THANK YOU
Mental health – focused on meeting your needs

Now more than ever, it’s important to reflect on our feelings and mental wellbeing.

Unusual events can have a big impact on our mental health. But help is on hand.

Most local services to support your mental health are currently being provided online or on the telephone. But if someone needs face to face support, it can be arranged.

There are a range of ways to support you and your family’s mental health, whether that’s responding to a crisis or working on preventing mental health from becoming an emergency. Here are some of the ways you can get help.

Every Mind Matters

You may be worried about coronavirus, employment, family members or experiencing loneliness if your usual social activities have not yet resumed.

There are tips and advice on helping others struggling with their mental health. Get your free Every Mind Matters Mind Plan at www.nhs.uk/oneyou/every-mind-matters/

VitaMinds can help

VitaMinds provides adults over the age of 18, who are registered with a Basildon GP, access to a wide range of short term psychological therapies. The service is free and confidential for adults experiencing depression, anxiety, panic attacks, Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, social anxiety, health anxiety, OCD etc.

Mental health crisis? Help is on hand

Get timely and appropriate support and advice any time day or night by calling 111 and selecting the option for mental health crisis (option 2). The 24-hour crisis line is run by Essex Partnership University Foundation Trust (EPUT) and aimed at people aged 18 and over.

Children’s mental health and wellbeing

For many children this is a worrying and unsettling time, with routines and school turned upside down, it’s natural that some of our younger people need some extra support. Children’s mental health services are provided by the Emotional Wellbeing and Mental Health Service (EWMHS).

A child or young person can contact the service directly. Any parent, guardian or professional such as a teacher, school nurse or GP can contact EWMHS on behalf of the young person.

In-hours mental health 0300 300 1600 (Essex SPA)
Out of Hours Mental Health 0300 555 1000 (Mental Health Direct Line)

Visit: www.nelft.nhs.uk/services-ewmhs to find out about online apps like Kooth, Big White Wall and MiLife.
In this issue we pay tribute to those who have done so much for our community over the past six months. Six months in which loved ones have been lost, goodbyes curtailed, families kept apart, lives and livelihoods devastated. We have also seen the very best from our community – truly appreciating those in our health and care services, who have risked their own lives to save others. We have appreciated key workers like refuse collectors, delivery drivers, supermarket and distribution warehouse workers. We cannot thank them enough. And we thank the volunteers who have helped the most vulnerable and everyone who has complied with the new rules we continue to live under.

The virus is still out there and we need to stay safe. But we should not stop planning for the future – indeed regeneration is more important than ever. That’s why we also have a special feature on the transformation of Basildon town centre. Change is happening and we need to be in control of that change and ensure we have a town centred around you, that meets the needs of this and future generations and of which we can be truly proud.

Councillor Gavin Callaghan,
Leader of Basildon Council
The beginning of the journey

On 23 March the government announced lockdown measures...

Anxiety was high as we were doing all we could to protect our loved ones. Basildon’s community also faced a deep financial crisis, for residents and businesses due to the potential loss of income. We were all faced with a very different future.

This crisis was like no other that Basildon faced since our inception 71 years ago.

The Basildon spirit came out fighting...

Thousands of people took to social media to look out for one another, friends and neighbours. The council’s officers have worked amazingly hard to transform service delivery and our voluntary and community groups have been inspiring in their generosity.

Thank you

BASILDON COUNCIL’S CLEANER NEIGHBOURHOODS TEAM

From all at Butyl (local company specialising in equipment for emergency aid) for assisting with potential parking issues, whilst completing this Covid-19 Project.
This crisis was like no other that Basildon faced since our inception 71 years ago.

Answering people’s questions
The council’s customer service teams have made sure they were available to help when residents need us the most...

LONGER HOURS
Since 16 March, phone lines were open for longer, 6am - 10pm 7 days a week

HERE FOR EMERGENCIES
By launching specialist COVID-19 phone lines for residents who need help, fast.

ALL HANDS ON BOARD
Our reception staff have been re-deployed, helping answer customer calls

WORKING FROM HOME
Call centre staff started home working on 16 March, with Front of House following on 23 March

23 March was the busiest ever day for calls to the council we answered 1577 calls!

Friends help out to keep park beautiful
Many people have used lockdown to rediscover the beauty of their local park. Friends of Lake Meadows have done fantastic work to keep their park beautiful. The group’s 24 volunteer gardeners donned new polo shirts and took up new tools, bought with a grant from Basildon Council’s Sport and Physical Activity Development Scheme.

“Our group benefits the gardeners themselves, who enjoy caring for the park; and the many positive comments we receive from park visitors makes it all worthwhile,” says Charles Novis, Friends of Lake Meadows Chairman.

If you are interested in volunteering in your local park, contact countryside@basildon.gov.uk.

Keeping council services going
However, while some of our facilities closed - our key workers have continued to safely carry out their work.

34
Homeless people sheltered

1,646
Emergency repairs by Morgan Sindall

1 MILLION
Waste collections

2 MILLION
Square metres of green space kept open
Thank you to West Ham’s Mark Noble, for his generous donation.

On 8 April, Basildon Council received a £35,000 donation from Mark Noble and Revenue and Capital, a company concerned with generating revenue and capital for local authorities, towards helping our most vulnerable residents, during unprecedented times.

10,000 people saw our Facebook post, whufc.com and newspapers across Essex shared the news!

Leader’s Facebook Live

Live Q&As with Councillor Callaghan

You had so many questions with information changing so fast all the time. You put these to the Leader of the Council in regular Facebook Live sessions.

These had more than 150,000 views

The council has paid almost £32m to more than 2,400 small businesses to keep them going through the Covid-19 pandemic

Thank you Claire, Health Outreach Worker

Claire supports young people on a range of issues, including the impact of Covid-19 and bereavement.

“I am so impressed by the way the community in Basildon is pulling together.”

Mark Noble

Health Outreach Worker

Thank you Claire, Health Outreach Worker

Claire supports young people on a range of issues, including the impact of Covid-19 and bereavement.
Keeping our streets clean through lockdown

With lockdown giving us all an opportunity to spring clean and clear out the shed or the cupboard under the stairs and more rubbish left out to be collected each day, our refuse teams have certainly had their work cut out.

