Supporting Growth in our District

See inside:

Focus On Leisure
WIN a year’s gym membership

Braintree Means Business
Supporting local people

Budget Challenge
Balancing the budget

Recycling
Your Christmas and New Year collection

Shaping Our District
The need for more homes
Do you have a few hours to spare and enjoy helping others?

Community Transport Volunteer Drivers are wanted across the whole of the District to drive one of our minibuses or in your own car.

If you have time to spare and a willingness to help you could be giving a lifeline to many elderly and vulnerable people within the community - enabling access to appointments, local shops, social events and day trips. Out of pocket expenses reimbursed.

For more information or an informal chat please contact 01376 557883 or email community.transport@braintree.gov.uk

Looking for a unique and flexible venue?

From weddings to business breakfast meetings, fairs and conferences, the historic Braintree Town Hall provides an elegant surrounding for all your events, meetings, seminars, presentations, lectures and conferences.

To book Braintree Town Hall:
T 01376 557776
E thc@braintree.gov.uk
www.braintree.gov.uk/townhall

Braintree Town Hall

Calling all Charities

Every year the Chairman of the Council can choose to raise money for local charities.

Our Chairman Councillor Lyn Walters has had a successful year raising money for Essex Dementia Care, Crossroads Young Carers and Southview School in Witham.

We’re now appealing for local registered charities to come forward to be considered as the charities of the next chairman who will be elected in April 2016.

Please contact donwa@braintree.gov.uk
Dear reader...

Welcome to Contact magazine.
It’s been a busy year with another one ahead.
Our district is changing. People are living longer; we need more homes, more jobs, more investment and more opportunities for everyone who lives and works in our district.

We’ll grow significantly in the coming decade, so we need to make sure the right foundations are in place to support this growth. But we are determined that the character and community spirit that bonds our district and its towns and villages needs to stay.

In this issue you’ll find out more about how we are hoping to bring big decisions closer to you through devolution to Essex, we’ll take you through our plans to meet the need for more homes in the district and we’ll tell you about the work we are doing to make sure young people have the right skills to get the jobs on offer in our district and what we are doing to support local businesses.

I also need to be frank with you about the challenges we face and how we can work together to make sure the Braintree District remains a good place to live and work. All councils need to be less dependent on reduced funding from central government, meaning we have to do things differently.

Like many organisations in the public sector we have had to tighten our belts, but through prudent management we are in a good position. There are tough times ahead and difficult decisions to make but I am confident we can meet those challenges head on together. We are seeking views on how we spend your money, how we might make savings and what the priorities should be. This will help us inform the Corporate Strategy going forward.

Every day we aim to make a real difference to you and our communities, but much of what we do is out of sight. I hope this publication gives you a chance to find out more about our commitment to local people.

Graham Butland
Leader of the Council
Economic Growth

Economic growth is a top priority for the Council. We are helping our businesses to grow and create new jobs, and we are attracting new businesses to our District.

Small and medium sized businesses are the heart of our local economy. The more our businesses succeed, the more they provide money, jobs and opportunities for our residents and young people.

We’ve set aside money to improve Braintree, Halstead and Witham town centres to keep them vibrant and successful and we’re working to improve our industrial estates too.

We’re helping our residents start up and grow new businesses through our enterprise centre and through our advice and support. We have also set up a Business Growth Loan Fund for businesses to invest in premises and equipment to help them grow and create jobs.

We’re already attracting new companies into the District. The Skyline 120 Business Park in Braintree already houses some exciting and innovative companies such as Delamode PLC and Alphasense. This means more jobs and opportunities for you and our young people.

We know how important it is to be able to travel freely throughout the district and beyond so we’re working with the Haven Gateway Partnership to lobby for improvements to the A120 and A12. We’re also looking to secure improvements to train travel between Braintree and London.

Together with Greenfields Community Housing we’ve recently recruited our latest Green Team. Over the past four years, 18 young people have received support, training and work experience thanks to the 12-week landscape-based training scheme.

Braintree firm Swann Group designed, fabricated and installed the digital arch structure in Salford using a skilled workforce from the Braintree District.

Enjoy a faster online experience

We know how important fast broadband speeds are for the whole family. Whether you’re streaming music, catching up on your favourite TV show or shopping online, we all need reliable and fast internet access.

