

Colchester Infrastructure Audit and Delivery Plan

Stage 4 Report, to support Consultation on the Colchester City
Council Regulation 19 Local Plan

Colchester City Council

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Quality information

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Abbreviations

Abbreviation	Definition
ACL	Adult Community Learning
ADHD	Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder
AEP	Annual Exceedance Probability
AIMS	Asset Information Management System
ALS	Abstraction Licensing Strategies
AML	Acute Myeloid Leukaemia
AMP	Asset Management Plan
ANGSt	Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards
ANPR	Automated Number Plate Recognition
AOC	Ambulance Operation Centre
AONB	Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty
ARA	Ambrose, Riverside, Ardleigh
ARP	Ambulance Response Post
ASD	Autism Spectrum Disorder
ASRP	Ambulance Service Response Post
BCIS	Building Cost Information Service
BDUK	Building Digital UK
BEVs	Battery Electric Vehicles
BRES	Business Register and Employment Survey
BSIP	Bus Service Improvement Plan
BTEC	Business and Technology Education Council
CAEL	Colchester Amphora Energy Ltd
CAMS	Catchment Abstraction Management Strategies
CBC	Colchester Borough Council
CCC	Colchester City Council
CCL	Climate Change Lower
CCTV	Closed Circuit Television
CCU	Climate Change Upper
CDAs	Critical Drainage Areas
CIL	Community Infrastructure Levy
CIRIA	Construction Industry Research and Information Association
CQC	Care Quality Commission
CRMP	Community Risk Management Plan
CSMHT	Colchester Specialist Mental Health Team
DCMS	Department for Culture, Media and Sport
DCO	Development Consent Order
DfE	Department for Education
DfT	Department for Transport

Abbreviation	Definition
DHSC	Department of Health and Social Care
DMO	Demand Management Options
DNO	Distribution Network Operators
DPD	Development Plan Document
DSU	Day Surgery Unit
DWF	Dry Weather Flow
DWMP	Drainage and Wastewater Management Plans
DYAA	Dry Year Annual Averages
ECC	Essex County Council
ECF	Essex Community Foundation
ECFRS	Essex County Fire and Rescue Service
ECFWS	Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service
EEAST	East of England Ambulance Service
EfW	Energy from Waste
EHC	Education, Health, and Care
EPMA	Electronic Prescribing and Medicines Administration
EPUT	Essex Partnership University Trust
ESFA	Education and Skills Funding Agency
ESNEFT	East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust
ESOL	English for Speakers of Other Languages
ESP	Employment and Skills Plan
EU	European Union
EV	Electric vehicles
EWP	Essex Waste Partnership
EYEC	Early Years Education and Childcare
EYEC	Early Years Education and Childcare
FAS	Flood Alleviation Scheme
FCRM	Flood and Coastal Risk Management
FCERM GiA	Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant in Aid
FE	Forms of Entry
FEED	Funded Early Education Entitlement
FMfP	Flood Map for Planning
FTTC	Fibre to the Cabinet
FTTH	Fibre to the Home
FTTP	Full Fibre to the Premises
GEML	Great Eastern Main Line
GHG	Greenhouse Gas
GI	Green Infrastructure
GP	General Practitioner
GSPs	Grid Supply Points

Abbreviation	Definition
GVA	Gross Value Added
GWh	Gigawatt-Hour
ha	Hectares
HART	Hazardous Response Team
HIF	Housing Infrastructure Fund
HMCTS	His Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service
HP	High Pressure
HWCH	Health and Wellbeing Care Hub
IADP	Infrastructure Audit and Delivery Plan
IBSFNA	Indoor and Built Sports Facilities Needs Assessment
ICB	Integrated Care Board
ICS	Integrated Care Service
IDBs	Internal Drainage Boards
IDP	Infrastructure Delivery Plan
IDPFP	Infrastructure Phasing and Funding Plan
IPHW	Institute of Public Health and Wellbeing
IRMP	Integrated Risk Management Plan
ITL	International Territorial Level
km	Kilometre
LACW	Local Authority Collected Waste
LAP	Local Areas for Play
LCWIP	Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan
LDAs	Learning Disability Assessments
LEA	Local Economic Area
LEAP	Locally Equipped Area for Play
LEVI	Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure
LFFN	Local Full Fibre Network
LHA	Local Highway Authority
LLFA	Lead Local Flood Risk Authority
LPA	Local Planning Authority
LRN	Local Road Network
LSIP	Local Skills Improvement Plan
LSOA	Lower Level Super Output Area
LTA	Local Transport Authority
LTDS	Long Term Development Statement
LuF	Levelling-up Fund
MandM	Monitor and Manage
Mod App	Modification Application
MRN	Major Road Network
MUGA	Multi-use Games Area

Abbreviation	Definition
NCN	National Cycle Network
NDP	Network Development Plan
NEAP	Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play
NEE	North East Essex
NEET	Not in Education, Employment or Training
NFM	Natural Flood Management
NGET	National Grid Electricity Transmission
NH	National Highways
NHS	National Health Service
NLHF	National Lottery Heritage Fund
NOR	Number On Roll
NPTO	Neighbourhood Policing Team Officers
NPPF	National Planning Policy Framework
NPT	Neighbourhood Policing Team
NSIP	Nationally Significant Infrastructure Project
NWRSA	New Roads and Street Works Act
ONS	Office for National Statistics
ORCS	On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme
PandR	Park and Ride
PACU	Post Anaesthesia Care Unit
PCC	per capita consumption
PCI	Percutaneous Coronary Intervention
PCN	Primary Care Network
PCSO	Police Community Support Officer
PCT	Propensity to Cycle Tool
PFCC	Police Fire and Crime Commissioner
PND	Police National Database
POCU	Post-operative Care Units
PPA	Planning Performance Agreement
PPG	Planning Practice Guidance
PPOSS	Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy
PHEVs	Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles
PRoW	Public Right of Way
PSI	Postural Stability Instruction
PVI	Private, Voluntary, and Independent
PVI	Private, Voluntary, and Independent
RAG	Red, Amber and Green
RAMS	Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy
RFCC	Regional Flood and Coastal Committee
RICS	Royal Institute of Chartered Surveyors