Even before the lockown, there was affection from the public towards refuse collectors. A morning hello or a smile wasn’t uncommon. But through these difficult times, the respect for the work of Basildon Council’s refuse team has increased tenfold. For Richard Lambert, 35, one of our drivers here in Basildon, it’s been a testing time; ‘For me personally it’s been quite stressful, because the virus is something you can’t see, so you’re much more cautious. “For a lot of the workers you’ve got your family on your mind. I felt worried because I’ve got a young son, so I was thinking about what I might bring home.” However, the greater appreciation received has really made a difference to Richard and his colleagues through this time; “It’s been really surreal. We’ve been driving down the street and people have been clapping us and kids waving out the windows! “You’ll drive past someone that’s clapping you and think, I’m not a nurse or a doctor, but I’m still being valued by the public.”

The dustcart cabs driven by our refuse workers are now covered with notes from the public. There are messages of thanks, drawings from children – really touching tributes to the work they’ve done through this period.

And not only is Richard grateful to the public for their support, he’s also thankful towards the management team – for making sure that every day he’s been able to feel comfortable and safe at work;

“They’re checking if we’ve run out of hand sanitizers, wipes, gloves - everything’s in place to minimise the risk. They deserve a lot of thanks. Because even though we’re out there every day, they’re working really hard behind the scenes to make sure we’ve got all the things we need.”

Richard and the rest of the crew have experienced first-hand how such a tragic situation can still bring people together and strengthen our communities;

“As a borough, everyone has come together. Being a dustman driving down the road and having people clapping and coming out to say you’re doing a fantastic job has been really touching. It gives you that energy kick just as you’re feeling tired. “I’ve really felt the community spirit driving the dustcart each day, it’s been really nice to see.”

To keep up to date with the latest news, including service changes and recycling advice, sign up for our waste and recycling enewsletter at www.basildon.gov.uk/keepintouch
Helping with food supplies

The Community Hub’s 45 staff have helped residents with a vast range of issues from meeting demand for replacement hearing aid batteries to delivering food parcels to isolated members of the community.

During Easter, The Wat Tyler Education team donated over 100 Easter eggs originally intended for their Easter egg hunt to be given out to people who couldn’t visit the shops and another 80 Easter eggs to the food bank at Pitsea leisure Centre.

Thank you to Billericay, Helping Hands and Laindon food banks for delivering food parcels to vulnerable people.

Thank you to all of our volunteers, who have pulled together for our communities.

Thank you to our parks and countryside team

For working hard to look after Cranfield Park in Wickford. The wildflowers are stunning and the park is just beautiful. From Lara, a Wickford resident.

Thank you to our waste team

Our Waste & Recycling team received a massive amount of thank yous, including some really special drawings and videos.
Thank you NHS

Thank you to all the NHS workers at Basildon Hospital...

As a country, we’ve never been so grateful for the NHS. During this pandemic, we’ve found creative ways to continue showing our gratitude:

• Turning our Basildon sign blue to celebrate #ClapforCarers
• Singers and musicians across the borough recorded a ‘We thank you’ tribute to the NHS, based on the Yazoo 80s hit ‘Only You’
• Installing ‘Thank You NHS signs’ at Basildon Hospital and on the A127
• A special collaborative thank you video message from Basildon councillors to our key workers

One man’s 40 days of clapping to celebrate the NHS

On the morning of Saturday 25 April Colin Wilkinson decided to go to the rainbow banner outside Basildon Hospital to pray. The coronavirus pandemic was beginning to crash through Basildon. When he arrived though, something else happened: he began clapping as every NHS staff member came into work at the hospital. And each day, he stood and applauded NHS staff at Basildon hospital every morning as they came into work.

He would go on to return every day, for 40 days, during lockdown.

He received many forms of thanks from staff and people affected by the virus. Many of those were from people who lost loved ones. It helped.

This was officially recognised as lockdown came to an end by the Mayor of Basildon, David Burton-Sampson and NHS staff. Staff thronged the street around the hospital to thank him at the presentation, and Mayor David Burton-Sampson presented Mr Wilkinson with a gift to acknowledge his continual support. The crowd in attendance returned the inspiration: for one long moment their clapping rose to greet Mr Wilkinson, and a massive wave of thanks was the only sound.
Shop Local, Shop Safe

Supporting our retailers as they started to reopen after lockdown, and helping shoppers stay safe as they returned to our high streets and town centres, has been at the heart of our Shop Local Shop Safe campaign. From no parking charges in council owned car-parks until the end of the year, to a 20mph speed limit in Billericay and Wickford High Streets—alongside bright arrows on the ground and social distancing signage—we have been helping our boroughs’ shopping areas reopen.

Wickford’s Watson Wigs is one example of a re-emerging business we’ve been working with in weekly meetings, to help them get back to offering a huge boost to people with something personal: hair. Lockdown meant a freeze on selling its wigs and extensions; for customers with medically related hair loss like cancer treatment that was a problem. Now, Carla Watson, who opened the shop three years ago, is back helping people feel confident about their appearance. People are returning to the store, online sales have returned, and Wickford appears to be returning to a new form of normal. From a business point of view there’s been a crucial shift as the Wickford market moved, which has boosted Watson Wigs’ presence and sales.

For Michaela’s Health and Beauty in Billericay High Street, the council has also been there to talk through reopening after 16 weeks of coronavirus closure—something unprecedented in the business’s 20 years in town. “We’re more than just a business; we’re a confidant,” says owner Michaela Bartlett, “I’ve known some clients for 30 years.” Michaela says that personal relationships and community have been a major part of reopening. “I think that from the general atmosphere from the people in the salon just coming back and having a treatment whether it be their hands, their feet, a massage—people are happy that we’re back and to be out.”

www.basildon.gov.uk/shopsafe

Thank you Vania,

Iris would like to thank her new friend from the Community Hub Befriending Team - Vania has made a huge difference to her life, having someone lovely to chat with.
The Basildon Community Hub, which launched on 20 March, was the first in Essex, launching just two days after local authorities were asked to create Community Hubs.

The impact of the hub has been exceptional, as Jeneille Bushell, Basildon Council’s Day Centre Coordinator commented;

“The pandemic has massively changed the way our service works, but the ethos of supporting our residents most in need has remained.

On 19 March we got confirmation that our day centres had to shut and we had to move fast to tell our 2,000 members. We knew we needed to set something up. It would break my heart to think that even one of our members would be lonely and isolated; some with no one to talk to. It’s the little things that help, for example we helped a lady set up a Tesco account so she could order shopping online, she had an ipad but wasn’t quite sure how to do it, to get her shopping to her.

But, it has also been quite upsetting, one of my first calls was to someone who had covid and who had lost his best friend, it was heart breaking.”