That’s why we’re working with the Superfast Essex Team to rollout superfast broadband to our homes and businesses in the Braintree District.

We’ve invested £250,000 and we’ve already improved broadband connection for 11,000 homes and businesses. We’ll continue to work to improve the situation for those living in our very rural locations.

Economic Growth is a top priority for the Council. We are helping our businesses to grow and create new jobs, and we are attracting new businesses to our District.

To find out more about how we can help you and your business, please contact our Economic Development Team at economicd@braintree.gov.uk

We’re hosting a job fair
Causeway House
Bocking End, Braintree
Friday, February 12, 2016
10am and 3pm.

Come along for a chance to meet our local businesses and employment experts.
Braintree District Business Growth Loan Fund

- Need investment to grow your business?
- Capital investment loans between £5,000 and £100,000 are available on a commercial basis for companies located in or moving into the Braintree District.

For more information:
T: 01376 552525
E: economicd@braintree.gov.uk
W: www.braintree.gov.uk/businessloan

Apprenticeship opportunities

We offer a number of apprenticeship opportunities based in a range of different departments within Braintree District Council. All our apprentices gain nationally recognised qualifications while also gaining valuable work experience.

Gabriella Constantinou, Community Service Apprentice, said:
The reason I considered doing an apprenticeship was because of the positive feedback that other apprentices gave me. The idea of being paid and being provided with qualifications appealed to me.

Emma Street, Business Solutions Apprentice, said:
Everyone is supportive and wants you to learn as much as you can during the apprenticeship. As well as providing brilliant training and qualifications for your specific job role they also provide you with many other qualifications too.

Apprentice Lauren Wiffen writes about her experience so far:
I couldn’t recommend apprenticeships more, especially within local government where opportunities for young people are growing.

There’s a range of different departments from finance to marketing, from planning to customer service. I’m based in the marketing department and I’m gaining valuable experience and skills.

I’m working on projects and campaigns in my local community and I’m getting the chance to use and develop my writing skills which I really enjoy.

It’s great to gain life-long skills in a real working environment rather than an academic setting, and I’m earning a wage while I learn.

If you are interested in becoming a Braintree District Council apprentice please contact Samje@braintree.gov.uk
We all want good jobs and lives for our families, but a better Braintree District also depends on the new homes and the infrastructure that goes with it.

We want to promote a district in which people live good lives, where there are jobs and businesses boosting the local economy to make sure people can live well and healthily.

After changes to the government’s planning policies we have to significantly boost the number of new homes built in the district, something that applies to all local councils across the country.

We’re now working on a new Local Plan which will include all major planning policy for the district in one single document.

We have to plan for a larger number of new homes, so we will need to look at larger sites. This could include urban extensions like Great Notley, or new settlements which could follow garden settlement designs.

Our Local Plan is not just about new homes; we’re working with partners such as the NHS, education and highways authorities so that community facilities such as schools, GP surgeries, roads and public transport links are in place to support existing residents as well as new communities.

**What next?**

Last year we called for sites; this was an opportunity for sites that could be considered for development for homes and jobs to be put forward.

Since then we’ve been collecting evidence on landscape, open space, economic development and highways which will inform our draft plan.

With all this information a draft local plan will be published in 2016 for you to view and comment on.

From there revisions will be made and once approved by our councillors, the plan will be submitted to the Planning Inspectorate for consideration.

Examination will be held in public by the Planning Inspector and we expect the local plan to be adopted in 2017.

**Why the need for more homes?**

1. There are more people moving into the district than are leaving.
2. There isn’t enough affordable housing. The average price of a flat in the district is more than £100,000 and private rent is over £500 per month. Even the cheapest local housing is out of reach for most people.
3. We are living longer. The number of over 65s in the district is expected to rise significantly and we’ve seen a 43% increase in the number of over 90s over the past ten years.
4. More people are living on their own or in smaller households.

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**Have you ever wondered how our roads get their names?**

Once planning permissions are approved Braintree District Council liaises with district, town and parish councillors or local historians to make sure new homes, roads and developments have their roots firmly in the community.

In Witham, the Maltings Lane development has seen a particularly poignant use of names. Roads in the Witham development have been named in tribute to those from the town who gave their lives in the first and second world war.

