

CONTACT

RESIDENTS' MAGAZINE



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Braintree
District Council



Your Local College

Church Lane, Braintree

Colchester Institute's Braintree Campus is on your doorstep!
Come along to one of our open events to find out more



- Brickwork • Business and Marketing • Carpentry • Construction • Electrical Installations
- Engineering • Film and Digital Media • Plumbing • Uniformed Services and more

Our Next Open Event: Thursday 14th May 2026, 5-6:30pm



Book your place:
colchester.ac.uk/events

THANK YOU

to those who completed our survey in our last magazine. This feedback has been really helpful in understanding how informed you feel and what you want to hear more about from us.



81.4% of you felt informed about council services

You told us you want to hear more about waste & recycling, services available to you and council tax and spending in particular.

On page 12 & 13, you can get the latest on the changes coming to your waste and recycling collections, including your new bin deliveries and what goes in what bin or box.



Page 6 & 7 tells you more about where your council tax goes and about our budget for the year ahead.



You can find out about our services throughout this magazine and on our website.

KEEPING UPDATED with waste & recycling services

SIGN UP to receive bin collection reminders by text: www.braintree.gov.uk/text

VIEW OR DOWNLOAD your waste & recycling collection calendar online: www.braintree.gov.uk/collectioncalendar



If you require this document in another format, please call 01376 552525

It costs 7p per household to prepare and print this magazine.

How you can keep informed

-  www.braintree.gov.uk
-  [braintreedistrictcouncil](https://www.facebook.com/braintreedistrictcouncil)
-  [@BraintreeDC](https://twitter.com/BraintreeDC)
-  [@BraintreeDC](https://www.instagram.com/BraintreeDC)
-  [@braintreedistrictcouncil](https://www.soundcloud.com/braintreedistrictcouncil)
-  [@BraintreeDC](https://www.youtube.com/BraintreeDC)

SCAN TO JOIN

our new WhatsApp channel



SIGN UP to our email newsletters: www.braintree.gov.uk/tellmemore

We send out regular newsletters on a range of topics, including:

- Bins, recycling & environment
- Planning
- Jobs
- Health and wellbeing
- District news
- What's on in the Braintree district

Customer Services

 Braintree District Council, Causeway House, Braintree, Essex, CM7 9HB

 csc@braintree.gov.uk
 01376 552525

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Key Achievements 2025

11,000

residents
healthier
because of
popular Beat
the Street
campaign



£331K

invested in
initiatives
to support
residents with the
cost-of-living crisis



Over £2.4 million spent on projects

from Section 106 contributions
secured from developers,
such as 3G football pitches, games
and play areas and tennis courts



£167K

in grants allocated
to rural businesses and
community groups
from Rural
England
Prosperity
Fund



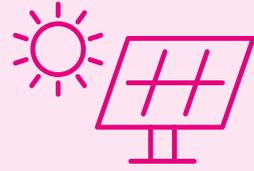
338

tonnes of
bulky waste
collected and disposed
of responsibly
(equivalent to more
than 27 London buses)

£1m

invested

in upgrading
community assets
and open spaces



983

solar panels and LED lighting installed

at Witham Leisure
Centre, saving
60 tonnes of
carbon annually



667

trees planted

for a greener
future



272

residents connected

with organisations
at 2 AgeWell fairs

968

people connected

with employers
at 4 job fairs



229

affordable homes

delivered
to support
families



781

fly tips cleared,

with 97% cleared
within 1 working day
of being reported



OUR BUDGET

DESIGNED TO SUPPORT
RESIDENTS AND COMMUNITIES

We know that many residents continue to feel the pressure of the cost-of-living crisis. That is why, thanks to our careful and prudent financial management, **we are freezing our share of council tax this year** to help ease the burden on households.

For example:

For a **Band D** property, this means our portion of council tax will remain at **£206.01 a year** or **£3.96 a week**.

We are also continuing our local council tax support scheme, assisting more than 7,000 low-income households.

Alongside the freeze, there will be no cuts to council services and additional investment will go towards supporting residents and local communities, with more money for community support, pride-in-place, economic development and improving accessibility to our services through digitalisation.