Since launching, staff at the Community Hub have made more than 2000 befriending calls to isolated residents, providing support and companionship to those who need it, as well as collecting and delivering vital prescriptions and food parcels to our residents without a support network locally.

Although face-to-face interaction at the centres had to be put on hold, the employees that worked in the centres still wanted to contribute in whatever way they could. Jeneille, went on to explain;

“It’s also about psychological support, through our befriending service we have been phoning in the region of 500 residents a week, a lot of them every day, to provide companionship. They really look forward and wait for our calls and we have received such positive feedback.”

If you or someone vulnerable may need support from the Befriending Service, contact the Community Hub on coronavirusresidents@basildon.gov.uk or by phone on 01268 533333 and select option 1 and ask to be referred for the service.

Since launching, volunteers have been busy

Making more than 2,000 befriending calls to isolated residents

Helping Hands food bank have given 971 food parcels

Delivering 100 hearing aid battery parcels

Collecting and delivering 814 prescriptions

First wellbeing pack delivered on 20 May

Our online FAQs for businesses and residents saw over 1,000 users on launch day.
During lockdown, across the borough we got creative with our workouts, from following YouTube videos, to extra dog walks and virtual yoga classes. And, with two million square metres of open space remaining open across Basildon there was no better time to launch Street Tag.

As a unique mobile healthy living app, Street Tag was designed to keep families of all shapes and sizes active, keeping local communities moving whilst exploring neighbourhoods. Street Tag founder Seun Oshinaike explained: “Spending time in so many beautiful parks in Basildon has been fun so far, we would encourage more local residents to go more often! Using the free app, you earn points by scanning virtual tags placed across our parks, green spaces and streets. Whether you prefer walking, running or cycling - all exercise can earn your team points!”

After launching in June, so far Basildon has reached over three million steps and counting! More tags are becoming available in popular parks including Gloucester Park and Lake Meadows. Street Tag encourages exercise, plus rediscovering local country parks and walks. Users can also create your own tags, for more challenges in your favourite outdoor spaces.

As an exciting digital project, the app is constantly updating with fun features: “Recently, we’ve created Super Saturdays,” Explains Seun. “For 50 minutes every Saturday morning, a park within the borough will have tags worth triple points. These bonus tags are a great opportunity to tour the parks and gain rewards.”

Street Tag is part of an exciting wider plan for a healthier Basildon, commissioned by Sport England. Basildon was specially selected for the programme for our community diversity, and Sport England are recognising local barriers and attitudes to exercise. As part of their recent study, Sport England identified that just 62% of adults based in Basildon meet the recommended 150 minutes of physical activity per week - this is the lowest level in Essex.

So far, Street Tag has encouraged more residents to get outdoors, including Rachel Deane; “We are loving Street Tag so far. It’s encouraging us to get out and exercise, I’m even walking at lunchtime now at work just to hunt for more tags!”

Street Tag is designed for anybody who is ready to start their fitness journey, something founder Seun welcomes: “We are all looking forward to more residents signing up for Street Tag and joining the Basildon leaderboard. Searching for Street Tag on Google Play Store or App Store is a great place for any resident to start their journey.”

By using Street Tag and getting outside again, you can enhance your physical and mental wellbeing. Download the app at: www.basildon.gov.uk/streettag

Our Streets Basildon

Download our brand new free waste app Our Streets Basildon, developed exclusively for the benefit of residents across the borough. Functionality includes being able to quickly check your recycling collection day, order a special collection, report missed collections and other issues affecting your street.

The app is available on Android and Apple devices, and is a great new way to get recycling information on specific items, request services and report problems while you’re on the go. Never miss a bin collection again!
REIMAGINING BASILDON TOWN CENTRE
Special focus on the vision and proposals for the transformation of Basildon town centre

ST. MARTIN’S QUARTER AND WESTGATE AREA P3

WHAT YOU HAVE TOLD US P7

STATION ENVIRONS AND TRANSPORT HUB P6
Basildon borough is the economic powerhouse of Essex – the largest economy on the Thames Estuary outside Canary Wharf. But you wouldn’t know it from a visit to Basildon town centre.

We have all seen the direction Basildon town centre has been going in over recent years. We sat down in the council to take stock of this last year. We looked at what people were telling us and what we experienced for ourselves – retail was in decline, the availability and cost of parking was an issue, the journey around the centre is difficult and the town felt unsafe, especially after 5pm. We also knew there was a huge fragmentation of ownership, with 55 different landowners in the centre, creating a particular challenge for the council.

We have talked to residents, landowners, retailers and investors over the past year. We were no longer prepared to wait for things to happen – we wanted to take a lead and make real, lasting change possible. We wanted a town centre that matched our economic prowess, one that looked and felt like the capital of South Essex.

So our new masterplan totally reimagines Basildon town centre from what it is at the moment – a shopping centre – into a home for thousands of people, an attractive destination for people region-wide seeking leisure and entertainment and a creative and dynamic place to work and do business.

We listened to people before drawing up the masterplan and we have consulted you on the draft. And we will continue to talk to you as plans develop. This has to be a town centred around you and your children – because it is our young people who will thank us for the action we are taking today – we are building a town centre for the needs of today, tomorrow and for the next 50 years.

As well as planning for the future, we have been taking action – stepping into the market to buy up some key properties and land, to smooth the path to more coordinated, strategic regeneration.

And we have done all of this against the backdrop of a global pandemic. Covid-19 has made the transformation of Basildon town centre more important than ever. People’s lifestyles and habits have been forced to change and we have all been rethinking how we will live our lives into the future. Shopping locally, working from home, wanting entertainment and leisure options within easy reach – these have all become more important.

Some people have questioned the need for so many new homes in the town centre and for high rise development. But there is no doubt we have a need for one and two bedroom flats – the vast majority of our housing waiting list is for this type of accommodation. And if we don’t take the opportunities to build in the town centre, and to build up where we can, then we will have to build out across the borough, including in greener areas.

I am delighted to see proposals coming forward from investors that support the delivery of our vision for Basildon town centre and planning applications are expected over the coming months covering a large portion of the town centre.

We are in a great position to get on and deliver the big, bold, transformational change our borough needs and deserves.

Councillor Gavin Callaghan
Leader of Basildon Council
This part of town has opportunities for a new hotel and an expanded leisure, cultural and community offer, such as the development of a multi-use arena. The council offices could be relocated closer to the more commercial area of the centre, releasing the site of the Basildon Centre for residential use. The masterplan proposes a new walking route between St Martin’s Square and Gloucester Park, with a new cycle way linking Gloucester Park and the train station running through St Martin’s Square. Better lit and more attractive underpasses below the Roundacre roundabout would increase pedestrian safety, making the route more welcoming.