Local historian Mike Bardell talks about how he suggests names for Braintree’s new neighbourhoods.

“In 1996 I wrote a booklet - ‘A Sense of Place’ about the origin of the town’s street names and shortly afterwards I was asked by the council for my help. Happily I have a large local history archive and since 1996 have had around seventy street and building names accepted. My method is simple, I simply try to relate the street to its original farm or field name - every field in the UK is named - ‘Black Bread Close’ is an example. Or I will look to a past owner, often ancient, like in ‘Dapifer Drive’ - a post Norman Conquest owner of Marks Manor.

Sometimes I resort to geographical or infrastructure features such as ‘Turnpike Place’ and ‘Postmill Drive’ built on the site of the old tollhouse and a windmill respectively, both of which once stood in Coggeshall Road. Occasionally I use old industries such as ‘Plaiters Way’ which reminds us of the mid-18th Century local cottage industry of plaiting straw for Luton hat making. Then there are the names of local notables and even those from further afield who have contributed to the success or health of the town and its people.”
Like lots of places across the country, Braintree District Council has been campaigning for a devolution deal from central government. But what is devolution? What does it mean for you? And how can it help us build an even better district?

It’s something we’re passionate about because ultimately it could make a real difference to you, your family and local businesses - both new and existing.

It might seem complex because we’re used to some services and spending being decided in London, but devolution boils down to the fact that we are better placed to make decisions that affect our communities and businesses than someone sitting in Westminster.

They don’t know the local context, or the local environment, or the sticking points when it comes to congestion and they don’t know our specific needs when it comes to the skills local businesses need to fulfil their job vacancies.

Take apprenticeships to help our young people into jobs and careers for example. Most of the funding for apprenticeships comes from central government and it doesn’t take into account the fine detail of how local employment markets work.

All fifteen local authorities in Greater Essex have been working together to look at the areas where devolving powers would enable us to improve the lives of residents and boost economic growth together. There is also work being done to engage other partners such as health, police and businesses.

Our ambition is to create a ‘Combined Authority’ which will have decision making ability on the issues that matter to you.

This is not a replacement to existing individual councils. Braintree District Council will continue to deliver services, but is a more strategic way for existing councils to work together and manage any new powers and funding devolved down from Government.

People in London can make decisions about our road networks, housing and skills, but ultimately they don’t know what is best for you and your family in Braintree, Halstead and Witham and surrounding villages.

We want to be able to improve our transport and infrastructure, not play second fiddle to massive projects with no benefit to Essex or our district.

This is not just about money. It’s about Braintree district, and Essex as a whole, having more say, more power and more influence. It is about your needs being better catered for, working together with our fellow Essex councils in partnership to deliver better for you.

We’re still very early in this process and there is much work and negotiation ahead but it is an exciting time and we’re committed to working together to try to deliver the best devolution deal we can for the district and Essex.

For more information on the Greater Essex Devolution project visit www.greateressex.org.uk

Signed by

Councillor Graham Butland
Council Leader

Nicola Beach
Chief Executive

DEVOLUTION PUTS POWER BACK INTO LOCAL HANDS.
Balancing the budget

With a further 40% reduction predicted, we need to close the financial gap of £3.34 million in our budget by 2020 and this means we have some decisions to make about standards of service provision and how we can generate income.

The amount of Government Grant funding we get for our day to day spending has reduced by £2 million over the last 4 years, presenting some challenges on how we deliver our services. And whilst we are in a better position than most through sound financial planning, making savings and investments early and introducing efficiencies, we still have a significant challenge ahead of us.

We will not be making major cuts to front line services or increase charges for car parking (in 2016/17) and we will be making the best use of our assets; looking at innovative ways to generate income and reviewing a number of our services to reduce costs. This year we have already identified over £1 million of reduced costs and additional income.
What we’re doing

We spend £7.9 million a year providing over 100 services, on average that equates to £2.42 per week per household.*

As part of our plan to balance the budget we are considering reducing some of our budgets in certain areas and looking at how we can make savings which will have minimal impact.