Abbreviation	Definition
RIS	Road Investment Strategy
RMA	Risk Management Authority
RMT	Rowhedge, Mersea, Tiptree
RoFfSW	Risk of Flooding from Surface Water
RTI	Real-time information
RTS	Rapid Transit System
S106	Section 106
SAB	SuDS Approval Body
SAC	Special Areas of Conservation
SCAP	School Capacity Annual Survey
SEA	Strategic Economic Area
SEND	Special Educational Needs and Disability
SFRA	Strategic Flood Risk Assessment
SMI	Serious Mental Illness
SMPs	Shoreline Management Plans
SNEE	Suffolk and North East Essex
SoP	Standard of Protection
SPA	Special Protection Area
SPD	Supplementary Planning Document
SRN	Strategic Road Network
SRO	Strategic Resource Option
SRTB	Sub-Regional Transport Body
SSH	Supported and Specialised Housing
SSSIs	Sites of Special Scientific Interest
STEPS	Smart Technology and Experimental Plan Suite
SuDS.	Sustainable Drainage Systems
SWAE	Smart Working at Essex
SWMP	Surface Water Management Plan
SWMP	Surface Water Management Plan
TAL	Technically Achievable Limits
TC	Tennis Club
TCBGC	Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community
TOC	Train Operating Companies
TSO	Transmission System Operator
TWh	Terawatt-Hour
UGF	Urban Greening Factor
UKCP	UK Climate Projections
UKPN	UK Power Networks
USAR	Urban Search and Rescue
VandV	Vision and Validate

Abbreviation	Definition
VSCE	Voluntary, Community, and Social Enterprise
VDSL	Very high-speed digital subscriber line
WAFU	Water Available for Use
WCA	Waste Collection Authorities
WCS	Water Cycle Study
WDA	Waste Disposal Authority
WFD	Water Directive Framework
WPA	Waste Planning Authority
WRC	Water Recycling Centre
WRE	Water Resources East
WRMP	Water Resource Management Plans
WRZ	Water Resource Zones
WSfE	Waste Strategy for Essex
WTS	Waste Transfer Station
WWNP	Working with Natural Processes

Executive Summary

Introduction

The purpose of the Stage 4 Infrastructure Audit and Delivery Plan (IADP) is to identify the infrastructure which is required to meet the growth anticipated in Colchester over the Local Plan period to 2043, along with the associated costs, timing and delivery arrangements for that infrastructure. The IADP will form part of the evidence base to support the Colchester Local Plan review which is currently underway.

The Stage 1 and 2 IADP Report produced by AECOM in mid-late 2024 set out in detail the baseline position for each infrastructure type, and the infrastructure implications of seven high level spatial options being considered by Colchester City Council (CCC). The Stage 3 IADP Report produced by AECOM in October 2025 supported the Draft Preferred Options Local Plan¹. It considered, based on the emerging development trajectory provided by CCC, the demand which planned growth will generate for each infrastructure type, and how infrastructure will be provided to meet this demand. This Stage 4 IADP is the final iteration and reflects the housing and employment sites identified within the Submission Local Plan.

The Project Schedule which accompanies the infrastructure assessment and is contained with Appendix A lists all infrastructure projects which have been identified as planned to help cater for demand over the Plan period.

Context and planned growth

The policy framework relevant to population and economic growth in Colchester over the existing and emerging Local Plan periods emphasises the importance of ensuring the appropriate infrastructure is in place to meet the needs of current and future communities. This IADP is therefore set against the context of positively planning for growth in line with the historic achievement of housing delivery targets, and policy aspirations to deliver against future housing needs.

The population of Colchester is growing and ageing. The economic activity rate is slightly below the regional comparison and some pockets of deprivation exist, although these are limited in spatial extent. The economy of Colchester is growing and there are good levels of educational attainment.

For the Stage 3 IADP Report, CCC provided a development trajectory to test the potential infrastructure implications of growth and was aligned with the Draft Preferred Options Local Plan. For this Stage 4 IADP, the development trajectory has been updated to align with the Regulation 19 Local Plan.

22,100 homes are forecast to come forward between 2026 and 2043, with the second phase (2031/32 to 2036/37) set to deliver the greatest proportion of homes (44%). The development trajectory is made up of 233 housing sites comprising 48 new allocations to be included within the revised Local Plan, 15 existing allocations included within the adopted Local Plan, and 170 existing commitments which already have planning permission. Housing growth will be delivered across different locations within Colchester. A substantial number of homes will be delivered in Marks Tey (2,500), East Colchester (2,500), South Colchester (950), Langham (860), and Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) (1,825).

The development trajectory provided by CCC also identifies employment sites, comprising existing allocations carried forward from the adopted Local Plan as well new employment sites allocated within the revised Local Plan. In addition, some committed employment sites which have planning permission and which are safeguarded for employment use within planning policy are identified. All

¹ Available at: [Document.ashx](#)
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together, 17 employment sites are identified which collectively make up 54.1 hectares of employment land.

Primary education

There are 63 state funded primary schools in Colchester.

ECC tested the growth scenario implied by the development trajectory and found that demand would be generated for 5,633 primary school places, translating into 14.4 FE to 18.7 FE surplus demand.

The overall impact of the development set out in the scenario on mainstream statutory age education can be mitigated through the allocation of the land for school use and planning obligations (as set out the ECC Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions).

There are four sites in Colchester where land has already been allocated for education within the extant Local Plan and s106 agreements, including land identified within the adopted TCBGC DPD. In addition, ECC has identified four locations where land should be allocated for additional primary schools.

A high level benchmarking exercise indicates that the cost associated with pupils arising from the new allocations would be £86.0 million.

Early Years Education and Childcare

ECC meets its statutory duty to provide childcare by working in partnership with a diverse range of early years providers, including day nurseries, pre-schools, childminders and childminder agencies, primary school nurseries, independent nursery schools and maintained nursery schools. The majority of EYEC (Early Years Education and Childcare) provision in Colchester is delivered by the Private, Voluntary, and Independent (PVI) sector.

Overall, in summer 2025 there were 910 vacant EYEC places across Colchester. However, seven of the 17 Colchester wards have less than 10% available occupancy. The waiting list for Colchester EY providers in summer 2025 was 15% of the total capacity.

There is a predicted drop in the number of under fives in Colchester over the next two years, however numbers are forecast to increase from 2027. The Government's programme of Childcare Reforms has increased eligibility for Funded Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) childcare places to include children from nine months to statutory school age and the offer is extended to support more working families.

Using ECC's standard early years pupil product factor, ECC estimate that the Local Plan allocations will create demand for an additional 1,251 early years places to 2043. ECC propose that new demand will be met by the creation of four 72 place Early Years facilities co-located on the four new Primary School sites referred to above. In addition, there is a requirement for a number of standalone Early Years facilities (30 / 56 / 72 place as appropriate) on other allocated sites. S106 financial contributions will also be requested to support the expansion of existing provision in areas of greatest need.

Using cost benchmarks within the ECC Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions, costs to provide for early years pupils associated with the potential emerging allocations are estimated at £28.8 million.

Secondary education

There are 12 state funded secondary schools in Colchester with 13,438 pupils on roll, compared with a capacity of 14,044 secondary school places, suggesting there is a surplus capacity of 606 secondary school places. It is estimated that at 95% capacity, there is a deficit of 96 secondary school places.

ECC tested the growth scenario implied by the development trajectory and found that demand would be generated for between 8.4 FE and 30.5 FE.

