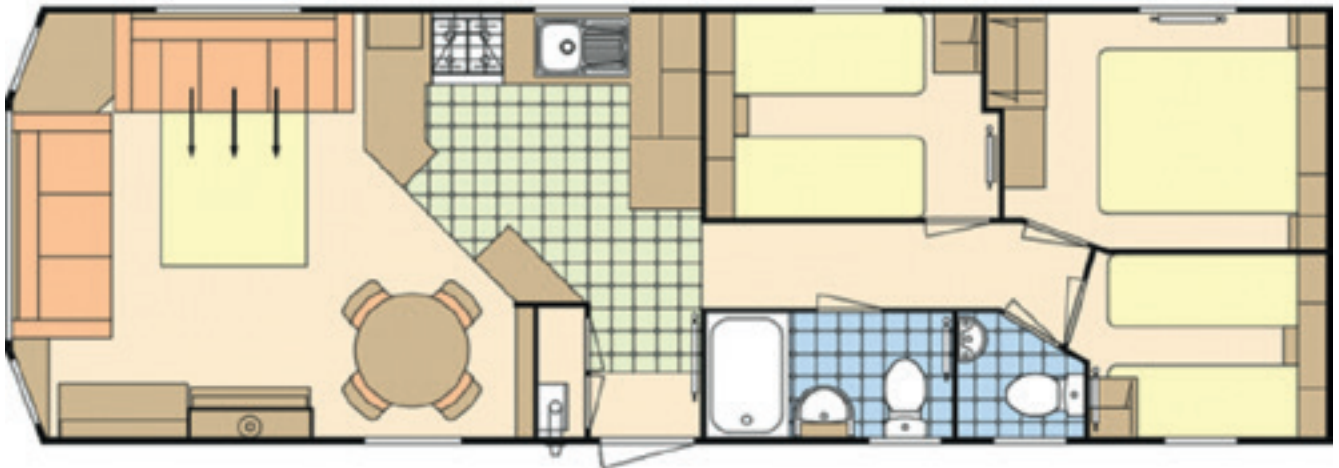
All of the adapted caravans have lockable wrap around decking and seating area with ramp and also a landeez all-terrain wheelchair is available to you during your stay and stored in a shed next to the caravan.



At one of the adapted caravans at Walton (**KP6**) and also at Clacton (**SV2**) we have installed a profile bed alongside one of the singles in the main bedroom. We can also arrange for a mobile hoist to be made available to you at these two caravans should you need it.



Caravan breaks



8 berth un-adapted caravans will have a similar layout as above which will include 3 bedrooms, the two smaller rooms will both have two single beds in each, the main bedroom will have a double bed and there is also a pull out sofa bed in the living area. They will have standard shower room and also additional toilet room.

The 8 berth caravans will also have lockable wrap around decking and outside seating area but these will have step and not ramp access to the caravan.

All of our caravans have double glazing and central heating, they are fully kitted out with everything you should need during your stay including bed linen and your beds (excluding the sofa bed) will be made for you upon arrival. You will need to bring towels with you and also washing up materials.



We have also installed fibre optic and sensory lighting into all of the caravans and a range of toys and DVD's are also in the caravans for you to use.

Swimming pool hoists have been upgraded at both sites. Valley Farm in Clacton now also has a Changing Places facility and access ramp at their swimming pool. We are still working with Naze Marine in Walton to try and get this in place but size restrictions on the building are making this more challenging.

The cost of your break will include your entertainment passes which will give you full access to everything on site. If you are having any visitors who are not booked into stay in your caravan you can arrange for some day passes to be issued



directly with the holiday site when you check in but there will be a small charge for this. Your cost will also include the caravan being cleaned after each stay.

Costs per stay are kept to a minimum charge and range between £130 – £170 (subject to annual running costs including pitch fees and maintenance/up keep of the caravans)

Bookings for 2020 will open in early January (exact date will be advised via mailing list and Facebook page) and can be made by visiting our website: shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk if you are not able to complete on-line please email shortbreaks@essex.gov.uk for a paper form

Caravan breaks

Please note you will need to be registered with short breaks and be issued with your unique passport number before being able to book a break



Caravan Bookings

To book a caravan you will be able to search by one or all of the options to narrow down what you are looking for.

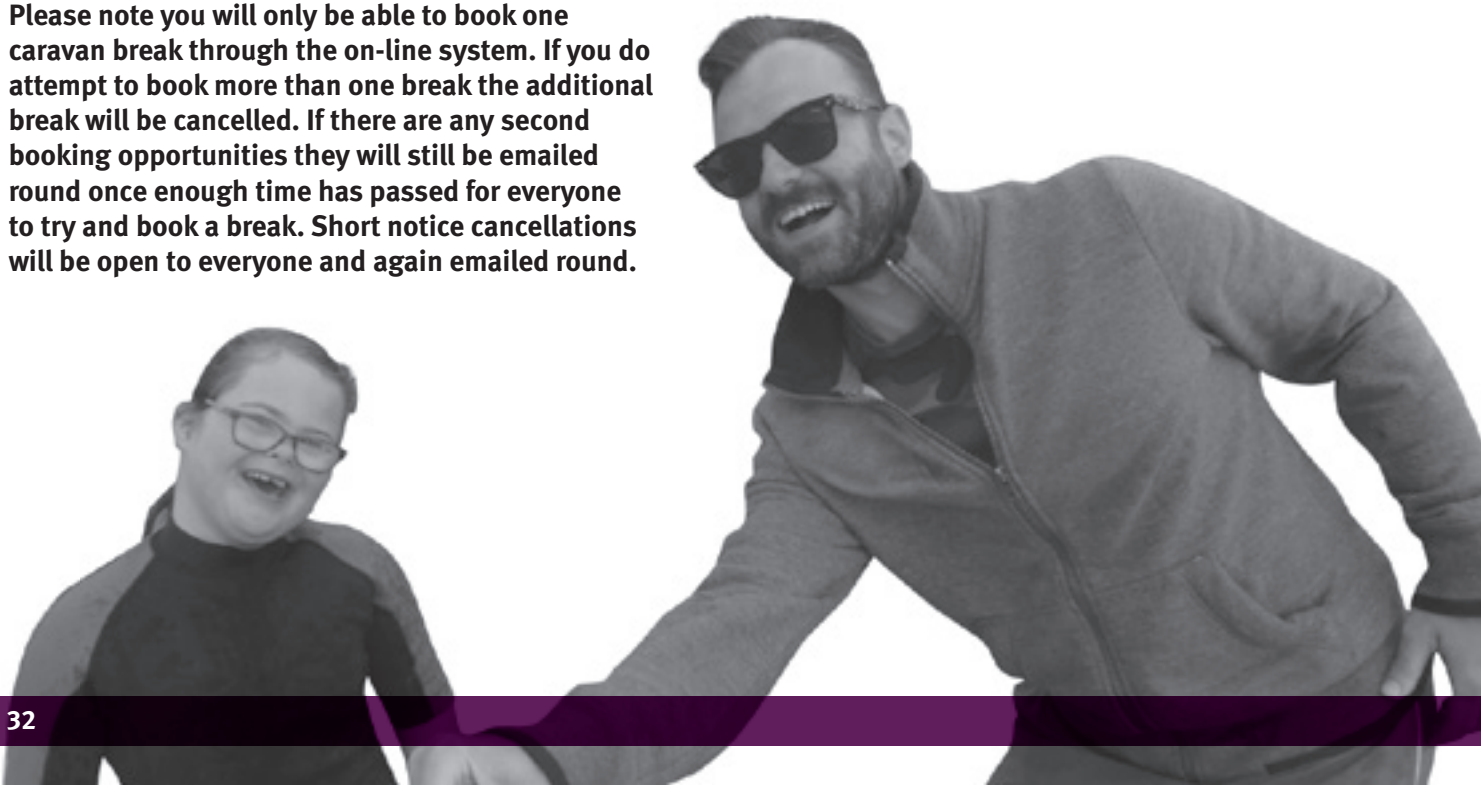
- Arrival Date (Set for either Monday to Friday or Friday to Monday only)
- Location
- Type of caravan (6 berth adapted or 8 berth un-adapted).

They system will then list all of the available options and a little bit more information about each caravan and the cost. You can then select and book the break you are interested in. At this point if you are looking for a double booking it will show you what other caravans are available for your selected date

Please note you will only be able to book one caravan break through the on-line system. If you do attempt to book more than one break the additional break will be cancelled. If there are any second booking opportunities they will still be emailed round once enough time has passed for everyone to try and book a break. Short notice cancellations will be open to everyone and again emailed round.

Once your booking has gone through and the payment of £20 has been paid through the on-line world pay system you will receive confirmation of your break **(Please note if you do not pay the deposit at the time of booking your break could be cancelled)**. You will receive notification 30 days before your break that the balance for your break is due for payment and this again will need to be paid on-line via the payment link emailed to you. This balance needs to be cleared no later than one week before your break or if a short notice booking by the date stated on your payment link. Once the balance has been paid your check in letter will then be emailed over to you.

By having the non-refundable deposit system in place the number of cancellations and wasted breaks has dropped drastically so we will be continuing with this system going forward. We still ask if you are not able to attend your break that you please give us as much notice as possible. If it is after you have paid your full balance a refund minus the £20 deposit will be issued back to the card you paid with. If this is less than 24 hours or just as you are due to be checking in it may result in only a partial re-fund of holiday balance as this may not leave us time to fill the break with another family.



Beach huts located at Clacton and Walton

For 2020 we are able to continue with the same £5 charge per day to book a hut. This charge is due to us having to pay yearly ground fees and maintenance costs for the huts.

We have for 3 years managed to keep the beach huts free of charge to families. For 2019 we will have to implement a £5 charge per day to book a hut. This is due to us having to pay yearly ground fees and maintenance costs for the huts which have increased as we now have 5 huts to look after.

The charge will need to be paid at the time of booking via the on-line system. If you need to cancel your booking as long as a minimum 24 hours' notice is given then the £5 charge will be refundable. If we are able to move your date then the payment will transfer over to the new date.



Clacton

We have three beach huts at Clacton which are located on the main promenade approximately halfway between the pier and the Toby Carvery restaurant. They are located near to the accessible ramp which gives direct access to the beach. The blue huts have an internal door allowing the two huts to open into one big hut allowing more space if needed for medical equipment or more than one child with a disability e.g. support groups, schools etc. Please note unless mentioned when booking you need both huts you will only be allocated one hut.

The Changing Places facility is located next to the main toilet blocks, a minutes' walk away from the huts.

There are two car parks nearby

Toby Carvery car park

Marine Parade West,
Clacton on Sea, Essex, CO15 1NW

Martello Bay car park

West Road,
Clacton on Sea, Essex, CO15 1AH

Please check Tendring District Councils website for local car parks and their charges
www.tendringdc.gov.uk/travel-and-parking/parking/car-parks-0

Walton

In 2019 we opened our second beach hut at Walton. This is located more towards the caravan site at the (Eastcliff) Naze end not near the pier. While this hut will not have ramp access due to restriction on the promenade it does have direct access to the beach with only the promenade separating. Naze Marine Holiday Park is just a few minutes' walk from the new beach hut. Located very near to Sunrays Kiosk (The Last Fisherman Café)
10 East Terrace, CO14 8PY

The original hut is located next to the Changing places on the main promenade. This is just a few minutes' walk away from the pier and also has ramp access down onto the beach. This hut does have storm barriers between the hut and the beach so if sitting in or outside the hut you wouldn't have direct site to beach in front of you. If you are staying at Naze Marine Caravan Park the beach hut is about a ten minute walk away.

There are two car parks nearby, one located at Walton train station and the second just over the road from the station.

Station Yard

Church Road, Walton on the Naze, Essex, CO14 8DE

Please check Tendring District Councils website for local car parks and their charges
www.tendringdc.gov.uk/travel-and-parking/parking/car-parks-0

Beach huts located at Clacton and Walton



Please note you will need to be registered with short breaks and be issued with your unique passport number before being able to book a hut.



Blue Badge Holders may park for 3 hours free of charge providing clock is set to arrival time and badge is displayed with expiry date and wheelchair symbol facing outwards.

All of our huts have a selection of beach toys available. We do ask if you accidentally damage any of the buckets and spades etc. could you please replace the items from one of the many shops and kiosks around the sea front area so there is still a selection available for the next guests.

There are also deck chairs / chairs and a table to use. We have provided a dustpan and brush in each hut and we do ask if all visitors can make sure the huts are left clean and tidy upon departure for the next visitors to use.

Please note none of our huts have running water or any power for health and safety reasons but there are lots of little cafés located along both promenades where you will be able to buy tea/ coffee and other soft drinks and ice creams.

Landeez all-terrain wheelchairs can be made available during your visit but due to a break in will no longer be kept inside the huts. If you require the use of a beach wheelchair for Clacton there is one held at Beach Patrol near the pier and for Walton a storage shed is located near the Changing Places. Details will be given when your access codes are emailed over to you before your visit.

Bookings for 2020 will be weather dependant as we will not open the huts during winter conditions (exact date will be advised via mailing list and Facebook page) and can be made by visiting our website shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk If you are not able to complete on-line please email: shortbreaks@essex.gov.uk for a paper form.

Beach Hut Bookings

When booking a beach hut you will again be able to search by one or all of the options of:

- Date
- Location
- Single or double hut (double hut for those with lots of medical equipment or groups such as support groups, special schools etc.)

Please note you will only be able to book one beach hut date through the on-line system. If you do attempt to book more than one date the additional date will be cancelled. If there are any second booking opportunities these will be advertised once enough time has passed for everyone to try and book one date.





News

This section is dedicated to information about new projects taking place within Short Breaks and the wider council.

It is made up of the following articles

- Harlow Inclusive Fun Day
- Riverside Leisure Centre
- Updated Information on SEND Schools
- Brentwood Inclusive Play Space
- Short Breaks Capital Scheme
- Inclusive Play Spaces
- Autism and Nature



Harlow Inclusive Fun Day

Spring 2019 will see the build and opening of a new inclusive play space which will be the latest addition to the lovely town park.

Summer 2019 saw the official opening of the new Inclusive Play Space at Harlow Town Park which completes the joint project between Harlow Council and Short Breaks to make the park and its facilities more inclusive to all visitors. The fun day welcomed all visitors to the park and included some of our wonderful short breaks providers of clubs and activities giving everyone a taste of what is on offer.



As well as the inclusive park area previous works include the addition of a changing place in 2017 and sensory equipment being installed in the Learning Centre and quiet areas like the Sensory Garden and storytelling area being completed in 2018 mean that the park alongside the much loved Pets Corner now has something to offer everyone that visits. Located next to Pets' Corner is Spurriers House Café which has disabled access and disabled toilets.

To access the Changing Places facility, families must register with Harlow Council for a unique key. The key can also be used to access the existing Changing Places site behind the bus station in the town centre. You can find the form at www.harlow.gov.uk and entering changing places in the search box.

The learning centre is also available to hire privately and for the booking form or for more information please visit the website www.harlow.gov.uk/pets-corner or contact either of the Education staff: mike.levett@harlow.gov.uk or pauline.neate@harlow.gov.uk

Harlow Inclusive Fun Day



Riverside Leisure Centre

2019 saw the opening of the redeveloped Riverside Leisure Centre, which brought modern, first class leisure facilities to the city centre.

As well as providing an affordable family-friendly leisure facility suitable for all, Chelmsford City Council will be working hard to increase participation in sport and increase activity within the community.



“I attended the Sport for Confidence sessions to help me begin my swimming journey, now I am able to be independent and attend the leisure centre without their support.”

Riverside Leisure Centre is Chelmsford City Council’s flagship leisure facility. The centre, in the heart of the city, is located along the River Chelmer and can be reached on foot, by bike, car or public transport. There are seven accessible parking spaces available in our open-air car park, five spaces in the undercroft car park and a drop-off area next to the centre. Riverside has two accessible entrances with low, sloped ramps and automatic entry and exit doors. Staff are available to offer assistance and at reception, there is a low-level desk fitted with an induction loop. Assistance animals are welcome in the centre. Riverside staff are trained to support a range of needs and staff have had both autism and deaf awareness training. The centre has plans for dementia awareness training, hidden disability training and further autism training soon.

The pool complex, soft play, creche, and café are located on the ground floor. The brand-new pool complex at Riverside offers customers a state-of-the-art swimming experience. The main 10 lane, 25m pool has an adjustable floor and is sometimes

split into two sections, allowing different sessions to take place at the same time. Pool lifts are available on each side of the pool, giving swimmers who need it access to whatever part of the pool they need, even during classes. There is also a 10m learner pool, a splash zone and a flume. The centre has fully accessible ground floor pool changing, with single, group and accessible changing rooms and a ‘Changing Places’ unit.