Investing in our communities

A further
£400,000
over two years
for continued
cost-of-living support



Freeze
to the garden
waste subscription
service



£255,000
over three years
to fund festive lights
in our town centres



£1,500
per councillor
for community projects



£150,000
for environmental
initiatives



£3.8m
funding further
investment, including
playground improvements
and upgrades to a facility
which processes recycled
materials



Major upgrades
to waste and
recycling services,
increasing
recycling rates
and reducing waste



Each year, the council invests significantly in the services residents rely on every day. In 2026/27, more than £50 million* will be spent delivering essential services that help keep our district clean, safe and supported. From collecting waste and maintaining green spaces to supporting housing needs, local communities and the local economy, this investment underpins the day-to-day services that make a real difference to our communities.

Delivering services residents rely on



More than **£50 million*** will be spent on delivering over **100 services**, including:



Refuse & Recycling



Parks, Cemeteries & Landscapes



Street Cleaning & Litter Control



Planning & Development



Environmental & Regulatory



Democracy & Elections



Support Services



Housing & Homelessness



Local Tax & Benefits



Community Services & Support



Economic Development



Culture & Leisure

Our share of what you pay in council tax

Every £1 you pay in council tax, just **9p** goes towards our services



We recognise that rising costs, growing demand for services and reductions in central government funding will continue to put pressure on council budgets in the medium-term.

With this in mind, we are taking proactive steps to streamline operations and make savings in an effort to protect services and ensure a stable financial position in the future.

Find out more about our budget and where your council tax goes: www.braintree.gov.uk/budget



Planning for the future:

your chance to
shape the updated
Local Plan



The first of two consultations on the draft Local Plan Review are now open - it sets out where future development should go and the policies that guide it up to 2041.

It promotes new homes, jobs and infrastructure to be delivered in the right places, in a sustainable way, while protecting the environment and our district's character.

All councils are required by Government to prepare a Local Plan. Without one that's up to date, national rules mean we would have to approve most planning applications. Even if refused locally, developers could appeal and potentially get permission anyway, leading to unplanned or "speculative" development.

What the Local Plan does and the growth we must plan for

To meet mandatory Government targets, we must plan for around 1,300 new homes a year until 2041. Some of this growth will continue in existing allocated areas, while other sites are newly proposed. Wherever new development happens, it must be supported by the right facilities and services.



The Local Plan helps to:

- Ensure housing meets local needs and is sustainably located
- Support the local economy by identifying appropriate new employment sites
- Deliver essential infrastructure - better transport links, safe walking and cycling routes, schools, healthcare, community buildings and sports facilities
- Create well-designed, high-quality places with green spaces and parks
- Protect the district's natural landscapes and historic sites
- Tackle climate change and manage flood risk
- Safeguard land that is not suitable for development



How to get involved

We're asking for your views on the early draft of the updated Local Plan and the evidence behind it.

We're holding a series of **in-person events** where you can learn more, ask questions and share your feedback:



Hatfield Peverel Village Hall
Monday 9 March

The Institute, Kelvedon
Tuesday 10 March

Coggeshall Village Hall (Main Hall)
Wednesday 11 March

Braintree Town Hall
Tuesday 17 March

Queens Hall, Halstead
Wednesday 18 March

Cressing Sports and Social Club
Thursday 19 March

Events from 3pm-7pm

A virtual online webinar will also be available for anyone unable to attend in person.

FIND OUT MORE:



Why your views matter

Development affects every resident across the district. The Local Plan is the starting point for deciding planning applications.

By working together, we can plan for growth in a way that provides affordable homes, supports communities, and delivers the infrastructure local people need.



Have your say

We want to hear your views. Share your comments with us.

- Read the draft plan and comment online: www.braintree.gov.uk/localplanreview
- Paper response forms are available at:
 - Braintree district libraries
 - Our consultation events
 - Causeway House, Braintree, Essex CM7 9HB

Forms can be returned by post or emailed to planningpolicy@braintree.gov.uk

What happens next?

Feedback will help shape the final Local Plan. We will consult again later in 2026.

SCAN THE QR CODE to sign up for our regular Planning newsletter and stay up to date.