The TCBGC will include its own secondary school provision, in the form of either one or two secondary schools. In addition, ECC suggests that land for secondary school provision should be allocated at an alternative location within the Mid (Colchester) planning area (either on a large housing allocation to support a new secondary school or in a location well connected to serve the majority of smaller allocations). Provision could also be expanded at Thurstable School in Tiptree.

A high level benchmarking exercise indicates that the cost of providing for pupils associated with the new allocations would be £73.8 million.

The provision of new secondary schools will primarily be delivered through developer contributions. ECC acts as a commissioner, negotiating and securing funds to establish provision. However, during operation it is likely new schools will be academies and therefore not run by ECC.

Further education

There are three secondary schools with sixth forms in Colchester. Further education is also provided by one college and one sixth form college.

Colchester Institute is the largest further education provider in North Essex and offers both further and higher education opportunities. A Sustainable Skills Innovation Centre in the TCBGC is being progressed to expand provision for further education and adult learners.

Based on pupils yields within ECC guidance, it is estimated that Colchester's emerging development trajectory would create additional demand for 751 full time further education places to 2043.

Using a high level benchmarking approach, it is estimated that the cost of meeting demand associated with the potential emerging allocations would be £15.0 million.

As well as funding from central and local government, developer contributions may be required to contribute towards capital projects. As of April 2025, revenue funding for further education is mainly provided by the DfE.

Special needs education

Special needs may be met in a mainstream school, a specially resourced or enhanced provision within a mainstream school or in a special school depending upon the level of need.

Demand has outstripped the capacity of SEND service provision in Essex and a greater proportion of high needs students are now in mainstream schools.

There are currently four special schools in Colchester. Specialist provision is also made at nine mainstream schools.

Pupil numbers at special schools in Colchester increased by 20% between 2022 and 2026 (from 890 pupils to 1,069 pupils). Schools have found accommodating additional pupils difficult, and physical capacity for further expansion is extremely limited.

ECC tested the development scenario set out within the emerging development trajectory, and found that development to 2043 could result in SEN requirements for 188 pupils requiring an EHCP in mainstream schools and a further 116 requiring a special school placement. This demand would be significant enough to warrant new provision within a mainstream school and the expansion of a SEN school within the district via a satellite provision.

A high level cost estimate based on cost benchmarks indicates that special needs provision to meet demand associated with the emerging potential allocations would cost £24.3 million.

Higher education

There is one university in Colchester, the University of Essex. On account of the large catchment areas associated with universities, and the high international student population at the University of Essex, it can be assumed that a large number of students come from outside of Colchester.

The University of Essex plans to increase its intake of students to approximately 20,000 students and 1,000 researchers, as well as establish two new departments or disciplines to meet the University's needs. Despite numbers of domestic and EU undergraduates declining, the University is confident it can expand its operation through partnering with international organisations and promoting postgraduate courses.

Three infrastructure projects for the University have been identified. The largest projects identified include the opening of a new Centre for Coastal Communities as part of the Clacton Civic Quarter Development and the land allocation in the TCBGC DPD for the potential expansion of the Knowledge Gateway, sport facilities, and student accommodation.

The University will be the lead funder of any expansion of facilities to accommodate greater demand.

Adult education

There are two adult education colleges in Colchester: ACL Essex and Colchester Institute.

Adult education colleges have a key focus on basic skills such as Basic English, Maths and ESOL to enable individuals to upskill or enter the workplace. However, adult education provision and the types of courses made available are also shaped by the demand arising from the local economy and community. The TCBGC, Freeports East, and a variety of renewable energy projects in Essex are increasing demand for construction, green, and digital skills.

Population and housing growth is driving the demand for construction skills, as well as modern green and digital skills to adapt a changing sector. To support this growth, a Sustainable Skills Innovation Centre is planned within the TCBGC, with a cost of at least £5 million.

The Clacton Civic Quarter Redevelopment will include an Adult Learning Centre and this is recorded as a second adult learning project within the Project Schedule. This project will be funded by the Levelling Up Fund.

Indoor and outdoor sports and leisure facilities

There is a good supply of indoor and outdoor sports and leisure facilities to meet existing demand and likely new demand as the population of Colchester grows. There is, however, unmet demand for swimming pool facilities, and a degree of unmet demand for sports halls in the urban area as well as a need for additional MUGAs to meet informal demand in some locations. More rural, peripheral parts of the local authority area are less well-served and experience gaps in provision.

As outlined in the TCBGC Sports Strategy, up to 12.6 ha of land is proposed for sports provision, comprising up to 10.1 ha for the Southern Fields Masterplan Area and approximately 2.5 ha within or adjacent to schools and public open space. The TCBGC proposals include the provision of both indoor and outdoor sports and leisure facilities, which are assumed to meet the additional demand arising from the development.

The Sports England Active Places Calculator indicates that the new population arising from the new allocations to 2043 would require 6.64 swimming pool lanes and 8.29 sports courts at a cost of £14.67 million. It would also generate demand for 1.08 artificial grass pitches and 4.2 tennis courts at a cost of £1.76 million (noting that this is in addition to the requirement for grass pitches, open space and playspace covered in other IADP chapters).

Where significant development is planned, it is expected that developer contributions will be sought to supplement investment from the local authority in indoor and outdoor sports facility provision.

Playing pitches

The following playing pitch provision in Colchester has been identified: 196 football pitches, 20 3G pitches, 43 rugby union pitches, three hockey pitches, 30 grass wicket cricket facilities and five NTPs, 34 tennis courts, 63 netball courts, and 10 bowling greens.

The majority of these facilities are spatially concentrated in and around the urban area of Colchester in areas of higher population density. There is additional provision which is not available for community use in private and educational settings.

The Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (PPOSS) Action Plan assesses current and future deficits and surplus provision of playing pitches. It finds that the current and future supply/demand balance varies across types of facility and by geography; however it can be seen that there is a current and future shortfall of adult football grass pitches in all analysis areas; there is a current and future shortfall of football 3G pitches in three out of four analysis areas; and there are some future potential shortfalls in supply and over use of facilities with regard to tennis and bowls respectively.

The TCBGC Sports Strategy has calculated the overall requirement for pitches to be around 5.43 ha, with provision suggested across a number of hubs, including Southern Fields and co-located on or adjacent to a secondary school.

The PPOSS describes range of stated ambitions and proposals for expansion or refurbishment of existing facilities, as well as installation of new playing pitches. However, there is at present no evidence that these projects are committed or funded. These proposals have been recorded within the Project Schedule as a single entry.

Based on Fields in Trust Guidance, the population associated with the potential emerging allocations in Colchester could generate demand for 38.8ha grass pitches. Drawing on Sports England benchmarks, the costs of provision are estimated at £6.8 million (also assumed to be unfunded at this stage).