“The disabled facilities that are available are fantastic.”



Riverside Leisure Centre

The centre has level floors throughout, with two lifts – one for access to the ice rink and the other providing access to the gym, studios, sports hall and pool spectator platform. The 130-station gym has a wide range of equipment suitable for those with accessibility needs and carers assisting customers in the gym can come along free of charge. More than 150 group exercise classes from spin to yoga run throughout the week in our dedicated studios on the first floor and there are accessible changing rooms and a second ‘Changing Places’ unit for those using dryside facilities. There are six accessible toilets throughout the centre and ten baby changing areas, located in some of our accessible toilets.



Riverside offers a variety of accessible sessions, including multi-sports, basketball, swimming and boccia, supported by Sport for Confidence. Sport for Confidence also run pool sessions every Wednesday lunchtime (12pm to 1.30pm) and Friday evenings. The Friday session is scheduled after school and work hours, from 5.30pm to 6.45pm, and includes use of the main pool and learner pool. These sessions are available for anyone experiencing barriers getting into sport and a Sport for Confidence occupational therapist is also available to support customers living with disabilities, dementia, and autism. You can find out more at www.chelmsford.gov.uk/sportforconfidence

In addition, there will be a monthly ‘relaxed’ session which sees the centre close certain areas for an autism-friendly session, where customers and carers can enjoy use of the learner pool and its sensory equipment, including underwater jets,

chair nets for children to lie on, low lighting and light and colour projections on the walls. There are public sensory swim sessions every Thursday between 6pm and 7pm and also Friday between 1pm and 2pm which includes use of sensory lights, sounds and equipment. These sessions take place in the learner pool and run alongside a public swimming session in the main pool.



Additional work has been carried out to improve accessibility on the Riverside website, which follows best practice for colour contrast, text formatting and language – highlighting all of the accessible facilities and sessions available at the centre in one area. A new access film with BSL and subtitles is also available on the website, on screens in centre and on social media, showcasing the whole range of facilities and support available to customers. Social stories are being developed for different areas of the centre to help customers with a range of accessibility needs and these will be available at reception and on the website. Following consultation with disability groups and advisors, accessible internal signs and a range of icons have also been developed and installed around the centre. Each area of the centre is clearly defined, and these icons are also used online and for marketing to provide continuity.

For more information about the centre, visit www.chelmsford.gov.uk/accessriverside or call 01245 615050.

Riverside
Leisure Centre

Updated Information on SEND

Essex County Council is undertaking a major programme of investment in special needs education across the county. The aim is to provide over 350 new places for children who have an Education, Health and Care Plan.

The number of children in the County has increased and therefore the number of children presenting with special needs has increased too. Many more children and young people are being diagnosed with autism and social, emotional and mental health needs and Essex County Council is building new places to ensure they, and all children with special educational needs, have the best possible education.

The total investment in special needs places in Essex is likely to be around £85million. This includes £42million from the Essex Schools Forum, as well as capital funding from Essex County Council and central government.

The Council has already created and opened:

- 8 units of specially resourced provision in mainstream schools for children and young people with autistic spectrum disorder needs.
- 8 units of specially resourced provision in mainstream schools for children and young people with social emotional and mental health needs.
- **Lexden Springs Special School** has been rebuilt to provide a modern, purpose-built learning environment, providing 80 additional places including 30 Monday to Thursday boarding places.
- **Glenwood Special School** has been rebuilt with stimulating new facilities for 210 children and young people. Accommodation is under construction to provide 20 Monday to Thursday boarding places
- **Oak View Special School** has been expanded to provide 24 new purpose-built places for children on the autistic spectrum with moderate learning difficulties.
- **Kingwode Hoe School** has 12 additional places for children with moderate learning difficulties in KS1.

- **Harlow Fields School** has been expanded to address pressure on space within the school and create 5 additional places.

The following projects are currently being designed or constructed:

- A new special Free School for 75 children with autistic spectrum disorder needs in the Braintree area
- A new special Free School in Chelmsford for 64 children with Social Emotional and Mental Health needs including 15 Monday to Thursday boarding places
- A new special Free School in Chelmsford for 70 children and young people with autistic spectrum disorder who have complex needs with 10 Monday to Thursday boarding places
- A special school in Harlow for children and young people with social emotional and mental health needs including 15 Monday to Thursday boarding places
- **Southview School** will have an additional 24 places for children with physical and neurological impairments, including 10 Monday to Thursday boarding places.
- **Ramsden Hall School** will have 8 additional day places for children with SEMH in Year 6.

The Council's special needs capital programme seeks to ensure that each child and young person will be able to access the specialist provision he/she requires within his/her own community.

The Council's special needs capital programme ensures that each quadrant has a primary and secondary school with an autism support centre. While the young people spend most of their time taught in the same mainstream classes as their peers, they also have access to expert support as required.

Updated Information on SEND

Glenwood Special School



The primary provisions have eight places and the secondary provisions admit fifteen pupils. Access to the provisions is through the Statutory Assessment Service in Essex. In addition to the autism support centres, four Essex special schools have been designated as hub schools and are helping meet the needs of young people with autism, offering outreach support to mainstream schools. The hubs share skills, expertise and experience, helping develop programmes to meet the needs of individuals and offer training to groups of staff.

Lexden Springs Special School



Glenwood Special School



Brentwood Inclusive Play Space

Inclusive play equipment across Essex Parks

A new inclusive play area and Changing Places facility which supports children and young people with disabilities is planned as part of a phased improvement programme for King George's Playing Fields in Brentwood.

Phase one will see the completion of the toddler play area and changing places facility by Spring 2020.

Phase two and three will see the refurbishment of the Junior and Senior element of the play areas which will be due to be completed by Spring 2021 and Spring 2022 respectively.

The three elements of the play area have all been designed to be inclusive and equipment will include wheelchair roundabouts, nest swings, sensory play panels, sunken wheelchair accessible trampolines a wheelchair accessible multiply unit as well as sensory planting a story telling area and quiet zones.



Brentwood Inclusive Play Space

Subject to planning approval in January 2020, a brand new inclusive splash pad, and pavilion building will see fully inclusive facilities that will improve the offer for all children and families. The new pavilion building will house a bespoke sensory room facility and indoor soft play facility. This is due for completion in December 2020/January 2021. The splash pad will also have an all-terrain wheelchair located on site to allow all users access to this exciting new facility.

The project funded by Brentwood Borough Council and Essex County Council's Short Breaks for Disabled Children's capital grant programme. It is a key project as part of the Council's delivery of its Play Area Strategy, a five year programme to improve the Borough's Play Areas and provide inclusive facilities to families with disabled children.

As well as several public consultation events in 2019, the Endeavour special school, Brentwood Access Group and SNAP were consulted with. It is hoped King Georges Playing Fields will become a fantastic addition to not only residents but also a destination play space for other families to experience and enjoy.

Short breaks are pleased to continue our vision for enhanced play for all across the County, and discussions are due to take place in the next few months with Basildon Borough Council for the next inclusive play space and Changing Places facility.

Please keep up to date with all the latest news via the Short Breaks Facebook page www.facebook.com/shortbreaksecc and Brentwood Borough Councils website Social media links as follows:

Website: www.brentwood.gov.uk
 Twitter: [@Brentwood_BC](https://twitter.com/Brentwood_BC)
 Facebook: www.facebook.com/brentwoodcouncil
 Instagram: [Brentwood Borough Council](https://www.instagram.com/Brentwood_Borough_Council)



Drawings at time of going to print are not the final design and some elements have been changed.

Short Breaks Capital Scheme

For the third year running we have been able to offer the Short Breaks Capital scheme which is an opportunity for providers and organisations to apply for funding which is to be used to enhance provision for children and young people with disabilities.

Applications need to demonstrate that their bid will be used to create or expand accessibility and inclusivity to Essex Residents and also that they have consulted with their local community/ service users to make sure the equipment or minor adaptations they are bidding for increase access or open opportunities for those residents who may have previously struggled to attend. Applications were open to any organisation including specialist providers, mainstream activities and universal services including leisure centres and uniformed groups like scouts. This year we were pleased to award 12 providers whose applications totalled £150,000 and has been utilised for some of the following projects:

- Accessible mini buses
- Mobile hoist
- Accessible park equipment
- Soft play equipment
- Sensory equipment and lighting
- Wheelchair accessible swing and picnic benches
- Adaptations to premises
- Special string trampoline beds
- Accessible pathways
- Pool pod (wheelchair access lift).

Wickford Trampoline Centre

With the support of Short Breaks, the centre has recently upgraded their equipment giving special attention towards disability and special needs. The centre is NOT like usual trampoline centres, all our sessions are managed by BG qualified coaches, it has a special focus on disability and special needs through their renowned coach Debbie Fountain. The centre has three British Gymnastics disability qualified coaches who are all kept busy offering either one to one sessions or sessions within the normal running of this very friendly centre.

Newly installed are two special string trampoline beds that are much softer and kinder to users and much more comfortable and hard wearing. In addition, new sensory lighting allows all our centre users to enjoy the benefits of multi coloured patterns made on the beds as they bounce or are cared for on the beds.

The centre also has a brand-new hoist that allows them to lift children and adults from the floor into their wheelchairs or onto the trampolines, along with the new body belts our disability qualified coaches can manage our visitors without giving

themselves strains and injuries.
www.ultima-tc.club

Graham Parker of Wickford Trampoline Centre said, "The upgrades that we have been able to make with the support of Short Breaks has meant we have increased our disability and special needs sessions by 35% and the new users all agree it is one of their favourite times of the week when they get to participate in trampolining."



Short Breaks Capital Scheme



The Capital Grant means that we are able to transform our garden area at PARC and make it more inclusive. Centre stage will be a brand mud kitchen which has been built to our specifications, which will mean that children in wheelchairs will be able to play alongside other children. The new garden area will also feature other equipment, including a water wall and an outdoor musical station, which encourages sensory play and creativity. Outdoor play has many health benefits, both physically and emotionally, and we would like to take full advantage of our outside space at PARC. Thank you very much, Short Breaks, for allowing us to develop our outdoor space and giving children a wide variety of facilities. www.parc-essex.co.uk



A huge thank you to everyone involved in the capital funding process. We already had one minibus, but very quickly this was not enough, we were able to collect young people from one local special school, as well as those that were not able to get to us we were able to go along to their homes and pick them up ready for their day at club. As well as many different trips out into the local community. The bus was full and there were not enough seats available for all the young people that wanted to access our services. The funding we were awarded from the Essex County Council Short Breaks Capital grant, enabled us to purchase a second minibus, resulting in us being able to extend our offer to reach many more young people. We are now collecting young people from 3 local special schools. The young people love to go out into the local community, we have been able to and will continue to offer more trips out to more young people. The second minibus has increased the number of young people that are able to access our service. sharerespite.co.uk



“Here at Equal Performing Arts we were so grateful to receive the news that our bid for a Short Breaks capital grant from Essex County Council was successful as it means we can expand our provision that is currently bursting at the seams. We have an expansive building, but we have needed to develop the warehouse shell slowly as and when we have raised sufficient funds. Our organisation holds inclusion at its core, not only in the performing arts, but in the wider world.

All our classes are open to everyone and out of a timetable of 45 classes, 28 have students with additional needs in them working alongside the mainstream students. There are 4 dedicated SEND provision classes where we operate a buddy system, where by mainstream peer group mentors, work along-side the SEND students to enable them to access the activities; watching these relationships flourish and the lasting friendships this produces, only proves that this system promotes inclusion. Our aim is to provide the opportunity for all students to work together.” equalpeople.org.uk



Short Breaks Capital Scheme



The funding we have been awarded will be used to improve access to the farm, the abseil tower and zip wire for visitors with disabilities, those in wheelchairs but also those who are unsteady on their feet. Farm paths are muddy as you would expect, but also overgrown with weeds, rubble, gravel, and are very difficult to push a wheelchair on.

We are building solid paths that are flat and wide open to enable wheelchairs to move easily and safely between the areas and access the adventurous activities, alongside their more able-bodied peers. The paths will also assist young people participating in our longer-term programmes who regularly use wheelbarrows and other tools, so these paths would positively impact their experience and progress towards developing key skills.

Thanks to this capital fund last year, we purchased an accessible mini bus to create more opportunities for young people in wheelchairs to access our activities. In support of this, we must tackle our paths to make these activity areas of our site fully inclusive. www.lambourne-end.org.uk

InterAct

InterAct was thrilled to receive a Short Breaks capital grant from Essex County Council towards another wheelchair accessible minibus. This will support our Short Breaks activity programmes in Mid and North-East Essex.

We are also pleased to report that thanks to a further external grant, we can go ahead with the purchase of the vehicle.

The availability of this second minibus will enable us to meet the needs of a broader range of children and young people with Special Educational Needs and Disabilities through our activity programmes, both because of the additional seating capacity it provides, and through having greater flexibility to accommodate young people who are wheelchair users and their carers on trips out.

A suitable low-mileage used minibus has been identified, and this will be entering service with InterAct by the end of 2019. www.interact.org.uk

Other awarded providers

Happy Hills – Accessible mini bus

Chelmsford City Council – Pool pod lift, Riverside Leisure Centre and inclusive play equipment, Andrews Park, Chelmsford

Butterflies – Accessible mini bus

ECL – Wheelchair swing and accessible game top picnic tables and sensory equipment, Heston Lodge wellbeing hub

The Megacentre – Sensory room equipment and upgrades, Rayleigh



We also received an application for funding that didn't qualify under normal short breaks criteria but demonstrated not only a need but also that if awarded would make on-going revenue cost savings. This scheme was presented to our capital board who agreed that with the demonstrated need and cost savings it was a great idea and approved the additional funding of £25,000 to Trailnet CIC. The funding is awarded towards the cost of replace their existing cycle centre with a new modular unit which includes office accommodation, so they can move into site to provide seven days per week support to our service users, as opposed to the current four.

We will be running the application scheme again in April 2020 and interested parties can sign up to the notification list by emailing their details to shortbreaks@essex.gov.uk please note applications are not open to individuals. Further details will be released in Spring of 2020 including application process and level of funding available.



Inclusive Play Spaces

Inclusive Play Equipment across Essex Parks.

The Short Breaks for Disabled Children Team continue to look at options to support our vision of accessible play opportunities for all children and young people across Essex.

Our vision is that all children and young people should be able to play alongside their siblings and peer group in their local community, enabling the child to not only enjoy the outside play space but to be included and be able to access and use the play equipment that is available to them and every other child.

Outdoor play is beneficial for all children. It allows them to learn from nature and interact with their environment. Not only is it important for their physical health and development, but by enabling children, young people and adults to interact together, a play area can truly unite a community. Of course, some children find it easier to engage with play areas than others.

We continue to look at opportunities into working with the district councils and specialist play provision to look at larger inclusive play structures like the wheelchair accessible adventure castle at Hylands Park in Chelmsford, Bath House Meadow in Walton and Pets Corner in Harlow Town Park which opened in the Summer of 2019. We are also incorporating Changing Places within the large inclusive builds to ensure all children and young people have access to inclusive play without restrictions and can enjoy outside space with necessary facilities available to them.

Our aim is to work with the 12 district councils across Essex to make sure there is one large scale inclusive play space and changing place per district. Along with the three mentioned above we are already working with Brentwood Council for a 2020 build (further details can be found on page 42-43) and discussions are taking place with Basildon Council for 2021.

For an up to date list of inclusive play spaces in your local area including smaller scale local parks you can contact the Parks and Green Spaces department at your local district, town or borough council.

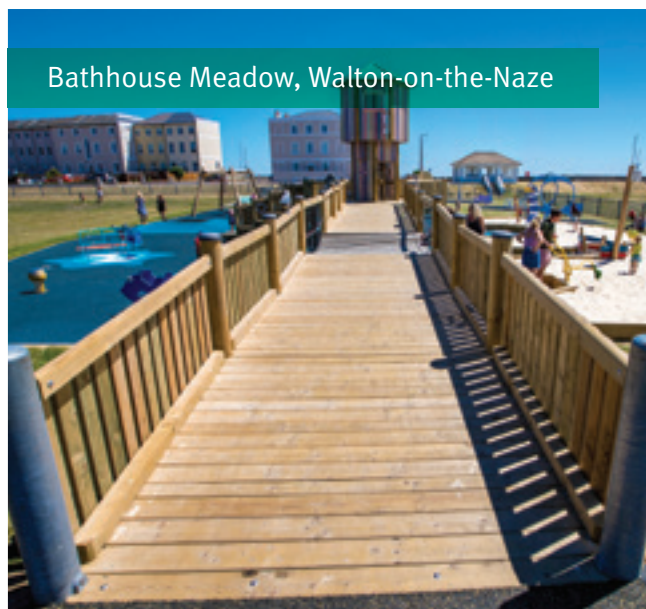
Hylands Park, Chelmsford



Pets Corner, Harlow Town Park



Bathhouse Meadow, Walton-on-the-Naze



Autism and Nature

Helping parents and carers to engage children with autism and related disabilities with nature, the countryside and their local heritage.