Find out more including the timeline at:

www.braintree.gov.uk/localplanreview



Braintree District
Local Plan

Supporting older residents across our district

AgeWell fairs

Last year we held two highly successful AgeWell fairs, each bringing together more than 30 local organisations to support older residents with information, advice and community connections. The Braintree District AgeWell fairs, held in Braintree and Witham in 2025, welcomed partners including Carers First, Essex Dementia Care, Healthwatch Essex, Essex Police and others, offering guidance on housing, health, fitness, safety and overall wellbeing.



Feedback from attendees was extremely positive, with many commenting on how helpful it was to have so many services under one roof and how easy the event made it to find the right support at the right time.

The next AgeWell fair is scheduled to take place at Halstead Leisure Centre on 9 April, offering another opportunity for residents to connect with valuable community services, meet local organisations and access support for healthy, independent living.



Celebrating dementia-friendly spaces



We are proud to share that several organisations across the Braintree district have recently achieved Dementia Friendly Status, helping to create a more inclusive and supportive community for residents living with dementia. Both Braintree District Museum and Holmes & Hills Solicitors have been formally recognised for their commitment to making their services and spaces more welcoming, accessible and understanding for people affected by dementia.

Braintree District Museum received the accreditation after demonstrating its dedication to providing a safe, supportive environment for visitors with dementia and their families.

Holmes & Hills Solicitors have also been awarded Dementia Friendly Accreditation, following specialist training completed with the Alzheimer's Society and the development of a detailed action plan designed to improve inclusivity and access to legal services.

SUPPORTING OUR Community



Stronger Together

As part of our Braintree Safer Streets funding, Theatre Inspiring Change put on productions at Alec Hunter Academy and Notley High School.

The performance, entitled Stronger Together, focused on Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) exploring themes including healthy relationships, controlling behaviour, sexist comments, sexual assault and consent.

Students understanding of VAWG and misogyny greatly improved after watching the performance and they provided very positive feedback on the performance.

Councillor Community Grants

Braintree Martial Arts Centre Judo Club

The Martial Arts Centre in Braintree has set up a judo club at their centre with the help of a Councillor Community Grant.

The centre received a grant of £3,036

towards judo mats and grappling dummies to help establish the new club, with classes run by two former GB international athletes Sensei Thomas Cousins and Sensei Faith Pitman, to lead and teach the sessions.

“
Faith said: We were very lucky and managed to get a grant to get the judo mats. We're getting new people in to try the club, which is the first in Braintree as far as I'm aware. We wouldn't have been able to run the club without this grant.
”

The aims for this new club are to provide an exciting opportunity for the local community to get involved in judo, promote physical activity and build new connections across groups.

This Councillor Community Grant was joint funded by Councillors Bowers-Flint, Prime, M Cunningham, M Thorogood, Bowers and Wrench.



YOUR NEW

recycling bins and boxes are arriving

Over the coming weeks, households across the district will begin receiving new recycling bins and non-standard boxes will follow later, as we prepare for the updated waste and recycling service launching in June 2026. These changes will make recycling easier to understand, more consistent, and better for the environment. This rollout marks an important step forward, and we want to ensure you feel fully informed as the new service takes shape.

If you would like to check your delivery window you can use the online tracker:



When will my bins and boxes arrive?

Deliveries began in February and will continue through to May, with new recycling bins and boxes being delivered directly to residents' properties.

Non-standard boxes will follow in March and therefore may not arrive with the bins, so don't worry if your neighbour's arrives before yours.

As this is a phased rollout, some households will already have received their bins, while others will receive them over the coming weeks. Thank you for your support as we work our way across the district.

If your bins have already arrived, please don't use them yet, even for storage.



Ahead of the new service starting, you will also receive:

- ✓ A letter outlining what's changing
- ✓ A new collection calendar showing your updated bin days.

Please keep an eye out for these important updates, as they will include everything you need to get ready.

Why are we making this change?



These improvements are being introduced in line with national Simpler Recycling legislation. Under the new rules, all councils in England must collect the same core set of recyclable materials. This will create a more consistent, easier-to-understand system and will help support the national ambition to increase household recycling rates toward the 65% target.

For residents, this means:

- ✓ Less confusion about what can be recycled
- ✓ More materials collected from your doorstep
- ✓ We are providing an enhanced service.

What are the new bins for?