Sport England recommends that developer contributions should be sought in order to supplement investment from the local authority in playing pitch provision. The future delivery of new facilities or upgraded or expanded existing facilities should be cognisant of the assessments and recommendations set out in the PPOSS.

Open spaces

There are 440 open spaces in Colchester comprising 954 hectares of land use coverage.

There is a good provision of open space in Colchester, particularly in the urban area of Colchester. There is a current deficit of provision when accessibility catchment areas and benchmark space standards are taken into account in the South and West of the local authority area.

In total, 19 allocated sites within the existing Local Plan make provision for open spaces of varying scales. Also, the Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sports Strategy (PPOSS) has identified 23 additional open sites serving catchment gaps that would benefit from enhancements. Costs and funding status for these projects is unknown, though it is likely that funding and delivery would be via the developer.

The TCBGC will create a multi-functional network of primary green spaces and corridors, including creation of the Country Park at Salary Brook, green corridors, and the provision of sports and leisure facilities.

Applying quantitative standards for provision of different types of open space to projected population increase associated with the new allocations (32,363 residents), and a benchmark cost, indicates an estimated cost of £34.1 million for open space over the Local Plan period to 2043. Planning policy requires either on-site provision or financial contribution towards open spaces in order to meet the demands of new residents.

Green infrastructure

Around 26.1% of the Colchester local authority area is considered green infrastructure. A large proportion of this is natural and semi-natural open space (of which the largest contiguous area is Dedham Vale) and also coastal features (particularly at Fingringhoe Wick and Mersea Island). Examples of green infrastructures located in proximity to population centres and providing multiple functions to communities include High Woods Country Park, Abberton Reservoir and surrounds, as well as contiguous green infrastructure between Colchester and Halstead (Braintree).

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The provision and enhancement of green infrastructure is promoted by planning policy, guidance and proposals within the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy² and CCC's Green Network and Waterways Guiding Principles³.

The current Local Plan sets out an aspiration to complete / improve the Colchester Orbital Route; improvements to access and connectivity to this route is included within the Project Schedule. Also, many of the allocated sites within the existing Local Plan make provision for contributions of new or enhanced green infrastructure elements; these projects are recorded in the Project Schedule as a single line entry. Costs and funding status are currently unknown.

Demand and costs for green infrastructure associated with new allocations to 2043 has not been quantified given the overlap with the open space typologies covered within the previous chapter. However, new development is at the forefront of delivering green infrastructure to Colchester. All development should integrate and/or improve green infrastructure given its ability to promote active and sustainable transport, and to integrate green infrastructure principles at early stages of design.

A range of potential funding sources and delivery arrangements exist for green infrastructure including developer contributions, public sector and third sector sources.

Playspace

No shortfalls in quantity have been identified with current playspace provision in Colchester. There are 118 sites totalling 6.21 ha of land; including 11 Local Areas of Play (LAPs), 54 Local Equipped Areas of Play (LEAPs), 15 Neighbourhood Equipped Areas of Play (NEAPs), and 38 casual sites.

Just over half the playspace sites identified in the Open Space Report have been rated above the quality threshold. It was identified that CCC should consider delivering improvements to playspace provision in regard to the maintenance/appearance and/or the quality of equipment on sites.

In terms of accessibility, no significant catchment gap was identified for playspace. Areas with greater population density were identified to generally be within walking distance from play provision.

The existing Local Plan identifies open space requirements on some allocated sites; costs and funding status are currently unknown, but it is likely that the developer would be responsible for funding and delivery.

It is estimated that the additional population associated with the new allocations will generate demand for 0.97 ha playspace to 2043, with an associated cost of £1.94 million. For the purposes of the Project Schedule, it is assumed that this investment in playspace is currently unfunded.

Youth services

Essex Youth Services and CCC provide youth services in Colchester, including at three dedicated youth facilities, as well as across other non-dedicated venues.

Demand for youth facilities will increase to 2043; this has not been modelled as part of this report but it is assumed that at least some of this demand could be accommodated by community centres which are covered within the next chapter.

The local authority may work with a variety of delivery partners to provide youth services.

Local authorities may charge service users, although funding where available should be directed where needs are identified such that barriers to access are overcome, particularly in communities where specific gaps are identified. National funds may represent additional funding sources available to youth organisations and other delivery partners.

² Essex County Council, (2020); Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy.

³ Colchester City Council, (2024); Green Network and Waterways Guiding Principles.
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Community facilities

CCC maintains an audit of community facilities which identifies 33 church halls, 23 community centres, eight scout huts, 31 village huts, six libraries and 34 other facilities in Colchester. The current Local Plan identifies that while some locations in Colchester have a wide range of community facilities and appear to be well-served, many would benefit from new or enhanced facilities, including Greenstead in the urban area, a number of district centres and some villages.

The Heart of Greenstead scheme is part of Colchester's Town Deal Funding awarded in 2022. It will provide a multi-use community campus including a library and community space.

Developer contributions may be sought to provide additional community space where large new populations are planned, or may be pooled to provide upgrades to existing facilities where smaller population increases are anticipated. Based on benchmarks within CCC's SPD on Provision of Community Facilities, estimated costs associated with meeting new demand arising from the new allocations to 2043 are £22.1 million.

ECC/Essex Library Services would only typically seek to build new library facilities where a new population in excess of 7,000 people is expected, and developer contributions would be sought to support this. Contributions towards the expansion of existing facilities or mobile services might otherwise be sought. Based on benchmarks within the ECC Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions, estimated costs associated with meeting new demand arising from the new allocations to 2043 are £1.5 million.

The hybrid planning application for the TCBGC submitted in March 2026 identifies four Local Centres which will provide community space. As well as developer and local authority funding, there are a number of charitable funds/grants which are available to support grassroots projects including Colchester's community facilities.

Cultural and civic facilities

A wide range of cultural facilities are located in Colchester including heritage assets, art galleries and museums.

£18.2 million was awarded to Colchester in 2022 from the Government's Town Deal of which a proportion will be dedicated to funding cultural projects; £8 million has also recently been awarded to the 'Jumbo water tower' preservation project from the National Lottery Heritage Fund (NLHF).

The Colchester Cultural Strategy sets out an action plan containing a number of other potential projects which will enhance Colchester's cultural assets to 2030, along with respective delivery responsibilities.

CCC may wish to promote the enhancement of existing facilities, particularly where these heritage assets are in situ, or consider the development of new facilities at appropriate provision levels, to support future population growth. Charitable organisations and developer contributions (where related to the development) are potential funding sources to support this.

Employing national benchmarks indicates that the population associated with the new allocations to 2043 would generate demand for 2,557 sqm floorspace to accommodate expanded arts galleries, archive facilities, and museums.

With regard to civic facilities in Colchester, His Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS) is responsible for the management of courts nationally, including Colchester Magistrates' Court and Family Court. Cases are dealt with at the appropriate court across local authority boundaries where necessary.