Autism and Nature is dedicated to helping children with autism and related disabilities engage with the countryside and the historic and cultural heritage of Essex. It produces guides for parents, carers and teachers, and story books and colouring books for children.

Guides to 'Visiting the Essex Countryside' and 'Exploring Essex's Heritage'; 'Alex and Rosie's Adventures in Essex' and 'Alex and Rosie's Essex Colouring Book' – are available free of charge from shortbreaks@essex.gov.uk.

Our publications are also free to download at www.autismandnature.org.uk/our-publications

Guides to help parents and carers

Our guides provide information to make visits to the natural and heritage places featured as relaxed and enjoyable as possible. The accounts of places highlight elements that families might easily see or experience; and emphasise aspects which may stimulate the senses of a child. Critically, the accounts in our guides help parents, carers and teachers to judge the suitability of places and prepare for visits with their children.

Story books and colouring books for children

We also produce story books and colouring books for younger children, using simple language with Widgit symbols. The books describe the adventures of Alex and Rosie, and give children the chance to read about, and colour activities they might undertake, and wildlife they might see at natural places featured in our countryside guide. The stories and illustrations also help adults prepare children for a visit to a particular place.

- In Oaklands Park off Rosham Street near the junction with New London Road (CM2 9AQ)
- Public transport: buses to/ from Basildon (Mon to Sun) and Braintree, Stansted Airport and Wickford (Mon to Sat) stop on New London Road, approximately 150 m from the museum
- Open daily (closed Dec 23, 24 and Jan 1); 'relaxed' opening 10 am to 12 noon on the 1st Sunday of each month (check website for details); free admission and car park (for longer than 2 hours, ask for a permit (free) at reception); blue badge parking next to the museum
- Accessible toilets and Blue Cafe
- Services: fully wheelchair accessible with steps, ramps and lift to the first floor; surfaced paths and grassy areas in Oaklands Park (further accessibility information on the museum website)
- Artificial lighting, subdued in some areas with brightly lit display cases; audio-visual and interactive displays
- Taxidermy specimens, mannequins, human skeleton and the 'body' of a Saxon on display
- Quiet space: Oaklands Park
- Children's playground in Oaklands Park
- Assistance dogs only in the museum; dogs may be encountered off lead in Oaklands Park
- Guide for visitors with autism and sensory description available to download on the website.

Chelmsford Museum

a fantastic local museum...

Chelmsford Museum has been recently refurbished, and represents a wonderful local museum that should appeal to many families with a child with autism. The entrance hall is spacious and well lit, and the staff on the reception desk are helpful and welcoming. The museum has a range of galleries designed to lead you through Chelmsford's history, from prehistoric times to the present day. An interesting place to start is the 'Prehistoric Gallery' on the first floor. As you approach the gallery, be sure to look at the observation beehive. If your child is happy to do so – children can look for the Queen amongst the mass of active honeybees and watch bees approaching the hive from outside. There is also a collection of taxidermy specimens in this area, including birds and animals associated with woodland. For children who might find this unsettling, there is an alternative staircase allowing visitors to avoid this area (ask at reception).

The Prehistory Gallery contains displays about Essex rocks, and examples of fossils in situ, in blocks of chalk, clay and red crag. Children might be particularly interested in the magnificent woolly mammoth tusks and teeth on display; the examples of Mesolithic axes and tools; or the hoard of gold Iron Age Celtic coins. There is also an opportunity here for children to try Iron Age weaving. Walk through to the Roman Gallery where you will find examples of building materials and a model of a Roman building (Mansio). Children can also design mosaics with trays of small tiles. Parents should note that the walkway



Titanic Radio Room



Excerpts from Alex and Rosie's Adventures in Essex and Alex and Rosie's Essex Colouring Book.



www.autismandnature.org.uk



ECC Services

This section is dedicated to other services offered through Essex County Council

It is made up of the following services:

- Essex Local Offer
- SEND in educational settings
- Essex SEND IASS
- Early Years and Childcare
- Children and Young People with Disabilities Service
- Fee paid Short Breaks Foster Carers
- Essex Libraries
- ECL Sensory Service
- Young Carers Support
- SEND Young Commissioners
- Talk Listen Cuddle (TLC)
- Essex Outdoors
- Essex Youth Service

Essex Local Offer

The SEND Code of Practice became law in September 2014 and saw many changes within the world of Special Educational Needs and/or Disability (SEND) provision. One requirement was for every Local Authority to have a Local Offer, which Essex County Council has produced in the form of a website: www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk

The aim of the Essex Local Offer is to provide information about what is available in the local community to support children and young people aged between 0-25 who have SEND. This includes information about education, health, social care, entertainment, leisure and employment. The information is for all children with additional needs.

Our vision for the Essex Local Offer

- **First port of call** – we aim for the Local Offer to be up-to-date and comprehensive, so that you can find everything you need in one place. We aim to include local services, information and events and signpost families to find support from local, regional and national services.
- **Think Local Offer** – if you use a service that is not yet on the Local Offer, let them know why they should join. Alternatively, let our team know and we can invite them to join. It is free to join for all organisations that offer something for children and young people with SEND.
- **Identify gaps** – where services and information aren't available, we will ensure decision-makers are made aware of this so they can influence future commissioning decisions.
- **Improve quality of services** – by directly involving families, professionals and the wider community, we hope to make the provision of services more responsive to the local needs



Working together

We would like you to be part of the continuing development and improvement of our Local Offer.

Children, young people and their families can:

- Suggest events, services and information that are not yet on our Local Offer. This can be done by contacting essex.localoffer@essex.gov.uk
- Ask services to get listed and post their events
- Share experiences of services on the Local Offer by contacting essex.localoffer@essex.gov.uk
- Share information and events on Facebook @ EssexLocalOffer

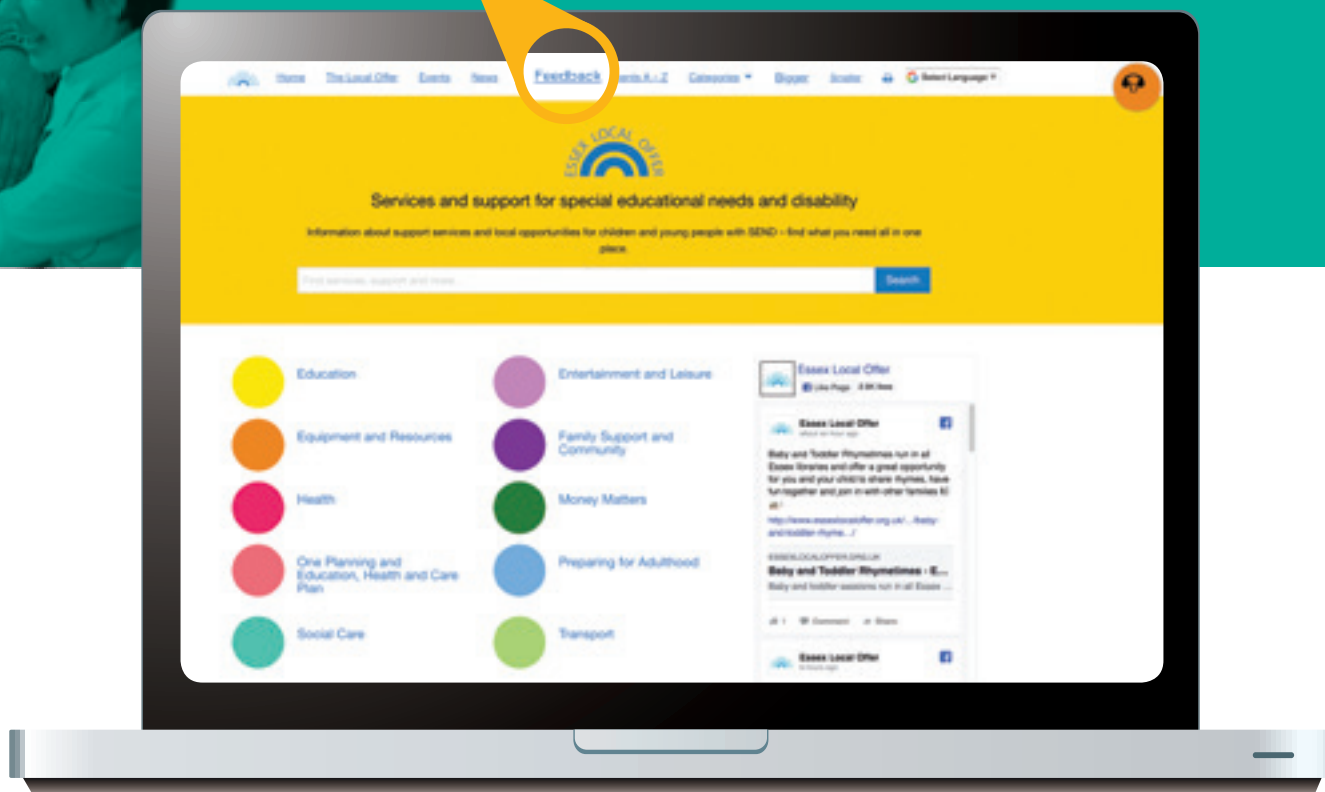
Service providers can:

- Add their service(s) and continue to review their information to ensure it stays up to date
- Post their events / workshops / training / news on the News and Events pages
- Share their services/events on our Local Offer Facebook page
- Encourage children / young people / families to share experiences of using their services and feedback to essex.localoffer@essex.gov.uk

All can:

- Give feedback about the Local Offer website and gaps in service(s) provision within the county via the 'Feedback button'

You can give your feedback
about the Local Offer website here.



Why is your feedback important?

As part of the Children and Families Act 2014, Local Authorities have a duty to continue to consult and coproduce the Local Offer with parents and young people. Therefore, as we continue to develop and expand, we welcome your views and suggestions so that we can make the Local Offer a resource that you will find valuable and informative. Your feedback directly impacts what information is available on the website and how it is set out.

We are currently undergoing a review of the Local Offer and would like your help. If you would like to contribute, whether it be completing a survey, joining our focus group or taking part in online testing, please email us essex.localoffer@essex.gov.uk to get involved.



www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk



Like us on Facebook @TheEssexLocalOffer for information, events, and more!

SEND in educational settings

The SEND Reforms introduced by the Children and Families Act 2014 has a focus on co-operation between education, health and social care and a greater focus on the outcomes which will make a real difference to how a child or young person lives their life. The reforms included changes for schools in order to improve outcomes for children and young people.

All children with special educational needs (SEN) or disabilities should have their needs met, whether they are in early years settings (like a nursery or a childminder), in school or in college.

Every school has a Special Educational Needs Co-ordinator (SENCO) who works closely with parents, teachers, support staff and other agencies to ensure that children and young people with SEN receive appropriate support and high quality teaching. To find out who your child's SENCO is, contact your school.

All schools and academies are required to make arrangements to support children with additional needs. As of September 2014, every school has to publish a **SEN Information Report**, which details the school's arrangements for identifying, assessing and making provision for pupils with SEN. Schools should try to publish this information on their website. If you cannot locate it, contact your school.

All schools provide planning, teaching and assessment which takes into account the wide range of abilities and interests of their children. Most children will benefit from these different approaches and will make progress, whilst other children may need more specific support.

On the 1 September 2014, the terms School Action and School Action Plus were replaced by the single term **School SEN Support**. This means that a child will be receiving additional or different support in school to meet their needs. Schools have a duty to tell parents if their child needs SEN Support and they must involve you and your child as fully as possible in any planning or decision making.

You can find out more about SEN support by contacting your child's education setting, or by contacting the SEND Information, Advice and Support (IAS) Service.

Whether your child has a statutory or non-statutory plan in place, they should follow person centred principles.

One Planning is how Essex describes a **person centred approach** to assessment and planning for children and young people with SEND.

One Planning is based on the principle that planning should start with the individual and must have regard to the views, wishes and feelings of the child, child's parents or young person, their aspirations, the outcomes they wish to seek and the support they need to achieve them.

Developing a One Page Profile is the perfect starting point for One Planning. Use person-centred tools to find out:

- What we appreciate (like and admire) about you
- What is important to you
- How best to support you

One page profile

PHOTO

What people like and admire about me

- I am happy and smiley
- I am kind and caring
- I love the sea and what lives in it
- I can read
- I am a One Direction expert
- I like to help out
- I am good on the computer

What makes me happy

- Cutting and sticking
- ipad / computer games
- Trampoline
- One Direction (music group)
- Dancing
- Rewards in schools
- Doing little jobs
- Swimming
- Watching TV shows about animals / under the sea
- Playing "Hide and seek" and "What's the time Mr Wolf?"
- Colouring
- Sea Creatures

How I like to be supported

- Being given choices (which are also acceptable to adults)
- For people to be calm and patient with me and to not lose their temper
- Giving me warnings for what's coming next - I can manage change when it is explained and I have warning
- Lots of praise and being positive. Please ignore safe low level behaviour
- Time to play with my friends and then some time with help from an adult
- Lots of things planned for distraction if it's needed
- Adults to always do what they say they are going to and for arrangements to be kept to
- I need to have regular sensory breaks and if I get "hyper" and am not listening, I may need quiet movement breaks such as a gentle stroll or doing a job. Carrying a heavy box could help to meet my sensory needs
- I need to have regular snacks throughout the day

SEND in educational settings

Essex has published a One Planning Guidance that covers the principles every professional working with a child with SEND in Essex should follow. This can be found on the Essex Local Offer website.

Sometimes a child or young person requires a more intensive level of specialist help that cannot be met from the resources available in the educational setting that they attend. This is the time to consider an **Education Health Care (EHC) needs assessment**.

An EHC plan brings your child's education, health and social care needs into a single, legal document, setting out the additional support to meet those needs.

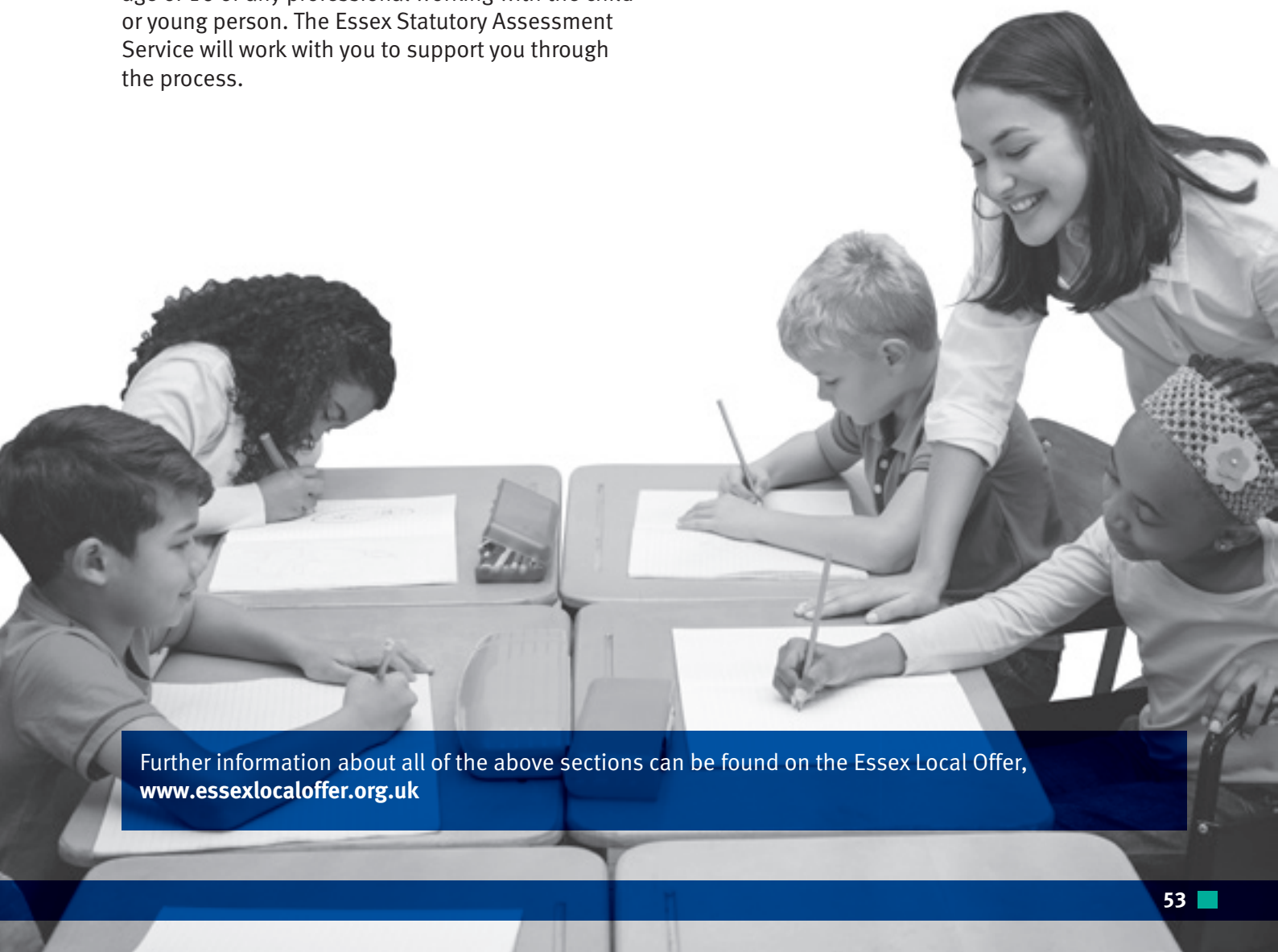
You should work with your child's education setting before requesting an EHC needs assessment to make sure all possible strategies have been put in place and all available resources have been used appropriately.