The following areas are under consideration:

Street Cleaning Service

We currently spend £1.1 million on Street Cleaning per year. We are looking at how we can do some things differently to reduce the overall cost of the service, whilst protecting our town centres, key gateways and strategic routes in and out of the district. For example, we intend to trial collecting dog and litter bin waste together in one bin to reduce our collections costs. We will also review the frequency we undertake some litter picking and mechanical sweeping activities to ensure that we only clean areas that actually need cleaning and not just a visit because they are part of a scheduled programme of work.

Horticultural Service

Keeping our parks, play areas and open spaces maintained to a very high standard costs £1 million per year. We will be looking to replace some of our summer and winter flower bed shrub beds. We will also be using different grass cutting equipment like rotary mowers that will enable us to reduce the number of times the grass needs to be cut in some areas.

Waste and Recycling Service

We currently deliver a fortnightly non-chargeable kerbside garden waste collection to residents who require the service. We have considered a number of options including; introduction of a chargeable kerbside garden waste collection service; suspension of the service between Nov-Mar; suspension of the service between Dec-Feb or withdraw the service totally. The most efficient option would be to suspend the service between December and February when garden waste is minimal.

Close or transfer chapels and toilets at cemeteries

The chapel buildings in Braintree, Bocking and Witham cemeteries are rarely used. If the buildings and toilets were shut, heating, lighting and maintenance costs will be saved. We will be exploring the options of closing, selling or transferring the buildings.

Reducing our contribution to Dedham Vale

Braintree District Council is a member of the Dedham Vale Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) and Stour Valley Project. Whilst the AONB sits outside of the District, the wider project area includes parts of the north of the District along the River Stour Valley. The project focuses on preserving and enhancing the special qualities of the area. BDC contributes £16,000 a year to this project and has done so for a number of years and is now proposing to reduce the contribution to £12,000 to reflect the project area within the Braintree District only.

Council tax on long term (over 2 years) empty homes

There are currently 271 properties across the district which have been unoccupied for 2 years or more. To encourage home owners to bring these properties back into use the proposal is to introduce a 50% council tax premium on long term empty homes.

If you have a view on the above proposals you can make comments or track our budget process: online at www.braintree.gov.uk/budgetchallenge2016 e-mail: budgetchallenge@braintree.gov.uk call: 01376 552525 for a paper copy of the consultation

*based on a band D property
Livewell in the Braintree District

The importance of the health and wellbeing agenda is reinforced through statistics from the Public Health District profile, which show that in the Braintree District there are a higher than average number of obese adults and older people suffering from hip fractures.

The Livewell programme introduced in 2014 set out to reduce the cost to health and social care by working with our partners to inform people on what’s available locally and how these initiatives can result in significant health benefits.

What’s happened this year?

**Tackling obesity**

**livewell bewell**

- We have launched a livewell website detailing activities across the district
- We have encouraged activity through a change in behaviour campaign
- We have hosted the Aviva Women’s Tour and Pedal in the Park event
- Together with Fusion we have increased visitors to the leisure centres

**livewell eatwell**

- We have produced a livewell healthy eating recipe book to encourage cooking from scratch, supported by a New Year’s resolution campaign
- New recipes now feature on the livewell website

[livewellcampaign.co.uk](http://livewellcampaign.co.uk)

**Tackling hip fractures**

**livewell agewell**

- We have produced an older people’s guide to inform people in later life about help at home, money matters, local transport, staying healthy, places to visit and local public services
- We have delivered a ‘Keeping warm and healthy’ booklet to vulnerable residents
If you think your footballing days are over - think again

Walking football is a slower version of the beautiful game. It’s aimed at the over 50s and is designed to help people keep active as they get older as well as getting those who used to play to take up the sport again.

John Smith started the Halstead Walking Football Club. John said: “There is one main rule to walking football: no running! Anyone who sprints, runs or jogs while the ball is in play concedes a free kick to the opposition and as a non-contact sport the risk of injury is reduced.”

Dave, age 60
“Following a heart bypass my GP advised me to get some exercise. I wanted a group sport because it’s not just about the sport it’s the social side too. It’s great to be part of a team again, keeps you young and I’ve lost 2 stone since I started playing in December 2014.”

Trevor, age 70
“I played football until I was 39 then I refereed for 22 years – when John started up the walking football it was the best thing that’s ever happened. We have a laugh and I love the camaraderie.”