ST. MARTIN’S QUARTER AND WESTGATE AREA

Providing key parking for the town centre the masterplan does not consider this site as a prime location for retail or workspace use. It does, however, see potential for some residential development. The proposal to fill the underpass to the west of Broadmayne road will improve the pedestrian environment, transforming it into one of the key entrances to the town centre. The opportunity to have trees and planters integrated along Broadmayne is also highlighted, creating a green border to the town centre and giving protection against vehicle pollution.

GREAT OAKS

910 homes
4,200 sqm leisure, culture, community space
1,700 sqm work space
750 homes
A town centred around you

Basildon Renewed will:

- provide the quality homes, workplaces and leisure opportunities our residents want and need
- drive growth for the whole borough
- have distinct areas and spaces with their own characters, complementing each other, with accessible and inclusive spaces for the public to enjoy
- celebrate the best of the new town
- encourage high quality buildings that are sustainable, inclusive and accessible
- be easier to get into and around, whether walking, cycling or using public transport
- be greener, more welcoming and safer
- be a place people want to visit during the day and in the evening
- build in energy efficiency and sustainability

TOWN SQUARE AND EAST SQUARE

Led by the new cinema, East Square and Town Square will become the beating heart of Basildon in the evening with restaurants, bars and entertainment. We see the opportunity to relocate and expand the Towngate Theatre into this space forming a strong creative and cultural focus and amplifying the Creative People and Places programme, funded by the Arts Council.

Removing the two large kiosks in Town Square would open up the opportunity for a greener, more welcoming space.

Proposals are expected soon for the redevelopment of the former Marks and Spencer building for a mixed use of homes and retail.

“We are delighted to be partnering with Basildon Council and being a part of this exciting, innovative and forward looking redevelopment project. We look forward to returning to Basildon and bringing our memorable cinema experience to East Square.”

Justin Ribbons, Chief Executive of Empire Cinemas
Hosting many high street names, the Eastgate Centre, has been the main retail draw in the town centre and we expect it will continue to be into the future. The specialist Development Manager Sovereign Centros and Leslie Jones Architecture launched a digital consultation on proposals for the Eastgate Centre in the heart of Basildon over the summer. Four new areas for the Eastgate Quarter are being explored, creating a place where people can live, work and play, in a place of fantastic homes, businesses and activities for all within welcoming green and public spaces. Further information can be found at www.eastgateconsultation.co.uk.

“Our vision is to evolve and enhance the Eastgate Centre and the surrounding area through the introduction of new exciting uses in a safe and sustainable high quality environment that will ensure it continues to be the heartbeat of the town centre for its community and customers. We are wholly committed to bringing forward a scheme that the community has helped to shape and we will continue to work with Basildon Council to ensure that our vision meets their needs for the future of Basildon.”
Graeme Jones, Sovereign Centros
We are really excited about our new campus which is a key part of the regeneration of Basildon town centre. Students will be coming from all around Essex and beyond, bringing trade to the town centre. The campus design reflects the modern and exciting environment that many IT and digital companies have and will help us equip a future generation of ‘digital and IT’ experts. Please visit our website to find out about the range of courses from beginners upwards that will be available.”

Anthony McGarel, Deputy Principal and CEO, South Essex College

“The application has been submitted following a consultation, which indicated that local residents would like to see new shops and restaurants, safer and welcoming public spaces. To the east of the area a much improved local transport hub is envisaged with active frontages on all sides towards the town centre, offering a platform for advertising but also for showcasing digital art, murals and local art, making an attractive entrance to the town centre. This would be further enhanced by tree planting that will improve the areas biodiversity and protect against winds. There is also a proposal for the new cycle routes to be added alongside the existing cycle infrastructure in order to improve access into the town centre from the bus station.”

Orwell Real Estate spokesperson

STATION ENVIRONS AND TRANSPORT HUB

More of the new workspace will be found in this area. The South Essex College digital campus will sit at the heart of this space, hosting a student population of up to 2,000. The college will be open to students from January 2021 and will offer a range of IT and digital courses for young people and adults. With specialised courses in mobile app development, ICT systems computer games design and creative media animation, this new campus will provide an attractive talent pool to businesses within the STEM industries looking to invest or relocate to Basildon.

The workspace will provide opportunities for digital entrepreneurs and start-ups to interact with this college offer and its students.

A planning application has now been submitted by Orwell Real Estate for the redevelopment of the land at Market Square, which would deliver 492 new 1- and 2-bedroom homes plus flexible commercial space with provision for new shops and restaurants, workspace for small businesses and a healthcare facility. Given the site’s close proximity to the town centre and train station, the homes are likely to be attractive to young professionals and downsizers alike. Wholly build-to-rent – a new type of tenure for the town centre – they would be built to a high specification and with excellent access to communal amenity space for co-working, relaxation and exercise, including courtyards and roof terraces.

The application has been submitted following a consultation, which indicated that local residents would like to see new shops and restaurants, safer and welcoming public spaces.

To the east of the area a much improved local transport hub is envisaged with active frontages on all sides towards the town centre, offering a platform for advertising but also for showcasing digital art, murals and local art, making an attractive entrance to the town centre. This would be further enhanced by tree planting that will improve the areas biodiversity and protect against winds. There is also a proposal for the new cycle routes to be added alongside the existing cycle infrastructure in order to improve access into the town centre from the bus station.

“We are really excited about our new campus which is a key part of the regeneration of Basildon town centre. Students will be coming from all around Essex and beyond, bringing trade to the town centre. The campus design reflects the modern and exciting environment that many IT and digital companies have and will help us equip a future generation of ‘digital and IT’ experts. Please visit our website to find out about the range of courses from beginners upwards that will be available.”

Anthony McGarel, Deputy Principal and CEO, South Essex College

PAGE 6
WHAT YOU HAVE TOLD US

The council carried out a formal six-week consultation on the masterplan during June and July. We had to do things a bit differently because of restrictions on public gatherings and restricted openings of public buildings. The consultation was focused on a dedicated website, which featured details of the guiding principles in the masterplan and the proposals for each area. Visitors to the website were invited to answer a number of questions on the proposals. Hard copies of the plan documents and the questionnaire were also available for those who were unable to access the internet.

We held two public webinars, which were open to anyone to listen to presentation of the proposals and to ask questions of the Council Leader, Chief Executive and the masterplan delivery team.

The consultation was widely publicised and shared across social media and reported in the local press.