HMCTS plans and manages demand including considering demographic trends and population growth over time to ensure the correct facilities are available in the correct locations. While it is reasonable to expect demand for these facilities to increase with population growth, it is not possible to quantify this demand or estimate associated costs.

There are a number of burial grounds in Colchester adjacent to places of worship. In addition, Colchester Cemetery and Crematorium provides cremations to support the needs of Colchester's population.

Demand and costs arising from growth for bereavement services have not been quantified. However, CCC is undertaking a strategic review of the ways in which Colchester Cemetery and Crematorium could be expanded or supplemented with an additional facility.

Police

Essex Police provides policing services across Colchester. The Colchester Local Plan Area is covered by the Colchester District Policing Area. The baseline police resources within the Local Policing Area are operating at capacity.

There is one police station within Colchester, as well as a British Transport Police station.

Essex Police indicates that both the construction and occupation phases of major new housing developments require additional police infrastructure/facilities (police facilities) to provide for the necessary community safety, cohesion, and policing to mitigate and manage the crime impacts arising from the increased population.

Essex Police has identified ten 'Growth Areas' within the development trajectory, where sites providing 250+ dwellings would be located which would require additional or enhanced police facilities such as police floor space, police vehicles, accommodation, traffic management facilities, Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs) during construction, and Neighbourhood Policing Team Teams (NPTs) during occupation.

To fund the additional demand on police facilities resulting from the population increase associated with growth, Essex Police will require funding from developers. It is anticipated that the total developer funding requirements for all ten Growth Areas across the plan period will be £5.5 million.

Ambulances

East of England Ambulance Service Trust (EEAST) provides the ambulance service in Colchester. There are currently two ambulance stations comprising the Colchester 'make-ready' hub and the Greenstead Ambulance Response Post (ARP). Information received during stakeholder consultation illustrates that demand is high and increasing, and the service is strained by handover delays at hospitals impacting on incurred costs.

EEAST indicated that a new purpose-built new ambulance hub is required in Colchester to meet current demand, which will support ambulance stations and response posts in the vicinity. An ambulance hub is expected to have a lifespan of 30 years. Ideally, EEAST will also need more ambulance response posts in order to target 90% of the Colchester area in 6-17 minutes. EEAST identify the requirement for four additional ambulances from 2026 to meet demand to 2043. Additional resources would also be required at regional call centres, and for recruitment, equipment and training of Community First Responders.

Draft policy OA4 within the Regulation 19 Local Plan indicates that a new emergency services hub would be suitable at the Northern Gateway allocation, as part of the mixed use area identified on the Policies Map.

According to EEAST, building costs of a new hub are in the region of £15-22 million (higher value includes land costs and additional power infrastructure to enable charging of electric vehicles (2025 prices) depending on size and design) depending on size and design. No funding is currently committed to the new hub. Each Dual Service Ambulance can cost around £140,000.

EEAST indicated that the new allocations (13,755 homes) would generate 7,276 additional incidents per annum and that developer contributions of £4.7 million would be required accordingly.

EEAST will apply to NHS England for funding for the new ambulance hub but anticipate that S106/CIL will provide additional funding. Developer contributions will also potentially support establishment of

new ambulance response posts, provision of additional ambulances and recruitment / equipment / training of Community First Responders.

Fire and rescue

Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) provides fire and rescue services across the Colchester Local Plan area. Within the local authority area, there are five stations: one wholetime station, three on-call stations, and one Urban Search and Rescue hub. ECFRS state that baseline resources are currently operating at capacity in Colchester.

ECFRS highlight that new housing supply (totalling 8,905 dwellings) from ten 'Growth Areas', comprising of existing allocations or new allocations which will deliver 250 dwellings or more, is likely to give rise to significant additional resource needs for ECFRS. Estimated developer funding requirements associated with these growth sites are £3.1 million.

Additional demand will arise through an increase in the Prevention, Protection, and Response activities, including the increased number of incidents, increased attendance times and changes in the incident risk profile to be mitigated and managed.

Additional or enhanced support may be in various forms including additional or enhanced fire station floor space and facilities; fire service plant and equipment; fire and rescue vehicles; funding for the recruitment, training, equipping and tasking of community safety, wellbeing and fire safety officers, and recruitment, training and equipping of firefighters.

ECFRS estimate that developer funding of £3.1 million is required to meet requirements of housing and population growth arising from the ten growth areas to 2043. Any requests for S106 and/or CIL funding would be supported by evidence to identify the need.

Primary care

The Essex Integrated Care Board (ICB) is responsible for the commissioning of primary care services in Colchester including GPs, dental services, community services and some specialised hospital services.

There are five PCNs operating 15 medical practices in Colchester. Data provided by the Essex ICB indicates a significant deficit of capacity for primary care services, based on benchmark space standards. Most practices and all PCNs have less floorspace than their weighted patient list implies is required, and there is an overall deficit of 3,402m². Opportunities to extend or reconfigure existing surgeries to address capacity issues are few due to building and site limitations and severe budgetary constraints. The NHS has estimated the cost of addressing this existing deficit in the region of £16.5 million.

Demand for primary care is set to increase due to population growth, the aging of the population, the increasing prevalence of multimorbidity, and ongoing cost of living challenges. Challenges include the number of primary care vacancies (specifically GP, nursing and pharmacy roles) and the scale and nature of the estate required to meet current and future forecast care needs.

Planned primary healthcare projects are recorded in the Project Schedule and include the potential expansion of Tiptree Medical Practice and the University Health Centre branch of Rowhedge Surgery, alongside internal remodelling at Ardleigh, Creffield, CMP Shrub End, CMP Parsons Heath, and Tollgate and/or Ambrose to improve clinical capacity.

Beyond these projects, the Essex ICB is not in a position to provide specific details of projects, as an overarching Estates Strategy is in development. However, the Essex ICB considered the Local Plan development trajectory and estimated that new allocations would generate a requirement for 1,931 sqm NIA floorspace and the existing commitments would generate a requirement for 1,137 sqm NIA floorspace. The Essex ICB indicated an expectation that developer contributions would be secured towards increasing capacity.

A high-level benchmarking exercise by AECOM indicates that the cost of providing primary care, acute care services, and mental health services associated with the new allocations would be £59.6 million.

Acute care services

East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust (a merger of the previous Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust and Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust) is responsible for the provision of hospital and community health care services across Colchester. The current lead commissioning group is the Essex ICB.

Acute care facilities within the local authority area comprise Colchester Hospital and Oaks Hospital. Community care provision by ESNEFT and partners in Colchester is delivered at Lexden Hospital as well as within smaller centres, care homes and patients' homes.

The Essex ICB describe existing capacity challenges across a number of service areas including in-patient beds and diagnostics.

There are six acute healthcare schemes in the Project Schedule including Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC) services expansion and the Day Surgery Unit at Colchester hospital.