Walking football is a great way to keep fit, learn skills, have fun and socialise. So if you’re ready to get back into playing the game you love or simply want to increase your activity join us on one of our sessions.

If you want help and advice to live a healthier lifestyle log on to www.livewellcampaign.co.uk

Find out local activities, signposting to health and wellbeing services and help with lifestyle changes; as well as regular updates on healthy eating, topical campaigns and events.
Braintree District Council is encouraging local takeaways to join the Tuck IN campaign.

**Tuck IN** is a new Essex-wide campaign which aims to reduce salt, sugar and saturated fat in takeaway foods. By working alongside local businesses that provide takeaway food, we can help change how foods are selected, prepared and served to ‘make food better’ and encourage positive lifestyle choices. By making the pledge to Tuck IN, businesses will be able to provide customers with a wider choice of foods, which can have a positive impact on the health of customers, especially if these foods are consumed regularly.

When ordering a takeaway, look out for businesses with the Tuck IN logo and ask a member of staff for the reduced salt, sugar and fat options.

Amy Leung and Keme Leung of Palm Trees Restaurant in Blake End, Rayne, Braintree.

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**Body Science:**
**Stunning Senses - Healthy Futures**

6 Feb - 28 Apr 2016

For the first time Braintree District Museum is holding a free, fully interactive science exhibition exploring the wonders of the human body and its powerful senses, working in partnership with Braintree District Council’s Livewell Campaign and Essex County Council Public Health.

Informative displays will also demonstrate how our lifestyles, such as our diet and physical activity levels, and even the temperature of our homes, can affect our health and wellbeing.

The Museum will also be running a series of themed activities for children and families over February half term and the Easter holidays.

www.braintreemuseum.co.uk
Celebrating our finest sporting talent

BMX racer Oli Cutmore was crowned Sports Personality of the Year at our Active Braintree Sports Awards.

Oli, 22, represents Braintree BMX Club, and has had a successful year riding in the 17-29 cruiser category achieving National Series and British titles and riding to fifth place in the 17-24 cruiser category at the 2015 BMX World Championships.

Oli said: “It was a great honour to win and rounded off a really good season for me. I couldn’t have done any of it without the support of my dad.”

Our winners:

Sports Personality of the Year Award
Oli Cutmore - Braintree BMX Club

Young Community Volunteer Award
Lewis Brennan – Ramsey School

Unsung Hero Award
Paul Eldridge – Valley Green Football Club (Witham)

Disabled Sports Personality of the Year Award
Lenna Rayner – Halstead Flat Green Bowls Club

Coach of the Year Award
Anthony Gordon – Braintree & District Athletic Club

WIN A CHOICE MEMBERSHIP Register TO WIN!
www.fusion-lifestyle.com/choice

Exciting facilities and activities at Braintree District leisure centres

Excellent facilities at 4 centres in the Braintree district:

- Gyms
- Over 250 Classes per week
- Swimming
- Racquet sports
- Creche
- Great value memberships
- Swim school
- Outdoor sports

And much more...

Braintree Sport & Health Club
Braintree Swimming & Fitness
Halstead Leisure Centre
Witham Leisure Centre

Tel: 0845 2601535
www.braintree-leisure.com
IN AN EMERGENCY ALWAYS CALL 999

BE SURE AT THE DOOR

STOP!
Are you expecting anybody?
You DON’T have to answer your door!

CHECK!
Ask to see the caller’s ID - are they Buy with Confidence accredited?

SAY NO!
Tell cold callers to go, and shut the door.

REMEMBER:
You decide whether you want repairs done on your home.
Don’t let a cold caller tell you what to do.
Check if they’re Buy with Confidence traders on 03454 040506 or www.buywithconfidence.gov.uk

Pick up a Be Sure at the Door no cold callers sticker from your local Essex library.
The North Essex Parking Partnership

We are a council-run organisation which brings together parking services in North Essex. The partnership is made up of six Districts, Boroughs and Essex County Council. It is managed by Colchester Borough Council.

What we do

- Parking enforcement in council-run car parks and on highways
- Resident, visitor and car park permits
- Manage car parks and payment systems
- Install and manage traffic regulation orders
- Administer Penalty Charge Notices and handle appeals
- Operate the CCTV enforcement vehicle, the Park Safe car
- Provide parking advice and information
- Weekly local parking news and advice via our blog

To find out more visit our website at www.parkingpartnership.org and our blog at www.northesxparkingpartnership.wordpress.com

If Santa is bringing you a dog this Christmas, microchipping gives you peace of mind and makes it easier for you to get your dog back if it strays, is lost or stolen.