Well over half the comments received during the consultation were positive.

The vision and guiding principles attracted the most comments overall and the most positive comments.

People were supportive of a greater variety of town centre uses.

Proposals to increase greenery, improve the cultural and leisure offer, better cycling and pedestrian routes, a consolidated transport hub and arrival, and more workspace proved popular proposals.

And generally people thought that the new town character and architecture of the town centre should be celebrated.

There was a more mixed response to – though still majority support for – proposals for quality affordable housing, consolidating car parking to free up space for homes, new homes in the town centre and to downgrade Southernhay to a single lane in each direction.

YOU ASKED, WE ANSWERED

Q. Of the new homes, what percentage of housing will be council or housing association?
A. The policy for affordable housing is 31%, which is split 70% social rent and the remainder being other affordable homes, which would include shared ownership.

Q. How will we make the new town centre accessible and inclusive?
A. The council’s Inclusive Basildon Project is working on clear expectations we can give to developers and we will work with developers early in the process, and with people in the community, to ensure accessibility is built into their developments.

Q. Will there be parks and safe spaces for children to play?
A. Public spaces and green spaces are really important to the masterplan – we want a greener and safer town centre for everyone, and particularly young people.

Q. Will housing be for local people first, regardless of age?
A. Homes for social rent will go to people on our council house waiting list, which has a seven year continuous residential qualification and we also prioritise veterans and key workers.

Q. Why so much density and high rise?
A. We need a critical mass of people if we are to make the town centre sustainable – we are building a community. Only the level of development we are proposing will generate the revenue to fund the high quality infrastructure, public realm and facilities a community will need. Adding to the footfall of the town centre with this level of housing will generate spend in local shops, take-aways, restaurants and bars to sustain a variety of outlets that will be attractive to visitors as well as those living in the centre. And the borough needs homes – the more we can build in the centre, the less pressure there is to build out across the borough.

Q. Will there be enough parking?
A. A detailed parking study has been commissioned, which is currently on hold until normal traffic levels resume. An earlier study suggested we currently have more parking spaces than are needed. The masterplan takes account of parking need – some would be provided on-site for new homes. We are also looking at consolidating parking on a modernised multi-storey car park in Great Oaks. But this is also a plan to take account of changing behaviour as we move forward and provides for an upgraded public transport hub and new routes and an improved environment for walking and cycling.

Q. How will we secure and build on Basildon’s cultural heritage?
A. A longer-term aim is to build on the already successful Towngate Theatre and allow it to reach its full potential. We have the cinema in development, the college, proposals for new public spaces suitable for community and cultural uses, and development proposals coming forward include a range of hospitality offerings. We are also open to working with partners on a range of meanwhile uses and to consider longer-term proposals.
Regeneration proposals are now coming forward from investors and planning applications are expected over the coming months covering a large portion of the town centre. Development proposals are consulted on before planning applications are submitted by the developers and once planning applications are submitted, they are subject to statutory public consultation. So there will be plenty of chance to have your say.

The council is developing a Basildon Town Centre Regeneration Strategy for approval by councillors this autumn. This will provide strategic guidance to those making development proposals, ahead of a formal planning document being approved in the future. This strategy will be based on the draft masterplan document and feedback from the consultation.

KEEP TRACK OF CONSULTATIONS AND PROPOSALS ON THE COUNCIL’S WEBSITE AT

www.basildon.gov.uk/masterplan or by signing up to our enewsletter at www.basildon.gov.uk/keepintouch
Five hours. This was how long it took for Michael Clifford to go from sleeping in a tent in Basildon’s Gloucester Park to the warmth and safety of a hotel room.

On Friday 28 March Michael was hunkered down in his tent listening to his radio, one of the few luxuries he had left. The global coronavirus pandemic was sweeping the world and Basildon was no exception. He had never felt so alone and detached from society. It was at this point he heard a news item speaking of how Basildon Council was trying to find all the borough’s rough sleepers to rehouse them somewhere safe in lockdown. This initiative was in line with a government directive leading to the council finding accommodation for 34 rough sleepers.

The council, in partnership with national homelessness charity St Mungo’s employs three street impact workers in their Homelessness team, whom Michael aged 42 made contact with, he said: “I can’t fault the council, they have been brilliant. They housed me within five hours. All I had was a sleeping bag and two bags of clothes. When I got into the hotel room it was like a weight had been lifted off my shoulders.”

His descent into homelessness began after he moved back to England after spending 10 years living in Spain with his parents. They resettled in Basildon in 2013 but just a year later Michael lost his dad and had to quit work to care for his mother, who sadly died two years later in 2016. Michael explained: “I had been working as a refuse collector but had to stop to care for my mum. I am an only child so there was no one else. After my mum died I spent a couple of years on and off the streets and was sofa surfing a bit at friends’ houses.”

Michael said he had been sleeping with one eye open in fear: “I would spend my days walking around the town looking for somewhere quiet to sleep as I feared being attacked. I never begged for anything but it’s tough when the little money you have has to be spent on fast food.”

After spending a few weeks in a hotel the council found Michael a room in a house share. He added; “I feel happier than ever here and am very grateful for the help the council has given me. I wanted to achieve three things. Get off the street, get a permanent room to call my own and a job. I am still searching for a job but two out of three isn’t bad.”

Citizens Advice launch Warm Homes Essex initiative

Fuel poverty is at crisis levels and now affects 4.5 million UK households, and the Citizens Advice Service have launched a new project that provides advice and support, plus help with behavioural change to ensure the very best use is made of heating controls within the home. Warm Homes Essex is here to help, staffed by experienced, professional advisers, based in local Citizens Advice offices around Essex, their service is resourced by the Warm Homes Fund.

For more information visit warmhomesessex.org.uk or contact them via phone at 0300 3033 789.
Lottery is just the ticket for local charities

Tickets for the lottery cost just £1 per week. Each ticket has a 1 in 50 chance to win a prize each week, with a top prize of £25,000! That’s a better chance of winning than the National Lottery or the Health Lottery!

Each ticket will consist of 6 numbers and each number will be between 0 and 9. There is a draw every Saturday night when a 6 digit winning combination will be picked. Prizes will be given to players with tickets that match the first or last 2-6 numbers from the winning combination. Match all 6 and you win the JACKPOT!

To buy tickets and find out more please visit: www.basildonboroughcommunitylottery.org

For any enquiries please email support@basildonboroughcommunitylottery.org or call 01268 939010 9am - 5:30pm Monday - Friday (exc. Bank Holidays).

Players must be 16 or over and physically located in the UK.