A high-level benchmarking exercise by AECOM indicates that an appropriate contribution from developers towards the cost of providing primary care, acute care services, and mental health services associated with the new allocations would be £59.6 million. Via consultation, ESNEFT indicated that S106 payments from developers would be an important funding source for acute healthcare infrastructure to 2043, where appropriate evidence demonstrates that planned growth will give rise to additional demand and that mitigation is necessary to address the impacts of that growth.

Mental health services

Mental health services in Colchester are delivered by the Essex Partnership University Trust (EPUT). A range of services is delivered including the Specialist Mental Health Team, Acute Adult Inpatient Services at Colchester Hospital, and the Children's Learning Disability Service.

EPUT's Strategic Plan (2023-28), and consultation with EPUT, indicates that mental health services are encountering challenges relating to increased demand for EPUT's services. Drivers for this include Colchester's ageing population, increased mental health referrals for children and young people; an increase in the number of those challenged by the cost-of-living crisis and the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic; and significant workforce pressures.

Future needs for mental healthcare will increase with population growth to 2043, implying a requirement for a range of associated services and infrastructure on top of existing pressures. The NHS 10 Year Plan emphasises a shift towards more community-based, integrated models of provision. Developer contributions will be an important part of the future funding strategy.

A high-level benchmarking exercise by AECOM indicates that the cost of providing primary care, acute care services, and mental health services associated with the new allocations would be £59.6 million.

Adult Social Care

In total, there are 48 care homes within Colchester, of which 35 operate within the built-up city area.

ECC co-ordinates and commissions provision of Adult Social Services, including domiciliary care services (which includes a range of services to support an adult to remain in their home) and working aged residential care (a service that supports an adult with learning disabilities and/or autism and physical and sensory impairments on a long-term basis).

Population increase to 2043 can be expected to increase demand for Adult Social Care, especially given that the proportion of older people in Colchester is growing. The projected population for over

75s arising from new allocations is 3,530 and it is anticipated that 159 additional nursing homes places, 229 residential care places, and 88 additional extra care places will be required.

Care homes and other facilities are largely provided through private and third sector providers, although health and social care services can be provided at community facilities operated by the NHS or local authorities.

A high level benchmarking exercise indicates that the cost of providing adult social care services associated with the new allocations would be £71.2 million.

Where there is evidence of need and where feasible within masterplans, ECC's preference is for large-scale development to deliver a proportionate provision of Specialist and Supported Housing (SSH) for predicted care and support needs arising. ECC will liaise with Local Planning Authorities to consider how opportunities for SSH can be realised on sites with significant housing development. Where this new accommodation cannot be provided on-site, ECC will liaise with LPAs to secure financial contributions that enable capital funding for new SSH accommodation on alternative sites.

Specialist and supported facilities for children

ECC has a statutory duty under child protection law to meet children and young people's care needs and the needs of looked after children.

ECC has commissioned the Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service (ECFWS), which operates 'family hubs', to deliver services from a number of sites. ECC also provides children's services including supported accommodation, registered children's homes, home-based care for children with disabilities, overnight short breaks for families and children, and short break community clubs and activities. Demand for these services is high. Children's Services and Early Years currently account for 14.6% of ECC's total expenditure on services (£367.1 million, approximately £976,000 per day).

Population growth will lead to an increase in the number of children aged 0 to 25 living in Colchester and therefore in the demand for children's services. This implies a likely need for additional space within family centres or alternative community hubs. It is also likely that population growth will lead to an increased requirement for children's accommodation in terms of both supported housing and registered children's homes.

A high-level benchmarking exercise indicates that there will be a demand for approximately 106 additional children social care beds up to 2043 associated with the new allocations, and that the cost of providing these beds would be £21.9 million.

The ECC Developers Guide indicates that where there is evidence of need, ECC's preference is for large-scale development to deliver a proportionate provision of Specialist and Supported Housing (SSH) for predicted care and support needs arising. Where this accommodation cannot be provided on-site, ECC will liaise with LPAs to secure financial contributions that enable capital funding for new SSH accommodation on alternative sites.

ECC's expenditure on children's services is funded through council tax, business rates and government grants. SNEE ICB and the Start Well Domain have provided grants to local projects, to help deliver emotional wellbeing and mental health early support in Colchester between 2023-25.

Active travel

There is some existing cycling infrastructure in Colchester city centre, but limited provision in more rural areas. Given this higher level of provision and the fact that it is a major employment centre, the most significant cycling levels are seen in Colchester urban area. Rural provision of active travel infrastructure largely consists of NCN and leisure walking routes. Although improving, there is limited provision of cycling infrastructure at transport interchanges.

There is planned strategic investment in the city's active travel infrastructure put forward in the recently published Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP). These LCWIP routes are key to the Local Plan growth mitigation package.

The repair and widening of the footbridge across the A12 in Marks Tey have been proposed to improve access to Marks Tey Station for cyclists and pedestrians.

A network of mobility hubs across Colchester are another key component of the mitigation package. These will enable people to interchange between sustainable travel modes.

The Project Schedule currently records overall estimated cost of £172.1 million for the 40 active travel and mobility hub schemes, with funding anticipated from S106/S278 and from external grants.

Bus services

Bus services in Colchester are limited outside peak hours, and supporting infrastructure is often poorly maintained. These challenges are common in small cities surrounded by rural settlements, as is the case in Colchester. Service provision is notably poorer in the more rural areas of the borough.

Park and Ride services have strong levels of demand in Colchester and are being expanded to increase capacity and offer greater modal choice for users.

The Rapid Transit System (RTS) is a new public transport service that will provide priority services connecting the city centre to the south-east and will support the TCBGC development.

To support growth to 2043, an extension of the RTS is proposed from the City Centre to Marks Tey.

Further proposed measures include a new bus and active travel bridge across the A12 as well as new and extended bus routes.

The Project Schedule thus records overall estimated costs of £171 million for 18 bus related schemes.

Rail services

Colchester is a strategically important location in the East Anglian rail network. Colchester Station is located on the Great Eastern Main Line, with frequent services to London and other key regional destinations.

Significant rail freight flows through and nearby to Colchester. Freight is central to rail policy and planning in the region.

Accessibility upgrades at Marks Tey station with a focus on step free access and lift provision have been included in the 2043 Local Plan growth mitigation package, and are costed at approximately £5.0 million.

The development of mobility hubs has been proposed for Colchester North Station, Hythe Station and Marks Tey Station, with potential opportunities also identified at Chappel & Wakes Colne Station on the branch line.

Roads

Colchester is a strategically important location in the SRN. The A12 and A120 transect the local authority area.

The SRN has significant issues on both the A12 and the A120, driven by existing demand. Issues on the A120 are severe and unsustainable. Capacity issues at junctions are interconnected and require holistic solutions. The most significant issues on the SRN are not driven by Local Plan growth.