If your dog is recovered by our Dog Wardens and doesn't have a chip, you could face **A FINE OF UP TO £500**

www.braintree.gov.uk/dogchip or call 01376 552525

lost!

... without a chip
Get ready for winter

Be FLOOD AWARE
If you think your home could be at risk from river flooding, take action now. As a home owner you have responsibility to protect your own property. The Environment Agency can give advice on flood warnings through Floodline on 0345 988 1188 or through their website www.gov.uk/environment-agency

The National Flood Forum also provides support and advice, and their blue pages directory lists flood protection products available to protect your property from river or surface water flooding. 01299 403055 or visit www.nationalfloodforum.org.uk

We stock Floodsax which can be purchased at cost, call 01376 552525

WINTER is here
We are supporting the Met Office’s ‘Get Ready for Winter’ campaign.
A whole host of information can be found at www.metoffice.gov.uk/getreadyforwinter

Weather
If the weather turns bad, driving conditions may be affected so listen to BBC Essex and keep an eye on www.metoffice.gov.uk/weather

Gritting
Gritting is the responsibility of Essex County Council, but our operations staff will be out and about gritting the places we have responsibility for, such as our car parks and cemeteries. Keep up to date with all the latest information www.essex.gov.uk/Winter

Ice
There is no law stopping you from clearing snow and ice from the pavement outside your home or from public spaces.

When you clear snow and ice:
• do it early in the day - it’s easier to move fresh, loose snow
• don’t use water - it might refreeze and turn to black ice
• use salt if possible - it will melt the ice or snow and stop it from refreezing overnight (but don’t use the salt from salting bins as this is used to keep roads clear)
• you can use ash and sand if you don’t have enough salt - it will provide grip underfoot
• pay extra attention when clearing steps and steep pathways - using more salt may help

For everything else please see: www.braintree.gov.uk/winter

Worried about rising energy costs?
1 Switch to a cheaper energy tariff – we run energy switch schemes.
2 Check your home is fully insulated – you might qualify for FREE loft and cavity insulation.
3 If your boiler needs replacing, there are grants available towards a new one.
4 Heat your home using oil? Join a local oil buying club.

Braintree District Council’s sustainability team is here to help give you advice
Call 01376 552525 or email energyadvice@braintree.gov.uk

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What will you do if you’re not well this winter?

Flu and winter colds are usually best managed at home with plenty of rest and fluids.

If you think you might need medical care, think Pharmacy First: ask your local pharmacist.

Need a doctor? Call NHS 111 for access to out-of-hours GP services.
Clean & Green

Thank you for your support to tackle litter

We are proud to announce that Braintree District has won a prestigious national award for clean public spaces in the annual CIWM Clean Britain 2015 Awards. We know that clean streets and attractive open spaces are an important priority and by investing in the Green Heart of Essex, our residents and businesses are now benefitting from a cleaner and greener district. We would like to take this opportunity to thank you for your support, especially to all the volunteers across our district who continue to do their bit for their local community.

Last year, the ‘Love Essex’ anti-littering campaign saw a result of 41% reduction in fast food litter across Essex. The campaign received national recognition by winning the ‘Diamond Jubilee Partnership Award’ presented by Keep Britain Tidy in February 2015.

This year, as the trend in ‘eating-on-the-go’ increases, over 300 local businesses across Essex, Suffolk and Kent joined us in the battle against litter and put pressure on offenders to change their anti-social behaviour.

Allison Ogden-Newton, Chief Executive of environmental charity Keep Britain Tidy, said:

“It is fantastic to see the Love Essex campaign going from strength to strength and the model being adopted by other counties. Campaigns like this, which see local authorities, charities, businesses and communities working together, are the best way to tackle the problem of litter that blights our streets, parks and beaches.”

The partnership includes all 15 Essex local authorities, Britvic, Coca-Cola, Costa, Domino’s Highways England, KFC, McDonald’s, RP2 Global, Smith Anderson, Tesco, Wrigley, Green Heart Champions, local volunteers and community groups.