Retraining can get you back on course

If your livelihood has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and you are looking to retrain or upskill, you can now visit a new website to get instant information about South Essex providers and information for adults about getting back into education.

The site features courses with flexible study options, making retraining possible alongside work or family commitments. With bursaries and Advanced Learner Loans available for many courses, and some courses free to those receiving certain benefits, retraining is also an affordable option.

Kirsty Conner, a supervisor in the hospitality sector, has decided to retrain as an electrician: “During lockdown I had a chance to think about what I really wanted in the future. I decided the hospitality sector wasn’t for me long-term so I’m starting a course to become an electrician in the autumn at South Essex College. It is a complete change of direction but I can’t wait to get started on a new challenge.”

Klara Ludvik worked in sales in London and was due to return to work from maternity leave in May in the midst of the Covid-19 outbreak. She’s now decided to turn her graphic design and illustration hobby into a full-time home-based business. She also rethought her career path and decided she really wanted to study her passion of psychology and go on to get a degree. “The lockdown made me realise how much we all need an efficient support network during any global or personal crisis,” Klara said. “It also made me question my future prospects which inspired me to do what I really want.”

To find out more about courses available to adults, visit www.youtrainyougain.org

Lottery is just the ticket for local charities

Basildon Borough Community Lottery is an exciting weekly lottery that raises money for good causes in the Basildon Borough. All good causes supported by the lottery benefit Basildon Borough and its residents.

Play the lottery, support Basildon Borough - it’s that simple!

Retraining can get you back on course

If your livelihood has been affected by the Covid-19 pandemic and you are looking to retrain or upskill, you can now visit a new website to get instant information about South Essex providers and information for adults about getting back into education.

The site features courses with flexible study options, making retraining possible alongside work or family commitments. With bursaries and Advanced Learner Loans available for many courses, and some courses free to those receiving certain benefits, retraining is also an affordable option.

Kirsty Conner, a supervisor in the hospitality sector, has decided to retrain as an electrician: “During lockdown I had a chance to think about what I really wanted in the future. I decided the hospitality sector wasn’t for me long-term so I’m starting a course to become an electrician in the autumn at South Essex College. It is a complete change of direction but I can’t wait to get started on a new challenge.”

Klara Ludvik worked in sales in London and was due to return to work from maternity leave in May in the midst of the Covid-19 outbreak. She’s now decided to turn her graphic design and illustration hobby into a full-time home-based business. She also rethought her career path and decided she really wanted to study her passion of psychology and go on to get a degree. “The lockdown made me realise how much we all need an efficient support network during any global or personal crisis,” Klara said. “It also made me question my future prospects which inspired me to do what I really want.”

To find out more about courses available to adults, visit www.youtrainyougain.org

Lottery is just the ticket for local charities

Tickets for the lottery cost just £1 per week. Each ticket has a 1 in 50 chance to win a prize each week, with a top prize of £25,000! That’s a better chance of winning than the National Lottery or the Health Lottery!

Each ticket will consist of 6 numbers and each number will be between 0 and 9. There is a draw every Saturday night when a 6 digit winning combination will be picked. Prizes will be given to players with tickets that match the first or last 2-6 numbers from the winning combination. Match all 6 and you win the JACKPOT!

To buy tickets and find out more please visit: www.basildonboroughcommunitylottery.org

For any enquiries please email support@basildonboroughcommunitylottery.org or call 01268 939010 9am - 5:30pm Monday - Friday (exc. Bank Holidays).

Players must be 16 or over and physically located in the UK.
Basildon Council has sown approximately 10,000 square meters with wildflower seeds across roundabouts, parks and open spaces around the borough to support flowers and insects. Around 97 per cent of England’s wildflowers have been lost in the previous 60 years. And that alarming fact has helped spur Basildon Council to take action locally and support the basics—like bees—needed in nature.

Back in March, in spite of the lockdown the council was able to take safety measures into account and start the pollinator project, with a large amount of sowing. A trial of relaxed maintenance on some of the main routes in the borough’s towns is also encouraging wildflowers and providing spots that make up corridors for pollinators. This has a big impact on the ability of insects to feed and spread pollen. And that feeds into the ambitious plan of action to create corridors for insects to find food and spread pollen between wildflowers and plants around the borough and neighbouring areas. In turn, the plan is designed to help boost ecosystems that support a wide variety of plant and animal life and allow them to flourish.

Starting in September last year Basildon Council set up a fund of more than £50,000 in an effort to boost the local bee population and protect the environment. Councillors also adopted a borough-wide, three-year-long ‘Pollinator Action Plan’, in response to numbing warnings about declining bee populations. In addition, over 100 trees have recently been planted, creating new orchards in the borough—all fruiting trees that people can eat from.

All of these works are increasing pollination and improving biodiversity within the borough.
I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their support towards my officers during the recent Coronavirus crisis. It has been a very challenging time for all of us, but we found the vast majority of residents in the District have complied with the restrictions and helped keep us all safe.

**UPDATE FROM YOUR DISTRICT COMMANDER**

**126% increase in stop and search**

**88% increase in people caught with drugs**

**21% increase in people caught with weapons**

**You said – We Did**

We have been listening to your feedback. You said you wanted us to be more visible in the community, you wanted us to tackle illegal drug activity and that you wanted to know more about crimes in your area.

**More Visible** – the work of the police has been changing over recent years. We spend lots more time dealing with ‘hidden crimes’ that occur behind closed doors such as domestic abuse and child abuse. The affect such crimes have on their victims is significant and therefore we must spend an increasing amount of time tackling these issues; however, doing so may be out of sight to those who are not directly affected. That being said, we are aware how important seeing us in the community is to you, so we have put in extra effort to conduct foot patrols across all areas of the borough. Our community policing team now devote dedicated extra time to being visible in local areas and I have asked the officers who respond to emergency incidents to try their hardest to fit in extra patrols, even if it is just 15 minutes in between calls. I know this is very important to you and we will continue to work hard to be visible in your local area. When you see us, please talk to us about the issues affecting your area.

**Tackle Illegal Drug Activity** – the activities surrounding illegal drug use negatively impact our community for many reasons. With drug misuse comes violence and anti-social behaviour, we also often see vulnerable people being exploited by drug dealers. We know this is an issue our community wants us to focus on.

Over the last year we have put more officers into our local drug enforcement teams and have asked all of our local officers to be proactive in tackling this issue. We have seen some very pleasing results. This has meant that we have not seen increases in community violence, like in other locations across the country. We will continue to work hard to keep you safe. This is a community issue and we need the support of the community to tackle the problem. We need you to give us information about the problems in your area via essex.police.uk or if you wish to remain anonymous at crimestoppers-uk.org.