There are significant delays on multiple local roads in the city centre and safety concerns at junctions across Colchester.

The proposed measures in the Local Plan growth mitigation package are proportional to the impact of that growth. Measures include signalisation at a number of A12 junctions as well as at other locations, and area-wide investment in dynamic movement management.

Altogether, the Project Schedule currently identifies estimated costs of £195.7 million for highway schemes. £86 million funding is secured for Phase 2 of the A120 - A133 Link Road scheme.

National Highways will assess planning proposals on a case-by-case basis. They support the principle of a Monitor and Manage approach to development, emphasising the need to monitor the impacts of growth and implement appropriate mitigation within a suitable timeframe to address issues effectively.

Electric vehicle charging

The EV charging infrastructure in Colchester is currently expanding from a low baseline. Provision of public charging devices in the East of England is significantly lower than the national number per head of population.

Future demand is likely to increase very significantly as the government has implemented ambitious targets on the roll out of EV infrastructure and phasing out of petrol and diesel cars.

The expansion of EV infrastructure is heavily dependent on both government and private sector funding, including developers (S106 and/or S278).

The delivery of new charge points and ensuring these charge points are at strategically located multi-modal interchanges is a key priority for investment. The delivery of EV charge points is therefore incorporated in the plans for mobility hubs described above.

Electricity

UK Power Networks (UKPN) operate fifteen primary substations in the Colchester. Currently, all but one primary substation have more than 5% demand headroom availability.

The forecasted electricity demand for 2043, based on the housing and employment projections, indicate that all but four primary substations will have capacity to accommodate the anticipated increase in electricity demand. However, this assessment is less conservative (i.e. more optimistic) than the Long Term Scenario Forecasts that were performed by UKPN and presented in the Stage 1 and 2 report.

The primary substation areas predicted to have insufficient capacity to accommodate the anticipated increase in electricity demand are located at the eastern and western extents of Colchester, in rural areas.

No planned UKPN projects have been identified to increase capacity of the electrical infrastructure in Colchester.

In accordance with DNO licence conditions, UKPN do not proactively invest in their network ahead of need. Instead, they reinforce their networks as required to suit committed developments, typically using funds provided by developers in paying connection fees.

The DNO typically covers the costs for shared asset reinforcements whilst developers typically cover the costs for sole use connection assets.

A high-level benchmarking exercise indicates that the cost of delivering electricity demands associated with the potential emerging allocations would be approximately £243.6 million. It is assumed that this cost will be met by the utility company and by developers through connection fees as noted above.

Gas

Cadent Gas did not share the exact capacity or location of their infrastructure but provided assurance that there are no potential bottlenecks in their networks for future expansion in Colchester.

The gas demand associated with employment allocations is presented in Table 5.3. This estimate (202.8 MWhr/day) is considered to be conservative as it does not account for the electrification of heating in commercial development.

In general, UK demand for gas is anticipated to decline to 2043 due to government legislation.

If a new connection to the system triggers a requirement for Cadent Gas to reinforce their network, an economic test is performed to calculate the level of customer contribution, if required at all.

Renewable energy

Renewable energy projects in Colchester currently generate 173.7 MW through Solar PV and 6.6 MW through landfill gas to energy sites.

By 2043, known renewable energy projects that have been granted planning permission in Colchester could increase renewable energy generation to 176.2 MW through solar PV, 6.6 MW through landfill gas to energy and 6.6 MW through battery energy storage.

Renewable energy projects are typically funded and delivered by private developers.

The introduction of Connections Reform has refined the process for connecting renewable energy projects, prioritising those that are suitable, well-advanced and aligned with the government's strategic energy goals.

Telecommunications and digital

The timescales envisaged for the updated Local Plan to 2043 are likely to see full-fibre connectivity emerge as a ubiquitous utility infrastructure, with densification of existing fibre networks and the retirement of the legacy copper networks originally designed and deployed for telephony.

There remains ample scope for public-private partnerships in helping to deliver full-fibre connectivity, and Colchester is well-placed to make best use of the network assets already delivered since 2020 in this way.

While the process of full-fibre network build will remain commercially driven, CCC has the opportunity to shape the process to the benefit of residents and businesses alike. This may include an explicit requirement that all new builds should be able to offer full fibre from multiple providers, ideally using open-access infrastructure.

At the same time, it is highly desirable that a “dig once” approach is taken to utility infrastructure. Implementing this goes beyond the remit of the Local Plan however, and would require changes to the wider legislative framework, notably the New Roads and Street Works Act (NWRSA 1991).

Potable water

Key findings relating to potable water are as follows:

- Anglian Water (AW) is the main potable water supplier to Colchester with small areas of Dedham and Wivenhoe provided by Affinity Water.
- Colchester is located within the AW Essex South WRZ and Affinity Water's Brett WRZ which are classed as under serious water stress by the Environment Agency.
- The main issues affecting the WRZs' supply-demand balance are population growth, restoring sustainable abstraction and reductions to achieve environmental destinations. According to AW's Water Resource Management Plan (2024), the AW Essex South WRZ is expected to go into supply deficit by 2025 if no measures are put in place. The Brett WRZ would still operate a surplus in its supply and demand balance until 2040 even without additional measures.
- AW plans to overcome the predicted deficit mainly through a demand management strategy as well as side supply strategies including imports from outside WRZs, water re-use and, depending on the scale of future environmental needs, through desalination. The preferred demand management strategy includes a smart metering programme, leakage reductions and water efficiency measures.

- AW are funding overall improvements to their networks and making efforts to reduce water consumption.
- There are three demand side potable water projects in the Project Schedule. These relate to:
 - o smart metering (total capital expenditure of £243 million);
 - o leakage reduction (total capital expenditure of £4,370 million);
 - o water efficiency measures (operational cost of £97 million); and
- The Project Schedule also contains four supply side projects relating to AW's strategy to reduce net transfers to 2050 (total identified capital expenditure of £533.9 million for the entire Essex South WRZ).
- Total capital costs of the listed projects are £5,146.9 million, however it is noted that these projects will cater for demand not just from Colchester but for a wider geographical area, and for this reason the costs have not been included in the grand total presented in chapter 5.9.33. The projects will be funded by AW through their Price Review (PR24) and so there are no funding gaps.
- Owing to the connectivity of WRZs, the spatial location of growth within Colchester does not materially influence investment required in water resource management.
- Developers are to fund the cost of development connections. A high-level benchmarking exercise indicates that the cost of connection charges to provide potable water infrastructure with the potential emerging allocations would be £11.1 million. This sum has been included in the Project Schedule.