RED-LIDDED

240-litre bin
paper & card

- Newspapers
- Cardboard
- Mail
- Magazines
- Catalogues

**PLEASE MAKE SURE
ALL CARD AND PAPER
IS CLEAN AND DRY.**



BLUE-LIDDED

240-litre bin
mixed recycling

- Glass bottles and jars
- Tins and cans
- Plastic bottles
- Tubs
- Yogurt pots
- Trays
- Plastic film
- Plastic bags
- Food and drink cartons



Together, we can make recycling easier, cut waste, and create a cleaner, greener district - right from your doorstep.

THANK YOU

for your patience as we deliver the new bins and boxes and prepare for the improved service.

Find answers to more questions at
www.braintree.gov.uk/wastechanges



Get ready for spring with garden waste



COLLECTIONS

Spring is a time of renewal – and garden waste collections are no exception!

Sign up or renew to receive the service from April to the end of March 2027 - find out what you need to do by checking www.braintree.gov.uk/myaccount



For the second year in a row, the cost of subscriptions has been frozen at £55, which provides fortnightly collections all year round, with a break over Christmas and New Year. Those with larger gardens can purchase additional bins at £37.25 each, plus a subscription fee of £30 per additional bin. Properties that are unsuitable for wheeled bin collections can purchase special compostable sacks for garden waste collection, at £8 per

roll of 20 sacks, which includes the cost of delivery and collection.

Subscribers receive a collection every two weeks of green waste such as grass cuttings, weeds, dead flowers and plants, leaf-fall and hedge and shrub cuttings. This is then sent for composting.

IF YOU SIGNED UP ONLINE LAST YEAR and did not opt out of auto-renewals, your subscription should have renewed automatically at the beginning of March.

IF YOU SIGNED UP BY PHONE OR IN PERSON, you will have to renew your subscription manually. You can renew or sign up for the first time by going to www.braintree.gov.uk/myaccount

Find out more about the garden waste collection service: www.braintree.gov.uk/gardenwastesubscription



RENTERS RIGHTS

What you need to know

The Renters Rights Act 2025 is bringing significant changes to the private rented sector. The Government will implement the first changes on 1 May 2026.



Landlords

- Tenancies will become assured periodic tenancies, running on a rolling basis.
- It will be an offence to discriminate against potential tenants who are on benefits or have children, and tenants will be able to ask to keep a pet in the property.
- No payments should be taken before the tenancy agreement is signed, properties should be advertised with an asking price.
- To increase the rent, tenants must have at least 2 months' notice. You cannot increase rent more than once a year.
- It will no longer be possible to evict tenants using the section 21 process and you will need a legal reason to evict them.
- You will need to register yourself and your let properties on the Private Rented Sector database, once it goes live. Civil penalties for non-registration could start around £7,000.
- We will have new powers to investigate, collect and act on evidence if you break the law.

For more information visit: www.nrla.org.uk/resources/renters-rights

Renters

- If you are currently in a fixed term assured shorthold tenancy, it will become a periodic assured tenancy with no end date and operating on a rolling monthly or weekly basis.
- You will need to give two months' notice to end your tenancy but your landlord will be able to agree to shorter notice. Your landlord can only end your tenancy by going to court.
- Your landlord will not be able to ask for more than 1 month's rent in advance.
- Your landlord will only be able to put your rent up once a year and you will get at least two months' notice of a rent increase. You will be able to go to a tribunal if you think a rent increase is too much.
- You will be able to ask to keep a pet in your rented home. You will need to write to your landlord to ask for permission and include a description of the pet you plan to have.
- Your rights will not change on 1 May 2026 if your landlord gives you a valid eviction notice before this date.

For more information visit: <https://england.shelter.org.uk/>

Witham's new community centre nears completion

Work on Braintree District Council's new community centre in Witham is nearing completion, marking a major milestone for the

£4 million investment.

Located on Haygreen Road, the purpose-built facility will provide a modern, flexible space for residents and community groups.



Photo credit: Ingleton Wood



Councillors at the topping out ceremony (December 2025)

The centre will include a mixed-use hall, kitchen, bar area and changing rooms, supporting everything from social events and meetings to sports activities on the adjacent football pitch.

Construction work is expected to finish in a few months, after which ownership and management of the centre will transfer to Witham Town Council.



