

TDC June 2026 – Report

Leaders Annual State of Tendring District Statement 2026 – Council Meeting 19 May 2026

“Good evening, Chairman, and fellow Councillors.

I want to start tonight with a simple question.

What does it actually feel like to live in Tendring right now?

Not the statistics. Not the strategies. Just the honest, everyday experience of being a resident in this district.

That is what this Council exists for. Not the paperwork, not the processes, not the politics. The people. And everything I want to say tonight comes back to that.

I should say at the outset that there is so much happening across this district that no ten minute speech could ever do it full justice. Tonight is a snapshot, not the whole picture. It is my tradition to keep this address focused and relatively brief, and I intend to do that again this evening.

First, let me say. This Council’s financial position remains sound. I set that out in detail in February’s budget speech, and I am pleased to confirm to this chamber tonight that that remains the case. That is why you will not hear much more about finances this evening. The position is secure, and that gives us the platform to get on with the job.

A job that, like every council across the country, we are doing under real pressure. Rising demand, shrinking resources, genuine uncertainty about the future. We are not immune to any of that. What I can tell you is that we have refused to hide behind it. We have kept going. We have kept delivering. And Tendring is in a stronger place because of it.

Let me tell you what that looks like in practice.

It looks like families who nearly lost their homes, but did not, because we reached them in time. Our new Housing Strategy is built on one belief: that getting to people early, before a difficult situation becomes a crisis, is both the right thing to do and the smart thing to do. It saves lives from unravelling. It saves money. It keeps communities stable.

It looks like every household in this district getting a better waste service, not a worse one. We were expected by many to cut collections to three weekly. We did not. We listened to

residents, kept the two weekly cycle, and added kerbside glass collections on top. That is what listening looks like.

It looks like town centres with working CCTV, streets that feel safer, and crime levels that are coming down. We completed our CCTV upgrade in Clacton this year and the results are already being felt.

It looks like people getting out more. Moving more. Living better. Activity levels across Tendring have risen by more than seven per cent to a record high, while inactivity has fallen to its lowest level ever. We are now in line with the national average, having lagged behind for years. The conditions we have created, the facilities we have invested in, the opportunities we have opened up, they are part of that story.

It looks like backing career track, our own apprenticeship scheme, nearly 40 years old, and rated good by Ofsted. Because we believe in our young people, and in growing the talent this district needs from within.

It looks like a theatre that turned 95 this year and is more alive than ever. Record audiences. National recognition. Young people on that stage performing Chitty Chitty Bang Bang to a standing ovation. The Princes Theatre is not just a building. It is a beating heart in this community. Looking at culture more widely, the Arts Council England has invested £750,000 into our Creative People and Places partnership. They believe in what Tendring has to offer. And so do I.

It looks like town centres being transformed. In Clacton, in Jaywick Sands, in Harwich. Shopfronts being restored, libraries reopening, derelict sites being brought back to life. These are not grand gestures. They are steady, determined work. The kind that does not always make headlines but changes how a place feels to walk through.

It looks like a visitor economy which, by my estimation, is worth close to half a billion pounds a year, supporting one in every five jobs in this district. The Clacton Airshow, the largest free event in Essex, brings hundreds of thousands of people through our doors every year. Tourism is not a nice to have. It is a cornerstone of this district's economy and we treat it as such.

It looks like a coastline we are proud of and determined to protect. Four Blue Flags. Seven Seaside Awards. Improvements to Brightlingsea promenade and investment around the Naze in Walton. Water quality improving along our coast. And on the National Grid pylon scheme, let me be plain. We oppose it. We have always opposed it. We will not stop opposing it.

It looks like a new Urgent Treatment Centre nearing completion at Clacton Hospital, backed by two million pounds of this Council's money, because we believe residents deserve better healthcare access and we put our money where our mouth is.

It looks like the Careline service, a lifeline for so many of the most vulnerable residents, successfully moved to Colchester Helpline this year, with minimal disruption, and secured for the future.

And it looks like the groundwork being laid for Tendring's future. The Garden Community. The largest planning application ever submitted in the history of Essex. Not just homes, communities built properly, with the infrastructure and services that people actually need. The Local Plan. The A120. Freeport. These are not abstract ambitions. They are the foundations of what Tendring becomes over the next twenty years.

Now. Local Government Reorganisation.

I am not going to pretend this is simple. It is not a decision we made. The direction has been set by government and it is our job to respond to it well, to protect our residents throughout the process, and to make sure Tendring's voice is heard clearly at every stage and as our mantra has always been, put Tendring in the best possible place.

What I will not allow is for uncertainty about the future to become an excuse for standing still in the present. Residents will need us tomorrow just as much as they need us today. For their homes, their streets, their leisure, their safety, their support. That responsibility does not pause. Neither do we.

Chairman, before I close I want to say something to our officers and staff.

This has been a demanding year. The work that happens behind every decision in this chamber, the quiet, unglamorous, essential work of running a council, is carried out by people who care deeply about this district. I am grateful for every one of them and thank them for their tireless efforts.

I also want to put on record my thanks to my portfolio holders. These are people who do not just manage their briefs, they care deeply about them; they fight for them. That passion makes a real difference, and this administration is stronger for it.

We have done good work this year. There is more to do. And I for one cannot wait to get on with it.

Thank you.”

Open auditions announced for The Crucible at Clacton’s Princes Theatre



The Princes Acting Centre has announced open auditions for its forthcoming production of Arthur Miller’s gripping classic *The Crucible*, which will be staged at Clacton’s Princes Theatre.