An EHC needs assessment can be requested by an educational setting, a parent, young person over the age of 16 or any professional working with the child or young person. The Essex Statutory Assessment Service will work with you to support you through the process.

Many children with an EHC plan will be taught in mainstream schools, but some may be taught in special schools. Special schools only provide education for children and young people with special educational needs.

EHC plans can continue up to the age of 25, but will stop if the young person goes to university, gets a job or if the local authority or family think they no longer need it, for example, because they have achieved the educational goals written in the plan and no longer need additional special educational help.

Preparing for adulthood is a key aspect of planning ahead for young people with SEND. It is about preparing for things like higher education, independent living, being involved in the community and being as healthy as possible in adult life. It needs to start early – schools and other service providers should start having discussions with young people about long-term goals, ideally before they reach the age of 14; parents also need to be included in those discussions.



Further information about all of the above sections can be found on the Essex Local Offer, www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk

Essex SEND IASS

How the Essex SEND Information, Advice and Support Service can help you...

The Essex SEND IASS (Special Educational Needs and Disabilities Information Advice and Support Service) is a confidential and impartial information, advice and support service on issues related to Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND).

It is free, easy to access and confidential.

Referrals can be made by a parent/carer/child/young person themselves or anyone who has their permission. We can help by:

- listening to your concerns and explaining what options are available
- explaining how education settings can support children and young people with special educational needs/a disability
- giving you information about what the law is and what your choices are, to help you make your own decisions.
- supporting you where required at meetings and helping you to get your views across
- finding voluntary groups and other agencies that can also support you, with the help of the Essex Local Offer
- guiding you through the Education, Health and Care Needs assessment process
- supporting you in discussions with education settings and the local authority where a child or young person is at risk of exclusion or has been excluded
- advise you on processes for resolving disagreements, appeals processes and means of redress
- consulting parents, children and young people and ensuring your views influence the development of local policy and practice for children and young people with special educational needs/a disability.

In addition we provide access to Independent Support and also to an Independent SEN Mediation service:

Families InFocus (Essex) is an independent, parent-led charity providing a range of support to families of children with disabilities and special needs across Essex.

Tel: 01245 353575
www.familiesinfocusessex.org.uk

Global Mediation provides an independent SEN mediation service for disagreements between parents/carers, young people and the local authority or an education setting.

Call Global on: 0800 064 4488
Email: sen@globalmediation.co.uk

email: send.iass@essex.gov.uk
tel: 0333 013 8913
text: 0786 000 3010
www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/listing/send-information-advice-and-support-service

Early Years and Childcare

Early Years and Childcare settings are preschools, playgroups, day nurseries, crèches, childminders, after school, breakfast and holiday clubs.

Early Years and childcare settings have a responsibility under the Equality Act 2010 to provide an inclusive service that meets the needs of all children, including those with SEND.

Support for children with SEND

All Early Years settings must have a Special Educational Needs Coordinator (SENCO) who works in partnership with parents, advises colleagues and liaises with other professionals to ensure that children with SEND receive the best care and support.

Independent nurseries and preschools are also supported by an Area SENCO from the Specialist Teaching and Preschool Service. The service hosts a dedicated Preschool SEN support and outreach team as well as providing specialist support from the Specialist Teacher team for young children with sensory impairments. Initial referrals to the Preschool service are made by Health professionals.

Area SENCOs ensure that all preschool children with SEND can access their entitlement to an inclusive nursery education (within the non-maintained sector). The team of Area SENCOs provides advice and guidance to early years providers on the development of inclusive early learning environments for preschool children with SEND. The Area SENCO helps the setting to make the links between education, health and social care so that they can make appropriate early provision for children with SEND and also support their transition to school.

Finding a setting

A full list of early years' providers can be found on the Essex Family Information Service.

To search for a childcare provider in your area, visit www.essex.gov.uk/earlyyears. This will also tell you about local Family Hubs (formerly Children's Centres) and Baby and Toddler Groups.

Providers will be able to share with you details of their Local Offer for children with SEND.



Free Early Education Entitlement

All 3 and 4-year-olds in England are entitled to 570 hours of free early education a year regardless of family income or circumstances. This is also available for some 2-year-olds, for example, if your 2-year-old has an Education, Health and Care Plan or receives disability living allowance, they may be eligible.

This is usually taken as a term time offer of 15 hours each week for 38 weeks of the year. The entitlement for working parents of 3 and 4-year-olds is an additional 570 hours that can be accessed with participating Ofsted registered providers, including childminders. For more information about eligibility and how to apply, ask at your local family Hub or visit www.essex.gov.uk/earlyyears.

Additional Funding

For children who require enhanced adult support to fully access a setting, extra funding is available for settings. This is either by a supplement (SEN premium) to the Free Early Education Entitlement funded hours for children formally notified to the local authority, or by Early Years and childcare Funding funding for non-notified children and/or for any additional hours a child attends. Parents should not be asked to pay more for their child's place than is charged for a child without SEND.

Details for early years settings/providers, and how to apply for inclusion Funding, are available on www.essex.gov.uk/earlyyearsandchildcare

Children and Young People with Disabilities Service

We want the best outcomes for all children and young people in Essex and this includes those with a disability. The best outcomes are the “right outcomes” for each child.

Our aim is to help people to achieve outcomes that enable them to achieve their best hopes and aspirations for life.

Successful and resilient families, friends and communities that include and enable children and young people to participate in are the key to providing the best outcomes. Children who live in resilient and successful families are more able to develop into the most successful adults. Essex is totally committed to supporting this process.

Essex County Council, 0-25 Children and Young People with Disabilities Service

The Children and Young People with Disabilities Service can provide social care support for children/young people from birth up to 25 years of age who have special educational needs and/or disabilities, who are still in education and meet eligibility criteria.

The service offers a county wide remit with offices in Chelmsford, Colchester, Basildon and Harlow. Within each office are a number of teams which work closely with each other in order to provide a smooth and integrated service.

These teams are:

- Children with Disabilities social work
- Young People with Disabilities social work
- Children and Young People Support Services
- Preparing for Adulthood
- Occupational Therapy.

Where a child/young person and family need more support than community services and school can provide, a social worker may visit to assess the child and family's needs and then work out with you what support is necessary. Social care is also responsible for child protection and for supporting children in care.

Depending on needs and eligibility the teams may be able to help with:

- Information and advice about other sources of support
- Additional support
- Carer support
- Direct Payment/Personal Budget to meet care needs.

Young people aged 18+ that are not already known to the service should contact Adult Social Care to request an assessment. Please call **0345 603 7630**.

Essex County Council has an obligation to assess the needs of children and young people with disabilities and then to offer support and services if there are needs that cannot be met within the family or community, including, where appropriate, a Personal Budget (which would be in the form of a direct payment or direct provision of services) to meet the needs identified of the child or young person and their carers.

The Child and Family Assessment (for children under the age of 18) will be carried out by a social worker and will identify the strengths and any unmet needs of the child. Together we will explore your extended networks (whether this is through family, friends or other community resources) to see if these networks can help support the unmet needs of the child. Should additional support be required (and universal and/or community services cannot support) then, together, we will see how best these needs can be met. Any support services that need to be put in place will be outcome focussed and must directly meet the unmet needs, as identified within the assessment. The assessment will be reviewed regularly to ensure that we capture the changing circumstances of the child and to ensure the right support is in place and is achieving the outcomes identified within the support plan.

Children and Young People with Disabilities Service

Personal Budgets

If the assessment/s carried out identified eligible unmet needs which can't be met by natural support networks and/or universal/community-based services, Essex County Council will support you financially in order to pay for services to meet these needs.

This financial support could be provided in the form of a Personal Budget/Direct Payment. This method of financial payment allows you the flexibility to purchase the support to suit your family circumstances - but it must be used to support the unmet needs as identified within the assessment. The service/s purchased must clearly link to the support plan and the outcomes identified for the child/family within the plan.

The Personal Budget can be paid as a direct payment or directly commissioned services – or a mixture of both.

The personal budget payment for a child under 18 is tax free and will not affect your benefits or family income.

For disabled children and young people with an Education, Health and Care Plan (EHCP) the social care assessment will determine the social care element of the EHCP. Young people will need a plan that is focussed on preparing them for adulthood. This plan will consider further education, employment, and independent living. We will seek to work in partnership to develop this plan.

The 0 – 25 social care teams provide a range of services subject to the individual needs identified, these may include;

- Support to children and young people and their families in their home, where appropriate.
- Helping parents identify local resources within their community
- Helping young people with preparation for adulthood.
- Personal care and behavioural support for families experiencing difficulties managing their child's care and behaviour in the home.
- A personal budget which would be in the form of a direct payment to the child's parents, carers or to a disabled young person aged over 18 years. This payment will enable the receiver to purchase care services for themselves in order to meet the unmet needs as identified in the social care assessment.
- Short break provision for children and young people with complex care and behavioural needs.
- Community-based short breaks.
- Child protection and adult safeguarding.
- Short breaks for parents and carers of a disabled child at home or in a different setting.
- Short breaks such as Shared care and other support for disabled children and young people in care.



Children and Young People with Disabilities Service

The following link provides guidance about assessing and supporting disabled children and young people and their families
www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/social-care-assessments

Turning 18

If you are already known to the Children and Young People with Disabilities Service, before your 18th birthday your social worker will carry out a Transition Assessment. This will identify your care needs as an adult. Within the planning we will also consider how you can be supported into further education, employment opportunities (paid or voluntary) and your longer term accommodation options.

We will carry out a Financial Assessment to see if you will have to pay something towards your care.

We may also carry out a Mental Capacity Assessment to make sure that you are able to make your own decisions.

If you are unable to manage your own finances at 18 we will discuss who will take on this responsibility and the options available.

Once you have finished your formal education your social worker will review your care needs and if you still require social care support you will be allocated a new social worker within Adult Social Care. (For young people leaving care the age to transfer to an Adult Social Worker will be 21 years or 25 if still in formal education).

Contact Details

If you feel you need support or to find out more about Essex County Council children's social services please call: **Tel: 0345 603 7627**

To request an assessment for a Young person aged 18 or over call Essex Social Care Direct on **0345 6037630**.

Occupational Therapy

Our Occupational Therapists work with children and young people who have a substantial and long-term disability which makes day-to-day activities difficult.

We will visit your family at home to explore what activities are challenging and work with you to consider how things can be improved. This might include:

- Other ways of managing an activity
- Advice and information
- Loan of specialist equipment for bathing, seating etc.
- Minor adaptations – installing handrails, half steps etc.
- Advice on techniques or loan of equipment to support manual handling
- Major adaptations – provision of stair lifts, ramped access etc.

Where we agree a major adaptation is required to improve independence or to support the care for a child, we will discuss options with you for a Disabled Facilities Grant.

You can find out more about this grant at www.gov.uk/disabled-facilities-grants/overview

Social care occupational therapists work with people in their homes to help make everyday tasks easier. You can request an assessment by calling **0345 6037627** or Email: foh@essex.gcsx.gov.uk

If your child has behaviour that challenges, their occupation therapist may seek additional support from the Behaviour Advisory Team.

Health service occupational therapists provide help to support rehabilitation after an operation or an injury, support within the school setting as well as postural care.

Wheelchairs are provided by health services. Your doctor or health therapist can refer you to your local wheelchair service.

Children and Young People with Disabilities Service

Preparing for Adulthood

Preparing for Adulthood (PFA) Advisors work with young people who have an Education, Health and Care plan (EHCP) at key transition stages between the ages of 13 and 25.

Your PFA Advisor can provide impartial advice on further education, training and employment to help identify suitable options and pathways. They will be happy to meet you in a range of settings including at school, college or at home.

Your PFA Advisor will complete a PFA Action Plan which will form part of the One Planning process and contribute to the EHCP.

A High Needs Further Education team processes applications for additional funding to enable learners with learning difficulties and/or disabilities to access Post 16 college provision.

Adult Social Care

Once you have finished your formal education (and are over 18 years old) your current social worker will review your care support package and make any changes needed. Once any changes have been put in place you will be re-allocated to an Adult Social Care team who will continue to provide support in your adult years. You can read more about the role and function of social care for adults at www.essex.gov.uk/Health-Social-Care/Pages/Health-and-Social-Care.aspx

Transport

If your son or daughter has an Education Health and Care Plan, is of compulsory school age and is attending their nearest suitable school, they may be entitled to free home to school transport.

Post-16 transport is available, at a charge, for eligible students aged 16 to 19.

Further information, along with Essex County Council's transport policy, can be found on the Essex Local Offer (www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk) within the Transport section.



Fee paid Short Breaks Foster Carers



Getting a break

Having a break is important for parents and siblings. If a child has a disability they might require more care or supervision than some other children. This means that the need for a break can be even greater.

Some parents can be very reluctant to leave their child with someone else to care for them. Sometimes, if a parent is not given a rest from caring, physical tiredness and stress can build up to a point where they feel unable to cope.

What is fee paid short breaks?

The fee paid short breaks scheme was launched in 2014 to support children with disabilities presenting with challenging behaviour and complex needs and to avoid the need for residential care as much as possible. The regular short breaks enable the carer to build a warm and nurturing relationship with the child and their family.

How to get involved

For this role, we are looking for people who have experience of caring for children with disabilities in health, education or similar. Applicants would be able to offer 3 nights (part time) or 5 nights care a week. The scheme offers carers a generous fee and an additional allowance is also paid for each night that a child stays with them.



We appreciate that first call can feel a bit daunting to some. However, if you are interested in being approved as a short breaks foster carer for Essex and would like to discuss this further and have your questions answered please visit www.essex.gov.uk/fostering or call us 0800 801 530.



Fee paid Short Breaks Foster Carers

Sally and Barry have been approved for a number of years now, and in that time have been matched with a number of children and young people.

Although there have been challenges and the needs of the young people have been complex, Sally and Barry enjoy the role immensely. They are approved full time with the scheme and Barry has now retired from work, so that they can both be available to care for more of the time.

“Being a short breaks carer is so rewarding, we support not just the child but their whole family. We provide a home from home experience for the child and the opportunity to try new experiences - we took one child to an evening carnival which she loved and hadn't previously experienced. We support the families with a break from sleepless nights, meals out and holidays to recharge batteries.”



“We have also been able to arrange children's stays with parents, so that parents, brothers and sisters have been able to go away for break or even to a wedding.”

“We have also been able to arrange children's stays with parents, when parents, brothers and sisters have been able to go away for break or even to a wedding.”

“My role not only provides support and care to the child, but also to parents and siblings. The children receive care in a family home, have individual attention and get to experience everyday family life, with similar routines to those in their own home.”



Think Fostering, Think Essex County Council...

We are looking for caring, passionate individuals who can offer regular and sustained breaks for children with a range of disabilities.

This is a truly rewarding role for someone who has the commitment, time and experience to make a real difference to the lives of children in Essex.

Could you or someone you know foster?

essexadoptionandfostering.co.uk/fostering

0800 801 530

@essexadoptandfoster



Essex Library Services

Services to support children and young people

Sensory stimulation and interactive experiences are necessary for all aspects of child development and learning. Library Sensory Spaces will feature activity and tactile panels, infinity tunnels, sound activated light panels, projectors, interactive floor panels, fibre optic lighting, waterless bubble tubes among other equipment.