Some of you will know someone caught up in this world, some ‘recreational drug users’ who do not see the direct link to the harm that drug dealing causes, we regularly have to pick up the pieces when matters escalate and we want to avoid that for those in our community (talktofrank.com provides support and advice on drugs and alcohol).

**Crimes in your area** – our officers have been working hard to prevent crimes happening in the first place, but when they unfortunately do occur, we try hard to catch those responsible. Our efforts have been paying off:

- **Robbery** is down 14%
- **Burglary** is down 22%
- **Vehicle Theft** is down 24%
- **Other types of Theft** are down 16%

Across these crime types this means nearly 1,300 less victims of crime this year compared with last year in the District. Essex Police was found by an independent watchdog to be ‘outstanding’ at the way we capture the crimes reported to us, therefore you can trust that this reduction in crime numbers is accurate.

**Chris Bradford**
Chief Inspector
Wickford parish council proposals

Wickford residents are being asked for their views on proposals for a town council to be created. The detailed proposals have been drawn up following a petition from residents asking the council to undertake a review and initial consultation held last year.

Town and parish councils are independently elected and raise their own precept – a form of council tax. They can take responsibility for local services such as village halls and community centres, local parks and play areas, litter, public toilets and war memorials and provide a strong local voice for the area.

There are currently eight local councils in the borough covering about a quarter of households and electors. Should Wickford Town Council be established then most of the north of the borough will be covered by a parish or town council. The council is due to consider shortly whether consultation should be undertaken on proposals for whether areas to the south of the borough should be parished.

All residents in Wickford wards are being written to this month offering them the chance to have their say on the proposals.
Reducing rubbish

Rubbish weighing a staggering 988kg, or the same as a Ford Fiesta, is put out for collection by each household in the Basildon borough every year. That’s the highest figure in Essex.

Collectively, the borough needs to reduce its waste – and the impact of waste on our environment. That’s why Basildon Council is working with residents to improve recycling rates and reduce the amount of rubbish we produce. We want to do more to help improve our local, and the global environment.

Following the agreement of a waste strategy for the borough, changes are beginning to happen. For example, this summer we introduced the Our Streets Basildon waste app making it easier than ever to check bin collection days or report a street issue.

Over the summer service managers took to Facebook to answer your questions. Cleaner Neighbourhoods Manager James Hendry said: “There is clearly a strong desire from residents to work with us to improve and that is exactly how it needs to work. We can’t do this alone.

“Basildon residents are passionate about their neighbourhoods and we know that cleaner streets and reducing flytipping is right up there as a top priority for both residents and the council.

“We face unprecedented challenges but we have the opportunity to make changes to our operations to make our neighbourhoods cleaner and contribute to the improvement of the environment.”

We’re Cleaning Up Campaign underway in borough parks

People using the borough’s parks recently may have noticed some new signage as part of the council’s We’re Cleaning Up campaign.

Targeted signage has been installed with the aim of encouraging those who attend parks to take responsibility for their own waste.

This year the Covid-19 pandemic has affected how everyone has lived their lives and socialised with social distancing, the easing of lockdown and our outdoor parks and spaces being used more for gatherings. This has resulted in an increase in visitor numbers and an increase in dumped rubbish. From the 15 June to 20 July the council collected 15.11 tonnes of litter from borough parks.

Parks & Countryside Supervisor Glen Owens said: “Some people have been placing waste next to bins that are at capacity, which is still littering. This kind of litter should be taken home.

“There has also been an increase in littering of nitrous canisters and an increase in rubbish around fishing lakes.

“The time spent cleaning up could be better spent improving the parks for all to enjoy. Basildon is blessed with beautiful parks and open spaces and it is the responsibility of each and every one of us to ensure they are kept tidy.”
Molly waits in the dairy section of a busy supermarket

The family make various trips to the fridge and by the end of the week she’s empty!

Molly rinsed and ready to go

Finally she's picked up and brought home from the supermarket

Molly is put in a pink sack, collected by our recycling team and taken to a recycling centre

Finally... get me out of here!

Machinery splits open the pink sacks and all the materials are sorted

The plastic is broken down into pellets

These are baled together and sent or sold to a recycling processor

Pellets are then sold to packaging manufacturers

PLASTICS ONLY

The pellets are used to make new plastic milk bottles and Molly is reborn for the cycle to begin again

Pick me!

I'm a bit squashed

BALES
WE’VE GOT BASILDON COVERED!

NEW DIGITAL TECHNOLOGY CAMPUS
IN BASILDON TOWN CENTRE

Equipping young people and adults with the skills to work in the growing digital technology industry.

Improve your digital skills and gain a qualification in:

- Computer games design
- Digital animation
- IT from beginner to level 5
- Programming
- Networking

ENGINEERING & CONSTRUCTION COURSES

Our Luckyn Lane campus provides technical training to meet the skills needs in the Thames Estuary and beyond. Courses include:

- Engineering
- Construction
- Building Services
- Transport

ADULT SKILLS
RECENTLY LOST YOUR JOB? LOOKING TO RETRAIN?
VISIT: WWW.SOUTHESSEX.AC.UK/ADULTS FOR FREE COURSES

FOR MORE INFO WWW.SOUTHESSEX.AC.UK CALL 0345 52 12345

#MORE IN COMMON

BASILDON BOROUGH

Your one stop shop for help and support in the Basildon Borough

The Covid-19 Pandemic has forced many substantial changes to all of our lives, which are having major impacts on a whole range of people in today’s society. But there should be no shame associated with this situation.

HOW CAN WE HELP?

If for example you are suffering from worries or distress about Debt, Anxiety, Homelessness, Isolation, or Loneliness, to name but a few concerns, then you are not alone - there is help at hand.

The More In Common Basildon Borough website at the link below, or telephone number could assist you in finding the help that you are seeking.

All you need to do is to enter your concern in the search box, and you will be presented with those organisations who may be able to assist you.

GET IN TOUCH

WEBSITE
www.moreincommonbb.co.uk

TelephoneNumber
01268 394011

If you are a local Support Group or Charity Group who feels they could offer advice or support to our residents most in need then please feel free to register your organisation. We already have many such Groups who have registered and we would like to welcome many more
After being kicked out of school as a 15-year-old, months before he was due to take his GCSE exams, Kirby T was unsure about the direction his future was heading.