Directed by theatre practitioner and drama educator Melissa Wenn, the production will feature an adult cast alongside younger performers from Princes Youth Theatre in the children’s roles.

The show will be put on at the Tendring District Council-run (TDC) theatre from 29 to 31 October 2026.

Set during the Salem witch trials of 1692, *The Crucible* explores fear, suspicion and mass hysteria, and the devastating consequences for a community consumed by accusation and panic. Widely regarded as one of the greatest plays of the twentieth century, it remains as relevant and thought-provoking today as ever.

The production follows the launch of a new series of adult acting workshops led by Melissa earlier this year.

Since April, the sessions have attracted strong interest from adults across the area looking to rediscover a passion for theatre, build confidence and develop their acting skills in a supportive and creative environment.

Melissa said: “I have been absolutely amazed by the popularity of the adult acting workshops.

“It has highlighted a real need and enthusiasm for acting opportunities for adults locally.

“The response has been incredibly encouraging, and The Crucible felt like the perfect next step, a challenging, exciting and important play that offers fantastic opportunities for performers.”

Open auditions for The Crucible will take place at the Princes Theatre on Saturday, 20 June, 2026.

Anyone aged 16 and over is encouraged to audition, regardless of prior experience, with the Princes Acting Centre welcoming performers of all backgrounds and abilities.

Councillor Gary Scott, TDC’s Cabinet Member for Arts, Culture and Heritage, added: “The team at the Princes Acting Centre have worked tirelessly to bring this exciting opportunity to the stage, creating valuable opportunities for local performers and helping to raise aspirations across our community.

“We are incredibly proud of the talent and dedication within our council-run venue, and I would encourage anyone with an interest in performance to get involved and residents to support what promises to be a powerful and memorable production.”

For further information about the auditions, please email princesyouththeatre@gmail.com.

Tendring District Council and Essex Police take action against fly-tippers



Two Dovercourt men have been issued with fines and formal police warnings after they dumped waste in a remote rural lane near Harwich.

Rural engagement officers responded to several reports of fly-tipped rubbish in the same location earlier this year.

Following some detective work with Tendring District Council staff, they identified two men, aged 58 and 40, as being responsible.

The 58-year-old was found to have visited the location 50 times between 1 February and 15 April, dumping a foam mattress, a cuddly toy and clothing, partly on private land and partly on land owned by Essex Highways.

In unrelated activity, the 40-year-old had dumped soil and cardboard boxes in the same location on several occasions. He was also found to be advertising on Facebook as a waste collector, despite not holding a valid waste carrier's licence.

Now, both men have been issued with community protection warnings which run for two years. CPWs tell people they must stop certain behaviour or risk further action.

Rural engagement officer PC James Nickless says the team works closely with farmers, landowners and councils to deter fly-tipping and protect our rural environment.

"Fly-tipping causes real harm in our rural communities. Dumped waste often contains hazardous materials that have no place in the countryside.

"And it can have devastating consequences, causing serious injuries to people, horses, livestock and wildlife. Just last month a tipper lorry driver was jailed for 16 months after a crash in which a cyclist suffered a severe head injury.

"An investigation by officers from our Serious Collision Investigation Unit found that a nail protruding from asbestos he dumped in a county lane, which punctured the cyclist's tyre, was a major contributing factor.

"Fly-tipped waste also blights rural roads, farmland and beauty spots valued by local residents and visitors."

The community protection warnings (CPWs) issued to the two Dovercourt men, warn them that their conduct is 'unreasonable', 'persistent' and 'having a detrimental effect on the quality of life of those in the locality'.

Both men are warned that for two years they are not to go to the location for any reason other than to notify someone of a life-threatening emergency to dump any waste or other items on public or private land.

The 40-year-old is also ordered to ensure that if he continues to carry and dispose of waste, he obtains a waste carrier's licence.

James explains: "If a CPW is ignored, the next step is a community protection notice which, if breached, can lead to fines or criminal prosecution. This is why we support Essex County Council's SCRAP fly-tipping campaign and urge people who spot dumped waste to report it to their local council."

Tendring District Council also issued the two men with £400 fines for their actions.

Councillor Adrian Smith, Tendring District Council's Cabinet Member for Environment, says the authority will not tolerate fly-tipping.

"Fly-tipping is an utter disregard for our communities and the environment, and we will take action against those responsible," he said.

"This was not a one-off incident in the area – it involved blatant fly-tipping over a period of time. Cases like this show exactly why we work closely with our police partners to track down offenders and hold them accountable.

"Fly-tipping is not a victimless crime. Clearing it up costs taxpayers' money that should be spent on vital local services, and it is completely unacceptable that residents are left to pick up that bill.

"We are committed to taking a firm stance – where evidence is found, we will issue fines and will not hesitate to escalate enforcement action if offenders continue to ignore the law.

"I also want residents to understand their responsibilities when disposing of waste. If your waste is found as part of a fly-tip, you could face enforcement action and fines – even if you did not dump it yourself.

"Residents may have acted in good faith or might think they're saving a few pounds by using an unlicensed carrier, but it can end up costing them far more – with a £400 fixed penalty notice or fines running into thousands of pounds.

"You are liable for your waste and where it ends up. The only way to protect yourself is to use a properly licensed waste carrier and make sure you receive a receipt that includes their waste carrier licence number.

"We will continue to protect our district, and we urge anyone who witnesses fly-tipping to report it so we can take swift action."

Issued by Essex Police

Tendring District Council – Consultations ending this month

There are none

Consultations can be found following this link: [Consultations](#)