- All families are welcome at Baby and Toddler and Daddy Cool Rhymetimes. As well as places to share songs, stories and friendship, rhyme sessions have been shown to support mums' mental health as well as children's learning and wellbeing.'



- **Read With Me Under a Tree Library Bag** – These exciting outdoor themed kits can be borrowed from libraries via the library catalogue. They include books, activity ideas, a ground sheet and the autism friendly books Alex and Rosie's Adventures in Essex and Visiting the Essex Countryside.
- **Parent Information Booklists** – available via the library catalogue. There are booklists on 28 different topics including Autism; Children with additional needs; Fears, worries and anxiety; Feelings and Emotions; Mental Health and Wellbeing and New Experiences. Each booklist is a mix of books for parents and books to share with children.
- **Sensory Walls** – There are sensory walls in a small number of libraries and you can find a list of sensory events for children on the library events webpage. Clacton Library has a sensory room.
- **Books for visually impaired children** – Resources include large print books, audio books, giant print and braille picture books, Clearvision books, e-books and e-audio books. If your child has a visual impairment or other print disability they are entitled to a Children's Access Card.

- **Library Events** – Find out about events taking place at your local library via the library events webpage.

To find more information about Essex Libraries, including the services listed here please visit libraries.essex.gov.uk



Essex Library Services

Sensory Spaces

Sensory stimulation and interactive experiences are necessary for all aspects of child development and learning. Library Sensory Spaces will feature activity and tactile panels, infinity tunnels, sound activated light panels, projectors, interactive floor panels, fibre optic lighting, waterless bubble tubes among other equipment.

The sensory spaces will have some regular bookings and during this time will only be available to those groups for example during baby and toddler story times/activities. They will at other times be available to book in advance for exclusive use by groups and they will also be available for everyone to use at times allocated for the general public sessions.



Please see libraries.essex.gov.uk/events for on-line details of events and sessions in Essex Libraries or for more information on individual sensory spaces, equipment available and opening times please see contact information below:

Basildon Library

The Basildon Centre, St. Martins Square, Basildon, Essex, SS14 1EE.

Email: Basildon.library@essex.gov.uk
or call 03330 132642

Chelmsford Library

County Hall, Market Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 1QH.

Email: Chelmsford.library@essex.gov.uk
or call: 03330 132634

Clacton Library

Station Road, Clacton-on-sea, Essex, CO15 1SF

Email: Clacton.library@essex.gov.uk
Telephone: 03330 132651

Colchester Library

Trinity Square, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1JB.

Email: Colchester.library@essex.gov.uk
Telephone: 03330 132640

Loughton Library

Traps Hill, Loughton, Essex, IG10 1HD.

Email: Loughton.library@essex.gov.uk
or call on 03330 132677



Other support is available at your local library including books for visually impaired, talking and audio books. For more information about services available please visit libraries.essex.gov.uk/children-and-young-adults

ECL Sensory Service

Hearing and/or visual impairment support in Essex

The ECL Sensory Service on behalf of Essex County Council works in partnership with the voluntary sector, social care, specialist education teams and health partners to co-ordinate services for people with sensory impairments of all ages across the system. It also delivers specialist information, advice and guidance on all aspects of sensory support.

Essex County Council has teams of specialist teachers and support staff who provide support and advice to families and staff working in preschools, schools and post-school educational establishments.

The specialist teacher team deliver communication sessions called **C**hildren with **H**earing **I**mpairment **P**lay and **S**tay groups (**CHIPS**) for preschool children and their parents.



“In lessons I have my work brailled up for me. Most of my lessons apart from Maths and German are all printed out on the brailnote, which is a small computer that has braille and it can do all sorts of different things – such as you can copy work from it on a memory stick to go into a computer and that’s how I get most of my homework.”

“The CHIPS group has been a great source of support for us as family, I was so happy that CHIPS group was somewhere local that I could regularly go and meet other families going through similar experiences and not feel alone.”



For more information about the Hearing Impaired, Vision Impaired or Multi-Sensory Impaired (Deafblind) teams google Essex Local Offer and click the link for Education then Specialist Educational Services.

Essex Children and Families Social Care teams have a sensory specialist social worker lead in each quadrant area of Essex:

Mid (Braintree, Chelmsford and Maldon),
South (Basildon, Castlepoint and Rochford),
North East (Colchester and Tendring) and
West (Brentwood, Epping Forest, Harlow and Uttlesford).

ECL Sensory Service

These specialist social workers ensure children and young people's hearing and visual impairments are identified and supported appropriately, offering advice and guidance to support social workers or other relevant professionals, which may include advice on equipment within the home environment and sensory registration.

Essex County Council Occupational Team has a (re)-habilitation worker who is specialist in the practical and emotional aspects of visual impairment for children and young people, supporting independence within the home and social settings, which may include provision of equipment.



Social workers and specialist teachers work closely together to support children, young people and their families.

Some children, young people and adults register their visual or hearing impairments. If you want to know more about registration you can talk to ECL sensory service, specialist teacher, social worker or the Children and Family Hub.

Information about voluntary organisations that can also provide information, advice and guidance can be found on ECL Sensory website and Essex Local Offer.

Families of children with hearing impairment registered with Short Breaks describe how they found it:



“A good positive experience.”



“A great weekend away and fun at the beach with the family.”

Access to all Children and Families Social Care teams and the Occupational Therapy teams is through the Children and Family Hub:

Family Advisor – tel: 0345 603 7627

For more information go to Essex Effective Support online Portal: **www.essexeffectivesupport.org.uk**

ECL Sensory Service: **www.eclsensoryservice.org**

The Local Offer: **www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk**



Young Carers Support

Essex Young Carers Service

Young carers are children and young people under 18 years old who provide regular and on-going care to another person who is physically or mentally ill, disabled or misuses substances.

Young Adult Carers are aged between 16 – 24, and can also access support from this Service.

Many young people don't see themselves as carers and may not realise there is practical and emotional support available in Essex.

You may be a young carer if you:

- care for a family member, because of illness, disability or old age
- help someone with bathing or dressing, going to the toilet or getting into/out of bed
- need to cook for your family
- look after money or organise the family budget
- help anyone to take medication regularly
- collect prescriptions or benefits on behalf of someone else or go shopping for the family
- look after brothers or sisters, by taking them to school, doing their laundry, or cooking their meals
- take care of housework, such as dusting, hoovering, washing or ironing
- speak on behalf of someone who has difficulty speaking or communicating for themselves
- translate or interpret for someone at home.



Young Carers Support

The Effects of being a Young Carer

- you have responsibilities at home that prevent you from spending time with your friends, or inviting them around your house
- you feel sad, angry, guilty or embarrassed about the help you give to anyone at home
- you feel upset that friends don't have the same responsibilities
- you avoid telling anyone outside the family about your home situation.

How can the young carer key workers help?

- We offer free personalised support to young carers and their families that will be developed with you around your need for help and the caring you do.

The service offers:

- Confidential one-to-one support with a dedicated key worker in the area you live, including telephone support.
- Information, advice and guidance and assisting you to access other services to support you as a young carer.
- Training opportunities e.g. moving people safely, building confidence and self-esteem, fire safety and access to counselling services if needed.
- Recreational activities to take you away from your caring role and meet other young carers and make new friends.
- Transition to adult carer services as you come up to 18.

Where can you access the Essex Young Carers Service?

- Key workers are available across the whole of Essex and will be based in your local area.
- They will visit you at home, school or somewhere else at an agreed time.

How can you access the Service?

Families or Young Carers themselves can self-refer or a referral can be made by professionals including GP's, NHS staff, Social Workers and Teachers.

For more information:

www.essex.gov.uk/young-carers
[facebook/eccyouthservice](https://www.facebook.com/eccyouthservice)
 0345 743 0430

link to the online referral form
<https://forms.essex.gov.uk/default.aspx/RenderForm/?F.Name=VxC8Pwm6m3H&HideAll=1>



SEND Young Commissioners

Get involved and have your say in local projects for SEND young people!

Could you be a SEND Young Commissioner?

What is a Young Commissioner?

As a SEND Young Commissioner you will help to give a voice to young people in your local community, to ensure that youth projects and services are the best they can be to meet everyone's needs.

Send Young commissioners:

- Are aged 13-25
- Live in Essex
- Have a special educational need or disability
- Have an interest in their community.

What is the program?

Our specially tailored SEND young commissioner training is delivered over 10 sessions. It will help give you the skills and confidence to work with members of your community to develop projects and activities so they cater better for SEND young people and their families. It will help you to make a real difference in your area.

After the training, you could get involved in budgeting, marketing, developing the Essex Local Offer website, shaping the short breaks programme or quality-assuring services.

After the 10 weeks you can be involved as much as your time will allow and activities will be fitted in as much as possible around your availability as a group.

Activities could include – presentations, film making, secret shopper experiences, Interviewing, discussion groups & more.

Volunteering your time is a great way not only to learn new skills, but also to get recognition that can be used towards the Duke of Edinburgh Award Scheme, developing your CV whether it is for employment, college or university.



For more information:

melinda.yems@essex.gov.uk
or 07717802991

Talk Listen Cuddle (TLC)

TLC is an Essex wide campaign helping parents, carers and families give their young children the best start in life, developing their communication skills through playful learning at home.

We have a website that includes games and rhymes, top tips and ideas including a range of resources which you might like to download and share with your child.

www.tlc-essex.info

This site will regularly post a range of ideas, top tips and games to support children's language, physical and emotional development. Its aim is to ensure children start school ready to explore, learn and make friends.

We also have a fantastic Facebook page with daily updates, ideas and links to activities and local events don't forget to like us when you visit!

www.facebook.com/talklistencuddle

You can contact us in the following ways:

By email: **tlc@essex.gov.uk**
 By post: Early Years and Childcare
 Essex County Council
 PO Box 47
 Chelmsford CM2 6WN



50 things to do before you are 5

Playing with your child is one of the most important things you can do to support their development – exploring first hand experiences and everything on our list will help you enrich and support your little one's language and communication skills as they grow.

You can complete the list online or print it off, stick it on the fridge and tick off each activity as you go. Share and upload photos of you and your little ones on your adventures on our Facebook page and once you've conquered all 50 together, print a personalised certificate via the link below.

Ready, steady, go!

Read with me under a tree

Reading with your little one is a great way of helping them develop their communication skills and expand their vocabulary – and the best bit is you can read together almost anywhere! The great outdoors offers lots of possibilities for learning new things and being creative, and books can often be the starting point for coming up with your own games and activities – why not act out your favourite story together using homemade props and soft toys? You can borrow a Read with me under a tree activity pack free of charge from Essex Country Parks. The packs include a book, themed activity sheet and den building kit to help you get outside and have fun! Head for the visitor centre or rangers office to ask for a pack.



Essex Outdoors

Activities for disabled children and young people

Essex Outdoors are looking for adventurous children and young people with a disability who would like to participate in outdoor activities such as archery, aerial runway, canoeing, caving, climbing, high ropes, sailing, adventure course and more!

Essex Outdoors are looking for adventurous children and young people with a disability who would like to participate in outdoor activities such as archery, aerial runway, canoeing, caving, climbing, high ropes, sailing, adventure course and more!

With centres in Bradwell, Danbury, Harlow and Mersea, Essex Outdoors is committed to providing inclusive opportunities for children and young people with a disability, enabling them to try new activities, build self-confidence and gain the most from their outdoor experience. Our experienced instructors and centre staff provide accessible activities for individuals and groups tailored to the needs of the participants who can participate alongside their peers and supporters.

Our centres offer a wide range of activities including archery, climbing, aerial runway, sailing and high ropes, dependent on the facilities at a chosen centre. Our Bradwell centre offers sailing & crabbing days on the River Blackwater in our Bradwell 22s, a ketch rigged day boat ideally suited to all types of groups and sea conditions. Canoe days are available on the Chelmer and Blackwater Canal where participants paddle along the tranquil canal in canoes rafted to ensure stability.

Each August the Mersea Island Festival (MIF) is an inclusive camp that takes place at the Mersea centre and offers a range of indoor and outdoor activities, meals and evening entertainment. Participants can stay for the week or weekend or come for a day visit. Visit www.merseafestival.org.uk for more information.

“Thanks so much for a great day - aimed perfectly at the children's abilities.”

essex
outdoors



“A brilliant day - thank you so much. It has helped his confidence, concentration and new skills in a fun and safe environment.”



Essex Outdoors



“We had amazing quality time together with fantastic activities and brilliant staff and volunteers. The other campers so friendly and helpful such a great atmosphere.”
(Camper at Mersea Island Festival)

If you are interested in our opportunities, have any queries, or would like to be kept informed of any developments in our work for those with disabilities please contact us:

Visit our website:

www.essexoutdoors.com/adventure_for_all.php

Email: **inclusion@essexoutdoors.com**

Twitter: **@EssexOutdoors**

Facebook: **Essex Outdoors**



BRADWELL

Essex Outdoors Bradwell
Bradwell Waterside
Southminster
Essex CM0 7QY
Phone: 01621 776256

HARLOW

Essex Outdoors Harlow
Burnt Mill Lane
Harlow
Essex CM20 2QS
Phone: 01279 620270

DANBURY

Essex Outdoors Danbury
Well Lane
Danbury
Essex CM3 4AB
Phone: 01245 223342

MERSEA

Essex Outdoors Mersea
Rewsalls Lane
East Mersea
Colchester
Essex CO5 8SX
Phone: 01206 383226

“There was a lovely atmosphere with all joining in. You could see the children growing in confidence throughout the day. Thank you for a fantastic day.”

YOUTH SERVICE

Inspire
Enable
Achieve

Essex Youth Service works in partnership with a range of organisations to run youth provision for SEND young people.



Going along to your local Youth Club is a great way to meet other young people, try new things, have fun and take part in lots of activities!

Information for SEND opportunities

We have a range of clubs running across the county. Find a Youth Group in your local area:

North East Quadrant

Inclusive Club

Staff contact: Ben Randall,
ben.randall@essex.gov.uk 07702 900669
Location: Stanway Youth Centre, Colchester
Monday 6.30pm – 8.30pm

Simply the Best

Staff contact – Nikki Daniel,
Nikki.daniel@essex.gov.uk 07584 262908
Location: Clacton Youth Centre
Monday 6pm – 8pm

Mid Quadrant

Torchlight

Staff contact: Sue Hughes
sue.hughes@essex.gov.uk 07901330749
Location: Carousel Centre, Braintree
Monday 7pm – 9pm

South Quadrant

Endeavour club

Staff contact: Claire Love,
Claire.love@essex.gov.uk 07919 624935
Location: Hermit Youth Centre
Tuesday 6.30pm – 9pm

Gateway Club

Staff contact: Ashley Gillam,
Ashley.gillam@essex.gov.uk 07824867553
Location: Timberlog Youth Centre
Wednesday 7.15pm – 9.15pm

Soccerbility

Ricky-Joe Williams,
Ricky-Joe.Williams@Essex.gov.uk 07500990310
Location: Waterside, Canvey Island
Saturday 10am – 11.30am

West Quadrant:

Youth Plus

Staff Contact: Louisa Stirling,
louisa.stirling@essex.gov.uk 07557168088
Location: Ongar Youth Centre
Thursday, 7pm – 9pm

Saved by the Bell

Staff Contact: Clare Nunn
clare.nunn@essex.gov.uk 07775226866
Location Xperiance Centre, Harlow
Wednesday 3.30pm – 6pm

Countywide:

Duke of Edinburgh

Ask our friendly DofE Award Team a question at:
youth.work@essex.gov.uk

NCS

NCS is the country's fastest-growing youth movement, a rite of passage for all teenagers aged 15-17 to discover who they are and what they can do. It's your chance to explore, be inspired and find your passion.

NCS is a 4-week programme in the summer with a shorter programme available in the Autumn.