Cllr Kevin Bowers, Cabinet Member for Finance, Resources and Performance, said:

This new community centre will provide a modern, flexible space for residents to come together, whether for sport, social activities or community events. Together with our partners at Witham Town Council, we look forward to creating a welcoming space for everyone to enjoy. It's a fantastic investment in the town's future and we look forward to its completion.



The completion of the centre represents a significant step forward in enhancing local infrastructure and strengthening community life in Witham.

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

Utilities are costing more and taking up a growing share of household budgets. Take control of your energy and water use with the support and advice available to help cut costs.



Warm Homes: Local Grant

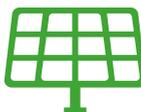
The Warm Homes: Local Grant aims to reduce bills and carbon emissions by funding energy saving measures in homes, eg loft insulation, solar PV.

Eligible applicants include owner-occupiers and private tenants in homes rated EPC D–G, households on low income or receiving certain benefits and those on ECO Flex Route 2 (go to www.heatessex.com for more information). Private landlords can also apply – their first property is fully funded, with a 50% contribution required for any additional homes.

To check your eligibility and apply for the Warm Homes: Local Grant, go to www.heatessex.com or call 01206 326808

Green Doctor Service

The Green Doctor Service, provided by Groundwork East, is a free service in Braintree district, offering small changes around the home to reduce energy costs, including LED light bulbs, draught proofing and radiator panels. Go to www.groundwork.org.uk/stay-warm-stay-well or call 07702 941 440 to see if you are eligible for support.



Water saving tips

Simple ways to reduce water use and save money from the Energy Saving Trust: <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/simple-ways-to-save-water-at-home/>

Clean Energy campaign

This campaign from central government offers detailed advice on saving energy in your home and information on more financial support you may be able to access: <https://cleanenergy.campaign.gov.uk/save-energy-in-your-home>



Find further support at: www.braintree.gov.uk/advice-environment/energy-efficient-homes

Elections to Essex County Council are taking place on **Thursday 7 May 2026.**

ALL YOU NEED

TO KNOW:



Register to vote deadline:
Monday 20 April

Apply for postal vote deadline:
5pm on Tuesday 21 April

Apply for proxy vote deadline:
5pm on Tuesday 28 April

Apply for free voter ID deadline:
5pm on Tuesday 28 April

You can register and apply via the GOV website.

Voters now need to reapply for a postal vote every three years. You will be contacted when yours is due.

Photo ID continues to be required to vote at a polling station.

Your polling station

You'll get a poll card in the post before the election around end of March. This will tell you where to vote. If you haven't received your poll card by early April, contact us.

Following our polling places review and the feedback received, we have made changes to some polling stations from this year:

Current polling station:	New polling station:
The Tythings, Halstead (portacabin)	The Three Pigeons, Halstead
Marshalls Park, Braintree (portacabin)	The Chapel Cemetery, Braintree
Templars Academy, Witham	Rickstones Church, Witham
STEM Innovation Centre, Braintree (portacabin)	Polly's Field Braintree



www.braintree.gov.uk/elections

elections@braintree.gov.uk

01376 557760

Bulky Waste

To improve our service, we are making changes to our collection from **1 April 2026**

More information can be found on our website: www.braintree.gov.uk/bulkywaste



SIGN UP
for waste updates

To receive our newsletters
SCAN THE QR CODE



Register for our text message service.
Text your house number/name
and postcode to **07860 064108**.



Braintree
District Council


the plaza

CO WORKING SPACE

A flexible workspace in Great Notley with superfast WiFi, meeting rooms, soundproof pods and café.

From
£10
+vat
per day



**BOOK
A TOUR**

DESKS AVAILABLE FOR HIRE





We've got lots to do... in Braintree

- Gyms • Swimming pools • Racquet sports
- Swimming lessons for children & adults
- Range of group exercise classes & much more...

Visit us today!

Braintree Sports and Health Club
Panfield Lane, Braintree, CM7 1FF
01376 552585

Halstead Leisure Centre
Colne Road, Halstead, CO9 2HR
01787 472480

Braintree Swimming and Fitness
Charter Way, Braintree, CM77 8YJ
01376 333833

Witham Leisure Centre
Spinks Lane, Witham, CM8 1EP
01376 534910

www.freedom-leisure.co.uk/centres



BRACOSIGNZ
Please recycle this when you have finished with it.