Fast forward six years and playing in front of a packed out crowd in Stuttgart, Germany, the 24-year-old former Billericay School pupil reflects;

“I was in my last year in school, looking at different courses for college, but ended up not making it to the end.

“It was a massive setback, to leave in my last year, I didn’t know what I was going to do, whether I was even going to be able to take my exams.”

Essex County Council had sorted two days a week of Maths and English study at a learning centre and there were three days of the week they needed to fill. That’s when an opportunity came along that kick-started his career;

“I wanted to do something music related, so they got in contact with Gateway. I had an interview there and they took me on for my school days.”

Gateway FM; a community radio station based in Basildon who broadcast on 97.8FM across Basildon and East Thurrock, and online across the world, gave Kirby T a sense of belonging. He stayed there for three years, and his weekly show helped him build contacts in the scene and gave him an industry CV, which helped in the pursuit to further his career;

“It really started kicking off at Gateway, a lot of MC’s started getting in touch, and I was put in touch with a lot of hungry artists. That’s when the show started getting really popular, and I decided to leave Gateway to progress.”

From there, he got a weekly slot on the popular urban radio station, Westside, and that platform gave him the opportunity to go on a journey across the UK and throughout Europe;

“I got booked to play for a crowd in Prague. It was in an old opera theatre and the crowd there were crazy, it was packed out with people going mental.

“When you’re on stage controlling an audience like that, it’s an incredible feeling.”

By becoming a growing face in the scene and creating the name he has for himself, Kirby T has been able to work with some of the genre’s pioneers - people that he grew up listening to, that inspired him to get involved in music;

“Ten years ago I was listening to Devlin’s albums on repeat, I was obsessed.

I’d have never imagined ten years on I’d be on tour with him, going to Manchester, Glasgow, Nottingham, London, doing these massive shows, it’s been an incredible journey so far.

It would be great if there were more platforms for music of an urban background and more opportunities for kids to turn their life around, like Gateway helped me turn mine.”

If you’re a young person with an interest in radio or music and want to explore that further, contact reception@gateway978.com for details about their young people’s radio club.

Basildon Council working to bring Youth Zone to the borough

Music, dance and performing arts facilities are just some of the activities on offer in an OnSide Youth Zone, which Basildon Council is working to bring to a town centre location.

Youth Zones are flexible spaces that can respond to young people’s changing needs and preferences and also typically provide multi-use 3G pitches, indoor sports hall, climbing wall, gym and café.

Look out for more news on the council’s website or by subscribing to our enewsletter at www.basildon.gov.uk/keepintouch
How the council works

Basildon Council has 42 elected members representing 16 wards. The current Leader of the Council is Councillor Gavin Callaghan of the Labour Group. Labour and independent councillors have agreed to work together as the Basildon Borough Alliance to run the council’s administration.

The Basildon Borough Alliance has 22 councillors (Labour 15, Independent 3, Wickford Independents 2, Non-aligned 2), while the Conservative Group has 19 councillors. There is also an Independent councillor.

Councillors are elected by thirds – meaning there 14 councillors are elected in three years out of every four, with an Essex County Council election being held in the fourth year.

The next council elections will be held in May 2021.

Each councillor publishes their contact details on the council’s website. For details about your councillor and how to contact them go to www.basildon.gov.uk/wherelive

Decisions are made in committees and meetings of full Council. Councillors are currently attending meetings remotely. Meetings are streamed live on the council’s YouTube channel and recordings are available to watch afterwards. Agendas and minutes for these meetings are published on the council’s website and most meetings are broadcast live. Go to www.basildon.gov.uk/meetings

Events

Here’s a round up of some of the events you can take part in.

Know something we don’t? Let us know so we can share it with our readers.

Email details of your upcoming event to together@basildon.gov.uk

The 2020 Virtual Fun Walk

The annual event, normally held at Barleylands Farm, Billericay, won’t be happening in its usual way this year. The 2020 Fun Walk virtual event will give supporters the opportunity to walk the equivalent distance of between two-five kilometres in a setting of their own choosing to raise the sponsorship money.

The Fun Walk has raised £1,169,000 for local charities since its inception, and has provided essential support to some of our borough’s most vital charities in the last two decades.

Sign up, get yourself sponsored and get walking!

To register for the walk visit: www.thefunwalktrust.co.uk/registration

Heart of Pitsea Community Connect Online

This event runs until 30 September 2020. Although our Community Connect club is physically closed, we are still meeting up in an online group chat on Wednesday evenings from 6.30pm. It’s amazing how meeting ‘virtually’ can lift your mood and make you feel less isolated.

To find out how to join email hello@heartofpitsea.co.uk

Virtual Civic Service to remember loved ones

Tragically, some of us have lost loved ones this year, not just to the virus - but the pandemic has meant that we haven’t been able to say goodbye in the traditional way or gather with family and friends to remember and pay our respects to those we have lost.

On the evening of Monday 7 September, there will be a virtual Civic Service of reflection, remembrance and recognition.

The virtual Civic Service will be live streamed at 6.30pm on the Basildon Council YouTube channel.
One small change, can make a big difference

Did you know that each year, around 400 million tonnes of plastic is produced globally? 40% of this is avoidable single-use plastic such as drinks bottles, carrier bags and coffee cups, which is accelerating climate change and damaging our local environments.

We want to help protect Essex and reduce the amount of single-use plastic across the county, so in January 2020 we launched the Essex Plastic Pledge. Since then, over 10,000 residents have joined us and pledged to reduce their plastic waste, but there’s still more we can do.

By opting for reusable items, you can reduce the amount of plastic you throw away. Here are some simple switches you could make:

- Use a reusable water bottle and refill on the go
- Always have your reusable shopping bag to hand
- Say no to plastic straws
- Switch to a bar of soap to cut down on bathroom plastics
- Choose washable cleaning, makeup and baby wipes

If you sign the Essex Plastic Pledge, each month you’ll receive an e-newsletter full of tips and tricks on how to cut down on single-use plastics. You can also follow @loveessexuk on Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

Remember that by making just one small change, you can make a big difference.

HANDS UP IF YOU’RE SAYING NO TO SINGLE-USE PLASTIC...

...JOIN US AND TAKE THE ESSEX PLASTIC PLEDGE AT

loveessex.org/plasticpledge
CORONAVIRUS HANDWASHING REMAINS CRITICAL

- Keep a safe distance from others (2 metres where possible)
- Limit contact with other people

For more ways to stay safe go to gov.uk/coronavirus

STAY ALERT ▶ CONTROL THE VIRUS ▶ SAVE LIVES