We can also deliver a bespoke program of delivery for SEND young people, if you are a school or college and interested in running your own bespoke NCS programme contact us at: ncs@essex.gov.uk

For further information on what we offer and to find out more information visit our website:

<https://youth.essex.gov.uk>

or look at our social media pages:

Facebook: **Essex Youth Service**

Instagram: **Essex Youth Service**

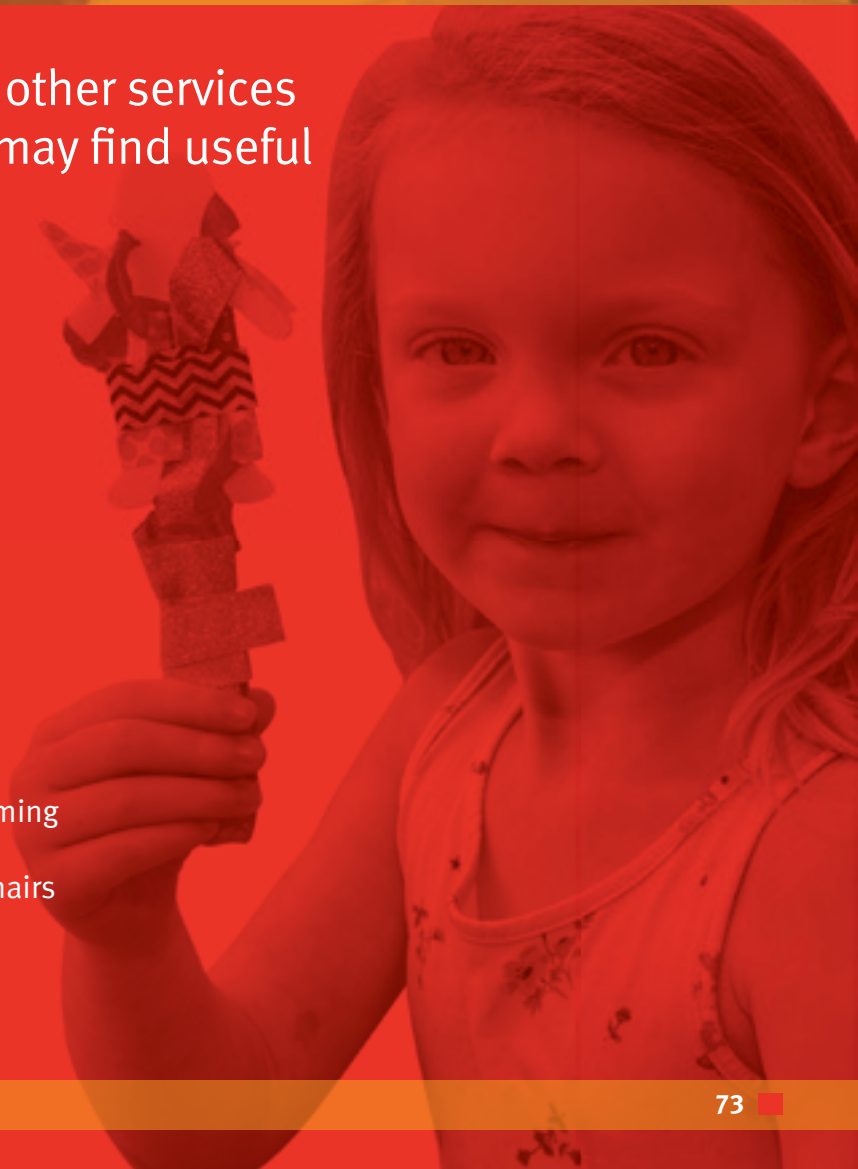
Twitter: **Essex Youth Service**



Other Services

This section is dedicated to other services and information which you may find useful

It is made up of the following:

- Inclusive Communication Essex (ICE)
 - Essex Family Forum
 - All Together
 - Sport for Confidence
 - Provide
 - PACT For Autism
 - Special Needs And Parents (SNAP)
 - Essex Advocacy Service
 - Purple
 - Families in Focus (Essex)
 - Upwards with Downs
 - The MAZE Group CiC
 - The Essex Carers Network
 - Spectrum
 - Dolphin Mobility Trampoline and Swimming pool hoists
 - De-Bug and Landeez all-terrain wheelchairs
 - Changing places locations and access
- 

Inclusive Communication Essex (ICE)

Communication changes lives. When a person can understand and interact with the world around them they can live more independently, they can be more involved in their community, they are better able to make choices and their health and wellbeing is improved.

Everyone communicates, you just need to know the right language. Inclusive Communication Essex (ICE) is a free service which can be accessed by anyone, without the need for a referral and specialises in helping to break the barriers to effective communication.

The ICE resource loan service allows customers to try a variety of Assistive and Augmentative Communication (AAC) aids such as:

- buttons and switches
- talking albums
- communication devices like GoTalks
- sensory story packs
- switch-activated toys



You can find a full list of loan resources along with information about how to register and how to reserve items on the ICE website at: www.essexice.co.uk/things-you-can-borrow.

You can borrow up to 5 items for 8 weeks at a time, 3 weeks for sensory stories. If you are still using an item at the end of the loan period, you can renew the loan for as long as you need without any charge.



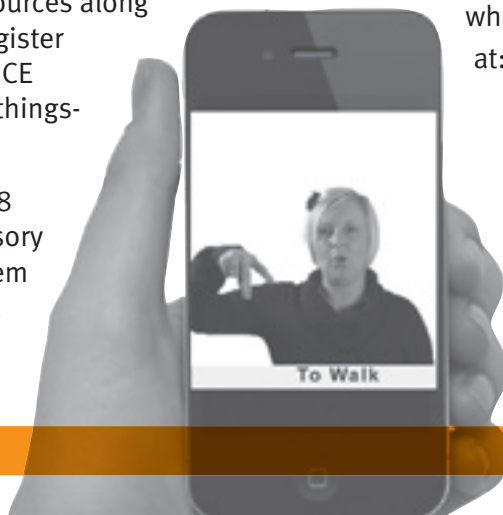
The team also offers consultancy, advice, support and training on all matters regarding accessibility and inclusive communication. ICE can also provide guidance on how to produce information in an EasyRead format.

The award-winning ICE website also has a strong focus on accessibility and is an excellent resource for many communication needs. As well as the full AAC catalogue you will also find links to video clips that demonstrate how to use the resources.

ICE users also have access to a range of useful information, including templates, One Page

Profiles EasyRead leaflets and the Pictosymbols 3 symbol set. Over 100 signing videos means

that people carry a true communication aid in their pocket. For more information about what ICE can offer visit the website at: www.essexice.co.uk



Inclusive Communications Essex (ICE)



The ICE Sharing Day is an annual event which brings together 150+ families and professionals from all over Essex and beyond. They come with a shared goal – to meet new people and share ideas that will help improve the life of someone they care for.

The day includes:

- guest speakers who share their expertise in different areas of alternative communication
- practical, hands-on activities and workshops
- access to all the latest communication technologies at the market place
- Autism Reality Experience
- Virtual Dementia Tour.

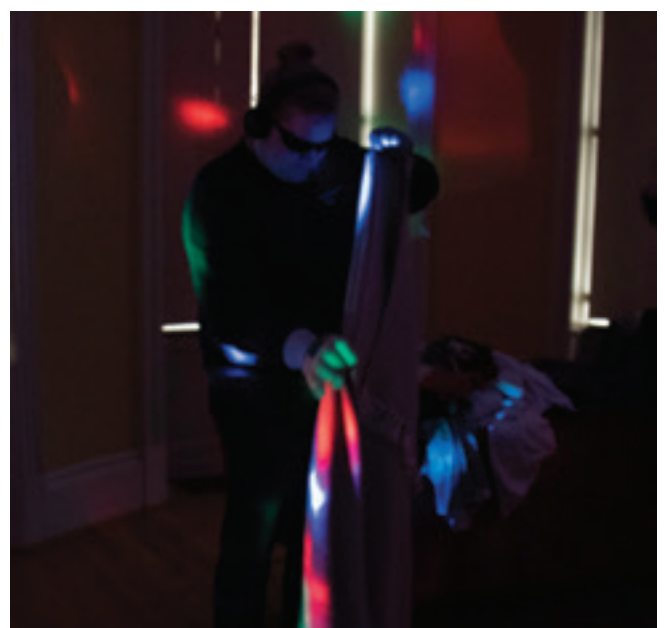
Change someone's life, teach them to communicate

ICE often works with partners to deliver presentations, sensory stories and training at events such as Colchester Zoo's Special Senses Day, Family Fun Days and Information Marketplaces.

These events give you an opportunity to try out an array of ICE resources and hear the ingenious ways others have used them. You can even borrow or return items on the day. The portable pop-up blackout tent has proven popular with customers of all ages, offering a quiet zone for sensory



exploration where you can relax and chill out. The ICE team is always happy to come and give a talk and demonstrate their resources at schools, coffee mornings, parent forums, support groups, wherever it suits you, all over the county.



Contact the team directly via email at ice.resource@nhs.net to discuss how they can help you.



Essex Family Forum

We have been working with Contact, the national charity that supports all parent/carer forums across the UK, to develop the independent parent/carer forum for Essex.

What is a Parent/Carer Forum?

A parent/carer forum is a group of parents and carers of children and young people with disabilities and additional needs aged 0-25 who work with local authorities, education settings, health commissioners and other providers to make sure the services they plan and deliver meet the needs of disabled children, young people and families.

Local Authorities are encouraged to involve parents/carers in a wide range of strategy groups and project boards and regularly work with parent/carer forums to ensure the voice of parents/carers is represented.

Who can join a Parent/Carer Forum?

Parents or carers of a child or young person with any type of additional need or disability are welcome to join. Joining a forum does not mean you have to commit lots of time, some people simply want to be informed and others choose to take a more active part and may attend one-off or regular meetings on a particular area of interest or join the Management Committee.



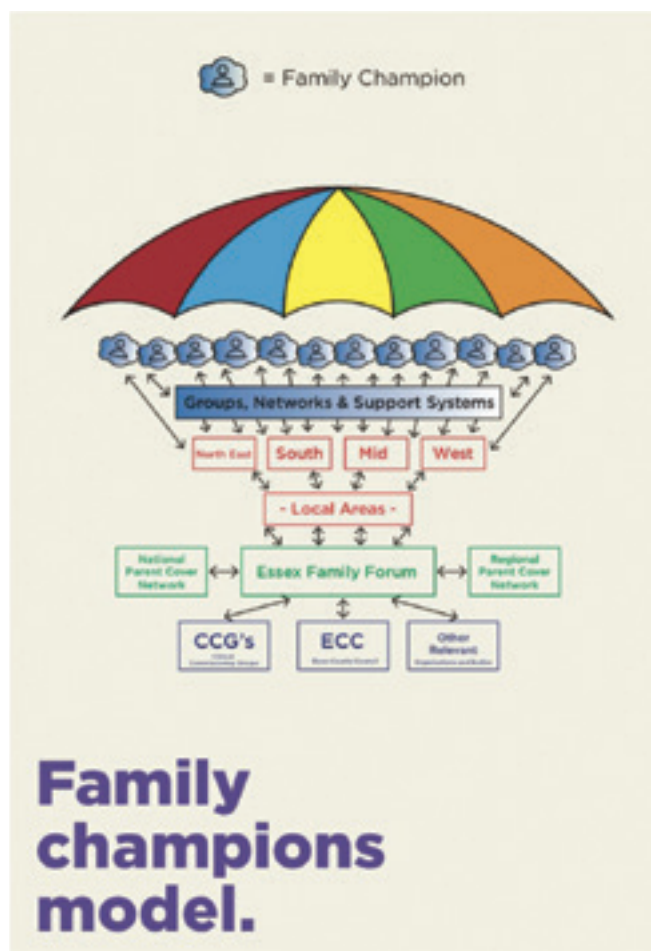
What is the Essex Family Forum?

The Essex Family Forum is a well-informed, connected and empowered community of families that includes children and young people up to the age of 25 with disabilities and/or special educational needs. We work in partnership with parents, organisations, our local authority and health commissioners aiming for quality outcomes that meet the needs of all our families. We are also part of the eastern region and national network of parent/carer forums.



Essex Family Forum

Essex is a large diverse county and we have a responsibility to ensure that we can reach a cross representation of the SEND population throughout the geographical spread of the county. So, in addition to the county-wide Essex Family Forum there are local area-based Family Champions who will ensure the views of families in their area are heard and considered. Our aim is to make as much difference as we can in the best possible way.



What is a Family Champion?

Family Champions are parents and carers that represent the lived experiences of families. They attend well established local groups, coffee mornings or could simply be someone that represents a handful of parents meeting at the school gates or their kitchen table sharing their experiences.

Our Family Champions ensure each parent/carer's voice is heard by adding their comments onto the Forum's Graffiti Wall. Our Family Champions understand their local area and we ask that they highlight what is working well and what is not working well. These views are collated and we feed back to the organisations we work in partnership with.

Family Champions can also be involved in projects, workshops, as well as strategic meetings with our local authority, health commissioners, and other organisations to represent and ensure that the parent voice is heard.

How to become a Family Champion?

Parents or carers can volunteer directly or groups, networks or support systems can nominate a volunteer who they feel will represent the lived experiences of the families in their group to be their Family Champion.

If you are interested in becoming a Family Champion for Essex Family Forum or have someone you wish to nominate, please contact us via email or visit our website for more information.

Would you like to be part of the Essex Family Forum?

You can become a member, subscribe to our mailing list or find more about family champions at: www.essexfamilyforum.org

Contact details:

Email: hello@essexfamilyforum.org

Or follow us on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram



All Together

All Together is an Active Essex campaign to promote the opportunities available for people with disabilities or long term health conditions to participate in sport and physical activity across Essex.

There are lots of opportunities to get involved in and we hope to help everyone to participate in the activity of their choice at their chosen level.

Getting Active

To find out about inclusive sport and physical activity opportunities in Essex:

‘Like’ our Facebook page www.facebook.com/EssexAllTogether and visit our website: www.activeessex.org/resource/getting-active

All Together Ambassadors

We have over 40 All Together Ambassadors who are inspiring more disabled people to take part in sport and physical activity across Essex.

Our ambassadors share their own stories of overcoming barriers to get active and they help share opportunities across Essex to signpost others to.

Our All Together Ambassador Donna Robinson is hoping to encourage more disabled people in Essex to get involved with physical activity and sport.

Donna says ‘my journey into sport started in about 2012 when I was put in contact with Sport for Confidence at Basildon Sporting Village and I started playing Boccia. A few years after playing Boccia, I was supported to go on a Boccia Leaders coaching course which I did and I have been coaching games ever since. I also take part in netball for confidence sessions and aqua for confidence sessions here too. Sport is important to me because it has improved my confidence massively and helped me through some of the hardest times in my life.

I signed up to be an All Together ambassador for Active Essex because I want to help and inspire children and others like myself.’

We would love to hear from other people in Essex who would be interested in becoming an All Together ambassador and share their own experiences to help increase the numbers of people with disabilities taking part in sport and physical activity

More information about Active Essex and the All Together ambassador programme can be found here: www.activeessex.org/resource/all-together-ambassadors

All Together Supporters

To help with our ongoing campaign we are reaching out to disability organisations and charities to work with us to promote opportunities available for their service users to get active and help provide new opportunities where there is a need.

If your organisation would like to speak about current opportunities or access funding to create new opportunities for your service users to get more active, we would love to discuss how we could help. Contact: administration@activeessex.org



Sport for Confidence

Sport for Confidence delivers sporting opportunities to people who face barriers to participation in mainstream settings.

The model comprises of a health professional and coach in a leisure centre to contribute specialist knowledge and advice regarding the delivery of activity for young people and adults who have a range of different abilities and needs. The health professional will mentor and observe coaches and together will deliver a weekly programme of activities offering individuals the chance to try new skills, meet new friends, get active and most importantly have fun!



The sessions delivered range from swimming, boccia, dance, cricket, running, football, tennis, squash, trampolining and many more sports!

Please visit our website www.sportforconfidence.com which will provide more information.

The programmes are designed to create unique partnerships working with local health teams, national governing bodies, local sport clubs and charitable agencies. The model strives to ensure that individuals are supported to take part in meaningful activities.



Everyone works together to ensure that the individual needs are met and that there is regular communication, self-reflection and mentoring across the team.

There are currently sessions taking place in the below leisure facilities;

- Witham Leisure Centre, Spinks Lane, Witham, Essex, CM8 1EP
- Waterside Leisure Centre, Somnes Avenue, Canvey Island, Essex, SS8 9RA
- Basildon Sporting Village, Cranes Farm Road, Basildon, Essex, SS14 3GR
- Leisure World, Colchester, Cowdray Avenue, CO1 1YH
- Clacton Leisure Centre, Vista Road, Clacton on Sea, CO15 6DB
- Riverside Leisure Centre, Victoria Road, Chelmsford, CM1 1FG
- Eversley Leisure Centre, Crest Avenue, Basildon, SS13 2EF
- Hornchurch Sports Centre, Harrow Lodge, Hornchurch, RM11 1JU

If you are interested in any of the above sessions based in our current centres either visit our website or email info@sportforconfidence.com

New groups are developed in response to people's needs, with the sport carefully selected based on the advice of specialist health care professionals, coaches' expertise and on occasions the request for opportunities to conduct specific assessments and therapeutic interventions.