It costs £1.1 million of taxpayers’ money to keep our area clean and tidy.

See it-report it

So far, we have received over 400 car litter reports from members of the public in our district. If you see anyone throwing litter from a vehicle, take the registration number and let us know. www.braintree.gov.uk/report or call 01376 552525
Through your efforts nearly 30,849 tonnes of waste was recycled last year. That’s just over 54%, making us third best in Essex. Please continue to recycle as much as you can.

Hot Dates!

Confusion over date labels is common - only 36% of us correctly understand the term ‘Use By’ and by getting dates in a muddle, we can easily end up throwing away food that is perfectly edible or eating food that is potentially unsafe. Just under half of the good food and drink that we end up throwing away (worth £5.6 billion) is because we don’t use it in time: thrown away because it has either gone off or passed the date on the packaging. By getting the dates to work for us, we can eat safely, take control, and also save money.

The most important dates are the following:

The ‘BEST BEFORE’ date relates to quality - it will be at its peak condition at this time – food will still be safe to eat after the date, but it may not be at its best.

The ‘USE BY’ is there for your safety and is only found on foods where there is a safety risk. Therefore food should not be eaten past this date, but it can be eaten or frozen right up to it.

The ‘SELL BY’ and ‘DISPLAY UNTIL’ dates are just for the shops for internal stock control not shoppers so they can be safely ignored. If others in your house always throw food away at its Sell By scribble it out – just make sure you leave any Use By clearly displayed. Also try writing an ‘opened on’ date to milk or juice so that everyone knows how long they have to use them.

School Recycling

Earlier this year Braintree District Council won funding from the Department for Communities & Local Government to help continue to improve recycling and food waste reduction in our district. We’re using part of the money to make sure schools are better at recycling their food waste.

First to sign up was Powers Hall Infants School in Witham. Headteacher Claire Jaques said: “We’ve enjoyed learning about food waste and it has already resulted in us throwing away less food. We asked for kitchen caddies to put into our classrooms so we can collect the pupils’ fruit waste. The children have been involved at every stage and it is really important to me that our pupils start the reduce, reuse, recycle habit as early as possible.”

If your school would like to find out about the new food waste recycling collections please contact our Recycling Team via recycling@braintree.gov.uk or call 01376 552525

(Left to right) Jack Taylor, Joseph Handford, Joe Scarlett and headteacher Claire Jaques
### Christmas & New Year Collections

**NORMAL DATE**

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<tr>
<th>Normal date</th>
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<td>Fri 25 Dec</td>
<td>THURS 24 DEC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mon 28 Dec</td>
<td>MON 28 DEC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tues 29 Dec</td>
<td>TUES 29 DEC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wed 30 Dec</td>
<td>WED 30 DEC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Thurs 31 Dec</td>
<td>THURS 31 DEC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fri 1 Jan</td>
<td>SAT 2 JAN</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PLEASE NOTE**

NO GREEN WHEELED BIN COLLECTION from Monday 28th December to Sunday 10th January.

**RECYCLE**

**as much as you can**

If you need to dispose of out of date food, please remember to recycle everything you can. Research shows that food in its original containers gets thrown into grey wheeled bins and consequently goes to landfill, costing us all money and harming our environment.

Most food packaging consists of trays, cardboard, paper and foil which can all be recycled, as too can the out of date food.

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Please recycle this when you have finished with it.

1. Place food waste in FOOD BIN
2. Rinse containers
3. RECYCLE Packaging in your CLEAR SACKS

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### Recycling

Recycle as much as you can.

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**CHECK YOUR CALENDAR** for what items to put out on the day.

**USUAL COLLECTION DAYS RESUME**

ON MONDAY 4 JANUARY, HOWEVER THERE WILL BE NO GREEN WHEELED BIN COLLECTIONS

FROM MONDAY 11 JANUARY ALL COLLECTIONS WILL BE BACK TO NORMAL

www.braintree.gov.uk/collectioncalendar

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Keep in touch

Register for text message updates e.g. services, bin collections, special announcements, offers and customer feedback. Text your postcode and house number (or house name) to 07797 803 203

**SIGN UP for our e-newsletter** www.braintree.gov.uk/econtact