Twitter: [sportforconf](https://twitter.com/sportforconf) Facebook: [sportforconf](https://facebook.com/sportforconf)

SPORT
FOR CONFIDENCE

Provide

Specialist Healthcare Training

The Specialist Healthcare Training Team are a group of experienced children's nursing staff who deliver competency based health care education, training and support for staff working with disabled children on short breaks and in clubs and activities.



We promote the full inclusion of children with medical needs in all clubs and activities and offer training in:

- Epilepsy
- Enteral Feeding
- Anaphylaxis
- Ventilation/ Bipap
- Tracheostomy Care
- Suction
- Oxygen

We will also come to your club or activity to complete one to one training with staff until they feel confident and able to achieve the level of competency they need to meet the needs of children and young people.

The training we offer is fun and interactive and delivered in a variety of settings across Essex or within your workplace and we offer on-going support to clubs and activities.

If you would like to discuss training requirements please contact 01245 516726 or email provide.specialisthealthcare@nhs.net <http://bit.ly/specialisthealthcaretraining>

Provide



PACT for Autism

PACT for Autism is a registered Charity (No. 1148170). PACT was founded by a group of parents with autistic children, and the challenges of raising an autistic child have informed their approach to support, events and campaigning.

PACT for Autism supports autistic children, adults, and families – as well as those with similar conditions. By working in partnership with education and health professionals, we strive to achieve the best possible outcome for our families.



We aim to develop long-term strategies with local communities that will improve the living, working and social opportunities for autistic people and people with similar conditions.

PACT have been working tirelessly in our community, while with the support of Rob Halfon MP we have also had a regular voice in Parliament.

We aim to develop strategies for employability and skills for life, so that in the long term our young people have the opportunity to be as independent as possible and to be valued.

PACT has a dedicated team of trustees, staff and volunteers, all of whom have a wealth of experience in working with children and adults on the autistic spectrum – and we'd like to thank them all for their commitment to the Charity.

If you are a parent or carer of a child with additional needs then you may wish to register with us online. Receive information about family days out, talks and other events visit: www.pactforautism.org.uk to register and for more information.

Register a child or family member: To register a child or children (this also includes young adults and adults), please fill in the online form on our website. You can also register for our monthly newsletter, along with mailouts of other relevant events occurring in the local area.

Useful information and links: Our website is stocked with a Practical Services Directory, with useful links for any autism needs you may have. Our Adults page is stocked to help autistic adults with independence, employment and socialising, and is always expanding with new content.

Parent/Carer information and support:

Supporting parents is at the heart of what we do. Our support line (07377 386090 / 07377 386093) is open 10am – 2pm. Ask us anything, leave a message and we'll get back to you. We also hold monthly parent/carers support and information meetings in Harlow and Bishops Stortford, as well as a monthly parent support and information session with soft play for children at Wild 'n' Wacky in Harlow.

Find out more on our website
www.pactforautism.org.uk/parent-support

Web:	www.pactforautism.org.uk
Email:	info@pactforautism.org.uk
Facebook/Twitter:	@pactforautism
Helpline:	07377 386090 07377 386093
Office Admin:	01279 430300
Address:	PACT for Autism Office 50 Latton Bush Centre Southern Way Harlow, Essex CM18 7BL



Special Needs And Parents (SNAP)

SNAP is an Essex charity supporting families with children and young people who have any special need or disability.

From its Brentwood base, SNAP offers a helping hand to thousands of families in Essex who need support in a variety of ways.

No formal diagnosis or professional referral is necessary to access SNAP services, available to families of children and young people aged 0 to 25. Facilities at the centre include a training room, a multi-purpose activity hall, multi-sensory room and specialist IT suite.



“When parents first come to the SNAP Centre they often feel isolated and don’t know where to turn, but with SNAP’s support they grow in strength and knowledge and become better equipped to give the best possible help to their children.”

Karen Boath, SNAP Director (Family Services).



“Parents and their children use our facilities and services in a number of ways, and they all value the support they receive from us.”

SNAP services – Parent Advice and Support

- Helpline (email and telephone)
- Face to Face Parent Support
- Specialist Talks and Training Courses
- Library of Specialist Books and DVDs
- Online Information Network
- Counselling
- Education Advice Sessions

PLUS Activities for children and young people with their parents/carers.

Website with SNAP directory of useful contacts

The SNAP website includes a directory of useful contacts, which is a comprehensive guide for families and practitioners relating to special needs and disabilities. The entries are tagged into clear categories. There is also a search facility for you to browse by keyword, location or condition

The SNAP website also contains an Information Network listing social and training opportunities, relaxed performances and events. Downloadable resources offering help with common issues can also be viewed.



Registered Charity
No. 1077787

www.snapcharity.org

Telephone: 01277 211300

Email: info@snapcharity.org

The SNAP Centre,
Pastoral Way, Warley,
Brentwood,
Essex, CM14 5WF

Essex Advocacy Service

SHARE
YOUR
VOICE

Essex Advocacy Service is run by Rethink. It is a free service for children and young people who are receiving help from Essex County Council Social Care and are aged up to 19 years old and have a learning disability.

What is advocacy?

- Helps to get the young person's views across
- Allows them to have their say when decisions are being made
- A service independent of Children's Social Care
- An advocate works for the young person, and the young person only.

What can an advocate do for you?

- Provide information about the young person's rights
- Help to make a complaint if they are not happy with the service they receive.

Is it confidential?

- What the young person tells us is private
- We only share information with their agreement
- However, if we feel that themselves or someone else may be harmed we may have to share the information.

Contact details:

www.rethink.org

Tel: 0300 7900 559

Email: essexadvocacy@rethink.org



Rethink
Advocacy

Rethink Advocacy is a service delivered by Rethink Mental Illness – the operating name of the National Schizophrenia Fellowship, a company limited by guarantee.

Registered in England Number 1227970.
Registered Charity Number 271028.
Registered Office 89 Albert Embankment,
London, SE1 7TP.

Purple

Purple is an Essex-based organisation who deliver support services to both disabled people and business.

We operate in Essex and beyond and provide a variety of services for children and young people including:

- General advice and guidance on Personal Health Budgets and Direct Payments for Social Care
- Management of Personal Health Budgets for children and young people and Direct Payments for Social Care
- Signposting to voluntary and other organisations, to support children and young people who have experience of disability
- Innovative support programmes to help disabled people return to work or access the workplace for the first time, including pre-employment support in essential skills such as confidence-building
- Providing opportunities for all disabled people to share their lived experience to inform our work to improve the lives of disabled people.



Contact us today to find out more:

Tel: **01245 392300**

Textphone: **01245 392302**

Email: **hello@wearepurple.org.uk**

Twitter: **@wearepurple**

Website: **www.wearepurple.org.uk**

Registered as Purple Zest Ltd
Company Registration in England No: 11421082

Registered Office: 5th Floor, Metropolitan House,
3 Darkes Lane, Potters Bar, Hertfordshire, EN6 1AG



Families InFocus (Essex)

Supporting families of children with disabilities and special needs

We are an active and vibrant led independent charity committed to helping improve the lives of families of children and young people with any disability or special need throughout Essex.

We have a team of Family Support Advisers who offer free confidential specialist advice, information and support on all aspects of caring for a disabled child or young person, which parents/carers can access throughout their child or young person's development (0 to 25).

We provide assistance with education issues to ensure the child or young person receives appropriate support or additional resources in the classroom and help obtaining disability related benefits for the child or young person to help with extra costs.

We hold a Saturday Family Activity Club which families eagerly look forward to; a Siblings Support Group; Drop-ins across the county where parents/carers can meet, relax and support each other and much more...

"Families InFocus made me feel I was no longer alone. They gave me hope."

KIDZSPACE – Activities for brothers and sisters (aged 8+) of a child with a disability or special need. To join contact Jo on 01245 353575.

- Assault Course
- Fun on the Farm
- Horse Riding
- First Aid Fun

Families InFocus (Essex) Activity Club

at Chelmsford Sport & Athletics Centre
Salerno Way, Chelmsford, CM1 2EH

Join us for FUN every Saturday from 3.30 to 5.30pm

- Fun for the whole family
- Qualified trampoline coach available
- Free play, games and equipment
- Set in nice airy, secure and friendly environment for the children
- Somewhere where parents, friends, family and carers can come to either relax, talk to other parents or rush about with the children
- Suggested donation £2 per child.

"Having the chance for family time together where everyone can relax and not worry about what others think – invaluable."

To contact us or for more information

Telephone: 01245 353575

Email: helpline@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk

www.familiesinfocusessex.org.uk

www.facebook.com/FamiliesInFocusEssex

Families InFocus (Essex)
Lancaster House, 140 Mildmay Road,
Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 0EB



Families InFocus (Essex)

Supporting families of children with disabilities and special needs

Families InFocus (Essex) is a registered charity no. 1062311 and a limited company registered in England and Wales no. 3287829.

Upwards with Downs

Supporting Adults and Children with Down syndrome, in Essex, Hertfordshire and surrounding counties

Upwards with Downs is a registered Charity based in Harlow. We offer support to adults and children with Down syndrome throughout Essex, Hertfordshire and adjoining counties.

The charity was formed in 2011 by parents of children with Down syndrome and we currently have over 40 families who attend our activities.

We provide services such as;

- 1-2-1 Speech and Language therapy
- Sign language & Makaton Lessons
- 1-2-1 subsidised swimming lessons
- Occupational therapy
- Physiotherapy
- Regular fun swims for all ages
- SEND support and advice visits
- The Little Alice Theatre Company
- Regular discos for families
- Music and drama sessions
- Day trips
- Soft play hire
- Weekly preschool sessions (term time only)
- Little signers

“Our mission is to ensure that all people with Down syndrome, whether they are children or adults, are well supported in order for them to reach their full potential in life.”

The activities we provide help our members to progress and reach their full potential. Our monthly discos are for everyone with Down syndrome and their families and it provides a safe and fun environment for all, a place to socialise and make new friends.

If you have a child with Down syndrome or have recently discovered that your baby has Down syndrome, either during pregnancy or at birth, please get in touch. We would love to hear from you.

For more information please visit:

www.upwardswithdowns.co.uk

or email us at: **upwardswithdowns@hotmail.com**



Registered Charity No. 1158649

The MAZE Group CiC

The MAZE is a structured specialist 12 week programme for parents of children and young people with any kind of additional needs (with or without a diagnosis).

There are several visiting professionals from health, education and independent organisations (IPSEA, Families in Focus, Essex Steps) who deliver specialist session on Social Stories™, resilience, behaviour and anger management, continence, sleep, diet/eating, therapeutic interventions and mental health. A key strength of our programme and approach is the multi-agency collaboration, with ongoing support by trained, experienced Parent Mentors.

On completion of the course and the evaluation of it, parents report a marked improvement in their relationship with their child and 100% of participants expressed an improvement in their ability to cope with their child. Furthermore, 90% of parents rate the parenting programme very highly in meeting their needs and expectations.

Programme content:

- Week 1: Introductions
- Week 2: Sensory Processing Difficulties
- Week 3: Sensory processing/ attention and listening skills
- Week 4: Communication
- Week 5: Social communication and social understanding
- Week 6: Diet, continence and sleeping

- Week 7: The SEND process
- Week 8: Emotional well-being and mental health
- Week 9: Positive family relationships and managing behavioural challenges
- Week 10: My child's development
- Week 11: What about me?
- Week 12: Conclusions

In collaboration with Colchester Parent Support, Harwich Parent Support and Shorefields School, we offer free monthly drop in coffee mornings for parent/carers in Colchester, Clacton and Harwich. We also hold individual 1 day or half-day workshops on a range of SEND related topics. Please see our website for dates, times and venues.

There are MAZE Groups running each term. For more information, call Amanda Towns on 07809900161. To book a place on our weekly programme, please download the referral form from our website: www.themazegroup.co.uk and email it back to: amanda@themazegroup.co.uk or post to: PO Box 1035, Bentley, Ipswich, IP9 2WL

Follow us on Facebook and Twitter:
The MAZE Group CiC



The Essex Carers Network

Is your son/daughter aged 16-25?

From experience we know this can be a really challenging time for families, your child is moving towards becoming an adult yet their needs and challenges are unchanged.

Services are changing, educational provision is changing, you are moving from the children with disabilities social care team to the Preparing for Adulthood team; this is the time you need some stability and good information to know that others are also travelling this journey and to hear from some who have made this journey already.

The Essex Carers Network are an independent organisation in Essex made up of people who are caring for a family member with a learning disability and those who support them. We want people with a learning disability to have full and meaningful lives and we know that families need good information to help make this happen. As a network we aim to keep our members up to date with what is happening locally, regionally and nationally.

We listen to what our members say and make sure that those views are heard. We aim to work as a key partner with statutory and third sector organisations to improve the lives of people with a learning disability and their families in Essex. To help us do our work we need to hear from and speak to people like you.



Please become a member and support us to be a real voice for our families, to inspire change and empower people with a learning disability and their families in Essex.

For more information please visit:

www.essexcarersnetwork.co.uk

To become a member go to the join us page.

You can also join by emailing:

info@essexcarersnetwork.co.uk or

telephone: 07876 025480.



Spectrum Parent Support Group

Spectrum is a group for parents and carers of children with a social communication difficulty, run by experienced parents of children and young adults on the spectrum.



We aim to listen, understand, care and support each other.

We share information on local events, new research, new books, and positive strategies that have worked well for our children.

Our friendly team consists of:

- **Jane**, a highly knowledgeable parent with lots of experience with university students and adults
- **Siobhan**, Social Stories trainer and author of 4 books on Social Stories
- **Claire**, who was the founder of Apex Parent Support Group and continues to support parents
- **Michelle**, a proactive parent that shares strategies with others.

Together we all continue to support parent/carers and offer a welcoming and friendly group.

Meetings are held the first Wednesday of each month (with exceptions during school holidays).

Quaker Meeting House, 6 Church Street
Colchester (near Mercury Theatre)

10am to 12pm – refreshments provided

Meeting dates and further details available via email:

Siobhan: s.timmins2@ntlworld.com

Jane: drjanepearson@hotmail.com

f Spectrum Parent Support Group - Colchester

We are unable to offer crèche facilities so ask that children are not brought to meetings.



Dolphin Mobility

Trampoline and swimming pool hoists across Essex.

Short Breaks for Disabled Children and Young People continue to work with Dolphin Mobility to enable access to swimming and water therapy, trampoline rebound therapy or gymnastic floor soft play sessions.

These locations have the Handi Move mobile hoist with sling option:

Runnymede Leisure Centre

Thundersley 01268 756514

Waterside Farm Leisure Centre

Canvey Island 01268 694342

Riverside Ice & Leisure Centre

Chelmsford 01245 615050

South Woodham Ferrers Leisure Centre

South Wodham Ferrers 01245 605600

Brentwood Leisure Centre

Brentwood 01277 215151

Naze Marine Holiday Park, Walton

Naze Marine 01255 682410

Valley Farm Holiday Park, Clacton

Valley Farm 01255 422484

We also have the PAL pool hoist at the following locations:

Dovercourt Leisure Centre

Dovercourt 01255 686176

Clacton Leisure Centre

Clacton on Sea 01255 429647

Basildon Sports Village

Basildon 01268 722450

Blackwater Leisure Centre

Maldon 01621 851898

Lord Butlers Leisure Centre

Saffron Walden 01799 522777

Great Dunmow Leisure Centre

Great Dunmow 01371 878690

Victor Trampoline Hoists are sited at the following locations

Recoil Trampoline Club

Brentwood 01277 500282

BOSP

located at The Pioneer School, Basildon
01277 624300

Waterside Leisure Centre

Canvey Island 01268 694342

Riverside Leisure Centre

Chelmsford 01245 615050

Harwich Sports Centre

Dovercourt 01255 504380

Basildon Sporting Village

Basildon 01268 722450

Colchester Leisure World

Colchester 01206 367941

Leisure Zone

Harlow 01279 621500

Clements Hall Leisure Centre

Rochford 01702 207777

Epping Forest District Council run after school clubs at St. John's RC School, Chigwell and St. John's Fisher School, Loughton.

Please contact Fabrizio Ferrari at Epping for details – 01992 564516



The De-Bug and The Landeez



These chairs give the user the choice to go where the majority of other chairs cannot go, over sand, snow, mud, grass, hills - even the beach. They open up the boundaries; The Landeez all-terrain and De-Bug wheelchairs were designed specifically to enable people who use wheelchairs to come in closer contact with nature. Getting off the paved highway can prove to be the most difficult problem to solve. Now there is a solution! Built from stainless steel they are capable of going onto the beach and into the water. The large balloon tyres roll over the soft sand without digging in. When on rough terrain the tyres absorb all the impact from rocks, gravel and rutted tracks. They are also excellent for travelling over snow. Its soft plastic pneumatic tyres absorb almost all road shocks for a remarkably comfortable ride.



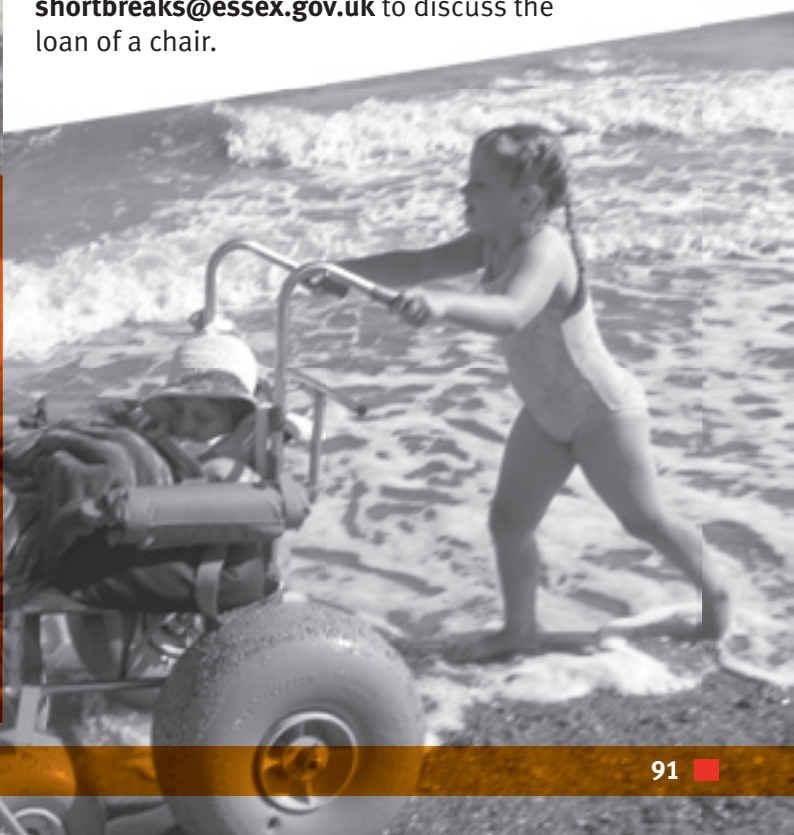
“For us as a family the chair was easy to put together and easy to push in that my other children were able to push my son down to the beach. However the greatest thing about the chair is that it allowed him to come onto the beach and into the sea and have all the fun in the waves with the others and for us all to enjoy together as a family. Without the chair he would be sitting up by the promenade looking down at the others, not included as we're not able to push his regular chair on sand.”

Our Landeez Wheelchairs are available for hire by families/carers/Schools etc. for a day out, a short break or holiday.

The chairs are free to hire and we currently have them located at the following locations;

- Walton adapted caravan
- Clacton adapted caravan
- Walton storage shed
- Clacton Beach patrol
- Dovercourt Beach patrol
- Maldon splash park
- Essex Outdoors Centres, Mersea, Bradwell and Danbury
- Thorndon Country Park, through Trailnet cycle hire
- West Mersea Sea Front. To book please call 01206 383855 or 07946 888063

Both models are also available to borrow free of charge for school trips or family days out/holidays. Please feel free to contact us at shortbreaks@essex.gov.uk to discuss the loan of a chair.



Changing Places

Fully accessible toileting facilities

Do you have a child or young person who has personal care needs that require carer support? Are you fed up with not going to some places because of the lack of facilities?

Changing Places may be of help to you and your family.



What are Changing Places?

Changing Places are fully accessible toilets and personal care facilities that include:

- Adult sized, height adjustable changing benches
- Hoisting equipment
- Enough space for a child/young person, plus two carers
- Centrally placed toilets with room either side for the carers
- Privacy screens or curtains around the toilet
- Wide tear off paper roll to cover the bench
- A large waste bin for disposable pads and a non-slip floor.

These have been designed to help meet the needs of children and young people with disabilities, their families and adults with similar care needs.

The Changing Places website gives details of all the registered Changing Places in the UK including locations, opening times and how to access.

Most locations will be RADAR key entry but some locations could be classed as vulnerable and to try and prevent vandalism they have been fitted with a unique key entrance system.

Their website also lets you search by location or postcode and gives you the option to plan your journey. If you are planning to travel outside your local area this option will quickly show you all the changing places toilet locations along your route. You just need to enter your starting point and then your destination, press plan and you can then select the most comfortable route to take. You also have the option to save journeys for another time.

You can register for a free account which then allows you to save all your favourite journeys. Please see changingplaces.uktoiletmap.org

Please feel free to email your suggestions for future Essex locations to shortbreaks@essex.com



Changing Places – www.changing-places.org

Changing Places directory












Mid Essex			Access
Braintree – Mencap	Charles Leek House, 7 Coggeshall Road, Braintree, Essex, CM7 9DB	Tel: 01376 326302	OA
Marsh Farm	Marsh Farm Road, South Woodham Ferrers, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 5WP	Tel: 01245 321552	R
Chelmsford – Market Road Public Toilets	Market Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1LH	Tel: 01245 605717	U
Hylands Park (Next to the new adventure area)	Castle Kiosk, Hylands House, Hylands Park, London Road, Chelmsford, Essex, CM2 8WG	Tel: 01245 605500	U
Adult Community Learning – Chelmsford	Beeches Close, Chelmsford, CM1 2SB	Tel: 01245 494129	KH
Maldon Promenade Park	Park Drive, Maldon, Essex, CM9 5JQ	Tel: 01621 854477	R
Hamelin Trust	19 Radford Crescent, Billericay, Essex CM12 0DU	Tel: 01277 653889	R
Great Dunmow Leisure Centre	Parsonage Downs, Great Dunmow, Essex, CM6 2AT	Tel: 01371 878690	KH
Great Notley Country Park	Great Notley, Braintree, Essex CM77 7FS	Tel: 03330 132900	R
Riverside Ice and Leisure Centre	Victoria Road, Chelmsford, Essex CM1 1FG	Tel: 01245 615050	R
Witham Leisure Centre	Spinks Lane, Witham, Essex CM8 1EP	Tel: 01376 534910	OA
South Woodham Ferrers Swimming Pool	Trinity Square, South Woodham Ferrers, Essex, CM3 5JU	Tel: 01245 605600	R
Beaulieu Community Centre	17 Centenary Way, Beaulieu Square, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 6AY	Tel: 01245 468911	R

South Woodham Ferrers Changing Place





Access symbol meanings **R** Radar Key **U** Unique Key **KH** Key Held **OA** Open Access Policy

Changing Places – www.changing-places.org

North Essex			Access
Colchester Leisure World	Cowdray Avenue, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1YH	Tel: 01206 282000	
Clacton Leisure Centre			
Clacton Sea Front	Main Promenade, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex	Tel 01255 686969	
Walton-on-the-Naze Changing Places	Southcliff Beach Promenade, Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex, CO14 8EJ	Tel: 01255 686969	
Harwich Dovercourt Seafront	Low Road, Dovercourt, Essex, CO12 3TA	Tel: 01255 686969	
Colchester Zoo	Maldon Road, Stanway, Colchester, Essex, CO3 0SL	Tel: 01206 331292	
Colchester Library	Trinity Square, Colchester, Essex, CO1 1JB	Tel: 0333 0132640	
Colchester General Hospital	Gainsborough Wing close to the Outpatients Department Turner Road, Mile End Colchester Essex CO4 5JL	Tel: 01206 747474	
Walton, Bathhouse Meadow Play Area	Bathhouse Meadow, Walton-on-the-Naze, Essex CO14 8PZ	Tel: 01255 686772	
Valley Farm Holiday Park, Clacton	Valley Road, Clacton-on-Sea, Essex CO15 6LY	Tel: 01255 425623	
Colchester Upper Castle Park	Castle Park, High Street, Colchester, Essex CO1 1TN	Tel: 01206 282962	





West Essex			Access
Harlow Bus Station	Terminus Street, Harlow	Tel: 01279 446896	
Brentwood High Street	High Street, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 4RG	Tel: 01277 312500	
Lord Butler Fitness and Leisure Centre	Peaslands Road, Saffron Walden, Essex, CB11 3EG	Tel: 01799 522777	

Access symbol meanings  Radar Key  Unique Key  Key Held  Open Access Policy

Changing Places – www.changing-places.org

West Essex			Access
Epping Town Centre	Epping Town Centre, Bakers Lane Car Park, Bakers Lane, Epping	Tel: 01992 564000	
Brentwood Leisure Centre Poolside Changing Village Main centre for gym	Doddington Road, Brentwood, Essex, CM15 9NN	Tel: 01277 215151	
Pets Corner	Harlow Town Park, 6 Park Lane, Harlow, Essex, CM20 2QQ	Tel: 01279 422790	
Princess Alexandra Hospital (A&E)	Emergency Department, Hamstel Road Harlow Essex, CM20 1QX	01279 444455 Ext 2518	
Zinc Arts Centre	Great Stoney, High Street, Chipping Ongar, Essex, CM5 0AD	Tel: 01277 365262	



South Essex			Access
Runnymede Leisure Centre	Kiln Road, Benfleet, Essex, SS7 1TF	Tel: 01268 756514	
Waterside Leisure Centre	Somnes Avenue, Canvey Island, Essex, SS8 9RA	Tel: 01268 694342	








Access symbol meanings  Radar Key  Unique Key  Key Held  Open Access Policy

Changing Places – www.changing-places.org

Assisted Facilities will meet most of the requirements of a changing places facility so will have all of the equipment but may not meet the full room size.

Currently we have two in Essex listed below which opened in 2017.

Mid Essex			Access
Chelmsford Athletics Centre	Salerno Way, Chelmsford, Essex, CM1 2EH	Tel: 01245 605666	
South Essex			Access
Basildon Sporting Village	Cranes Farm Road, Basildon, Essex, SS14 3GR	Tel: 01268 722450	

Access symbol meanings  Radar Key  Unique Key  Key Held

New for 2020

King Georges playing Fields, Ingrave Road, Warley, Brentwood, Essex, CM14 5AE



Application forms for facilities which require unique keys are available from the following websites:

Chelmsford which covers

City centre, in Market Road
Hylands Park, next to the Park car park
www.chelmsford.gov.uk/leisure-theatres-and-museums/visiting-chelmsford/public-toilets-in-chelmsford

Tendring which covers

Clacton seafront, Southcliff promenade on Walton seafront, Bath House Meadow in Walton, Dovercourt seafront and Valley Farm holiday park in Clacton
www.tendringdc.gov.uk/leisure/seafront-and-beaches/changing-places

Harlow which covers

Harlow Bus Station and Pets Corner at Harlow Town Park
bit.ly/38uslWI

Epping which covers

Epping Town Centre, Bakers Lane car park
www.eppingtowncouncil.gov.uk/public-toilet

Colchester which covers

Upper Castle Park, Colchester only
www.colchester.gov.uk/changingplaces

NOTE: RADAR keys can be obtained online, through your local council or through places like ‘Shopmobility’.

There is a Changing Places national website with information about the location of other Changing Places across the country. The online link is: www.changing-places.org

In Essex, there are more Changing Places still in development. We will let you know as soon as they are fully functional. The Short Breaks for Disabled Children’s team welcome comments about the facilities and also your views on where you feel new Changing Places would be best located to suit your needs.

Please contact: the Short Breaks for Disabled Children’s team
by email: shortbreaks@essex.gov.uk or telephone 03330 139889.



Directory

The following pages contain a directory of all information and services detailed within the brochure.

It lists all contact details for service providers and information sign posting.

Short Breaks directory

Action for Children	Tel	07540 919616 / 01376 555260
	Email	essexshortbreaks@actionforchildren.org.uk
	Web	services.actionforchildren.org.uk/essex-short-breaks-clubs-and-activities
All Together	Email	administration@activeessex.org
	Web	www.activeessex.org/resource/together-supporting-organisations
Autism and Nature		www.autismandnature.org.uk
CF Support Services Ltd	Tel	01473 233994
	Email	info@cfsupportservices.co.uk
	Web	www.cfsupportservices.co.uk
Changing Places	Tel	0207 803 2876
	Email	changingplaces@muscular dystrophyuk.org
	Web	www.changing-places.org
Children and Young People with Disabilities Service	Tel	0345 6037627
	Email	foh@essex.gcsx.gov.uk
Colchester Spectrum	Email	s.timmins2@ntlworld.com drjanepearson@hotmail.com
Crossroads		
MID District Areas	Tel	01376 529985
Braintree, Chelmsford, Maldon	Email	braintreexroads@btconnect.com
	Web	www.braintreexroads.wixsite.com/supporting-carers
WEST District Areas	Tel	01708 757242
Epping Forrest, Harlow, Uttlesford, Brentwood	Email	info@carerstrustcrossroadsehr.org
	Web	www.carerstrustcrossroadsehr.org
NORTH District Areas	Tel	01255 860960
Tendring, Colchester	Email	tendcrossroads@btconnect.com
	Web	www.crossroadstc.co.uk
Early Years and Childcare	Email	early.years@essex.gov.uk
	Web	eycp.essex.gov.uk
ECL Sensory Service	Tel	03330 133 262
	Email	sensoryservices@essexcares.org
	Web	www.eclsensoryservice.org
Essex Advocacy Service (Rethink)	Tel	0300 7900559
	Email	essexadvocacy@rethink.org
	Web	www.rethink.org
Essex Family Forum	Mob	07742 958003 or 07707 110592
	Email	hello@essexfamilyforum.org
	Web	www.essexfamilyforum.org
Essex Libraries	Web	Libraries.essex.gov.uk
Essex Local Offer	Email	essex.localoffer@essex.gov.uk
	Web	www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk
Essex Outdoors	Tel	Bradwell 01621 776256 Danbury 01245 223342 Harlow 01279 620270 Mersea 01206 383226
	Email	inclusion@essexoutdoors.com
	Web	www.essexoutdoors.com

Short Breaks directory

Essex SEND IAS Service	Tel	033330 138 913
	Email	send.iass@essex.gov.uk
	Web	www.essexlocaloffer.org.uk/listing/send-inforamtion-advise-and-support-service
Families InFocus (Essex)	Tel	01245 353575
	Email	helpline@familiesinfocusessex.org.uk
	Web	www.familiesinfocus.org.uk
Fee Paid Short Breaks Foster Carers	Tel	0800 801530
	Web	www.essex.gov.uk/fostering
Inclusive Communication Essex (ICE)	Email	ice.resource@essex.gov.uk
	Web	www.essexice.co.uk
PACT for Autism	Tel	01279 430300 or 07837 606089
	Email	info@pactforautism.org.uk
	Web	www.pactforautism.org.uk
Pets' Corner	Email	Justin.hopwood@harlow.gov.uk
	Web	www.harlow.gov.uk/pets-corner
Provide	Tel	03330 132598
	Email	provide.enquiries@nhs.net
	Web	www.provide.org.uk
Purple	Tel	01245 392300
	Email	hello@wearepurple.org.uk
	Web	www.wearepurple.org.uk
SEND Young Commissioners	Tel	07717 802991
	Email	melinda.yems@essex.gov.uk
Short Break Tickets		
Request tickets	Web	shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk/max-cards-and-tickets
Max Card	Web	www.mymaxcard.co.uk
Paradise Wildlife Park	Web	www.pwpark.com
Colchester Zoo	Web	www.colchester-zoo.com
Marsh Farm	Web	www.marshfarm.co.uk
Special Needs And Parents (SNAP)	Tel	01277 211300
	Email	info@snapcharity.org
	Web	www.snapcharity.org
Sport for Confidence	Email	info@sportforconfidence.com
	Web	www.sportforconfidence.com
Talk Listen Cuddle (TLC)	Email	tlc@essex.gov.uk
	Web	www.tlc-essex.info
The Essex Carers Network	Tel	07876 025480
	Email	info@essexcarersnetwork.co.uk
	Web	www.essexcarersnetwork.co.uk
The MAZE Group	Tel	07809 900161
	Email	referrals@themazegroup.co.uk
	Web	www.themazegroup.co.uk
Upwards with Downs	Email	upwardswithdowns@hotmail.com
	Web	www.upwardswithdowns.co.uk
Young Carers Support	Tel	0345 7430430
	Email	Young.carers@essex.gov.uk
	Web	www.essex.gov.uk/young-carers

This information is issued by:
Essex County Council
Disabled Children & Young People

Contact us:
shortbreaks@essex.gov.uk
shortbreaks.essex.gov.uk
03330 139889

Short Breaks for Disabled Children & Young People
Essex County Council
PO Box 11
County Hall
Chelmsford
Essex, CM1 1QH

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essex.gov.uk/keepmeposted



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formats, on request.

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