Wastewater

Key findings relating to wastewater are as follows:

- There are 18 Water Recycling Centres (WRCs) across the Colchester local authority area with three of these WRC catchments located partly in adjacent local authority areas or catchments. 13 of these WRC would have allocated sites within their drainage catchments.
- The demand for wastewater services within these 13 WRCs will increase due to population growth as well as climate change leading to more foul and surface water entering the network.
- The CCC Water Cycle Study (WCS) has assessed the impact of the preferred site allocations against WRC capacity including a comparison against the assumptions of AW's Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP). This identified nine WRCs where capacity would be exceeded (if no improvement plan is implemented) when also considering committed growth which has not yet been connected to WRCs.
- Three of the affected WRCs have sufficient capacity for all planned growth and do not need significant infrastructure investment (Birch, Layer de-la-Haye and West Mersea).
- The other 10 WRCs need some form of infrastructure intervention ranging from upgrades to changes in discharge permits, but the WCS has determined these changes are feasible within Technically Achievable Limits (TAL) and hence can be delivered at some point in the future to protect water quality and connected habitats/designated sites.
- The degree of infrastructure intervention required varies for these 10 WRCs, and the extent of funding secured as well as when the intervention will take place is variable:
 - o Three WRCs have solutions identified in the current AW Asset Management Plan (AMP) 8 investment period and have funding secured (Copford WRC, Fingringhoe WRC and Earls Colne WRC).

- o Two WRCs have capacity in the short term and have longer term solutions identified but not yet fully funded (Eight Ash Green WRC and Tiptree WRC).
 - o Two WRCs have capacity in the short term but capacity will be exceeded and without long term investment plans identified or funding secured (Colchester WRC and Great Tey WRC);
 - o Two WRCs have no immediate capacity and no immediate investment plans in AMP8 (to 2030) but do have medium to longer term solutions identified which are yet to be funded (Dedham WRC and West Bergholt WRC)
- Early phasing of growth in Dedham, West Bergholt, and Langham may be restricted until improvement plans are developed and funded for 2030 onwards (AMP9 or AMP10). Fingringhoe WRC also has no baseline capacity, but improvement plans are included in AW's AMP8 Business Plan and hence early phasing impacts may only be a consideration for the first 2 or 3 years of the Plan Period.
- As part of the DWMP the best value plan proposes medium- and long-term solutions for the various WRCs as:
 - o Remove surface water from the sewerage system using SuDS and traditional strategies.
 - o Remove unrequired network flows.
 - o Increase capacity, particularly at WRCs, and
 - o Introduce targeted education schemes in tandem with partners to reduce demand.
- Across their company area, AW are investing £5 billion between 2025-2050 to mitigate future risks to the wastewater network from expected growth and climate change. Of this, £836 million is estimated to be invested in wastewater infrastructure solutions within the Essex Rivers Catchment Partnership in which CCC is located. This gives an indication of the scale of investment that will be required in Colchester and surrounding local authority areas.
- For improvements at the identified WRCs in the PR24 Business Plan (Earls Colne, Copford and Fingringhoe), AW are investing approximately £11.97 million between 2024 to 2030. This AMP8 funding will come before 2030. This is reflected in the Project Schedule.
- A high-level benchmarking exercised indicates that the cost of providing wastewater infrastructure with the new allocations would be £13.3 million. These costs are also included in the Project Schedule. Costs associated with connecting new developments to the network are charged to the developer.

Flood defence

Key findings relating to flood defence are as follows:

- The primary sources of flood risk in the Colchester local authority area are tidal, fluvial and surface water, associated with the River Colne, River Stour and their tributaries.
- Flood defences are primarily located along the River Colne, as well as the coastal frontage and Mersea Island. These mainly comprise natural high ground, embankments and the Colne Barrier. The condition and level of protection provided by the flood defences is variable and climate change is likely to reduce the effectiveness of the defences in the long term in the absence of works to maintain the level of protection.
- Areas most likely to be affected by fluvial impacts of climate change are:
 - o Southern areas of the local authority area due to the areas' low-lying topography; and
 - o Areas close to the Colne and Stour Rivers.

- There are currently no flood risk management schemes proposed within Colchester.
- Where housing and employment development sites are proposed within the City of Colchester, some sites intersect slightly with Flood Zones 2 and 3.
- The Colchester Local Plan 2017-2033 requires all development to be directed to areas at lowest risk of flooding by applying the Sequential Test, in line with national guidance. Where future developments within Flood Zone 2 and 3 are proposed, they may require improvements to flood defences to provide or maintain a 1 in 100-year SoP and to pass the NPPF Exception Test. However, this would need to be considered on a case-by-case basis, and it would need to be demonstrated on a catchment level that flood risk is not increased downstream, through the loss of floodplain storage or floodplain connectivity.
- Proposed development located in areas to the south on lower lying land and settlements in proximity to the Rivers Colne and Stour, together with their tributaries in particular, may require improvements to defences to ensure adequate protection for the proposed developments. This may add significant additional expense for developers. Liaison with the Environment Agency will be required to determine any site-specific requirements with regards to Flood Defences.

Surface water management

Surface water is one of the main sources of flooding across the Colchester local authority area. Several communities are at risk of flooding from this source. The areas of Colchester located within the Critical Drainage Areas (CDAs) and within Marks Tey have a high prevalence of reported surface water flooding events in particular.

Strategic scale Sustainable Drainage Solutions (SuDS) may form part of flood alleviation projects to reduce the impacts and frequency of existing surface water flooding problems. Anglian Water's DWMP includes long-term strategies to increase drainage capacity through surface water management and upsizing, and via emerging schemes in catchments susceptible to emerging growth.

SuDS for new major development will also be essential to ensure that surface water discharge rates and volumes from growth are kept to a minimum or as close to the pre-development runoff rate as possible, minimising the increase in flood risk downstream, particularly along the River Colne and River Stour. While no schemes relating to SuDS have been identified within the Project Schedule, it is likely that all the development sites referred to in the emerging development trajectory are of sufficient size to require SuDS provision under the NPPF, though smaller sites may pose feasibility challenges to including provision within the development boundary.

SuDS must be designed and constructed in consultation with ECC in their role as Local Lead Flood Risk Authority (LLFA). The impacts of climate change must be considered in the design of SuDS schemes.

Funding for SuDS related to growth will be provided by developers, and in some cases where SuDS can form part of a wider solution to manage existing surface water flood risk. These may be part funded by the LLFA, the Environment Agency or water companies on a site by site or project by project basis. Under the current legislative and policy position, SuDS constructed for new development will be maintained by private owners or in some cases, may be adopted by Anglian Water, or ECC. Once Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act is enacted a SuDS Approval Board (SAB) will adopt SuDS built to the requirements of new national SuDS standards.

Anglian Water's DWMP identifies significant investment in surface water management to manage WRC treatment and transmission capacity; however, SuDS specific schemes within Colchester are not identified at this stage of planning, and no costs have been allocated to surface water management within the Project Schedule.

Liaison with the LLFA and EA will be required to determine site-specific requirements prior to SuDS construction and development.

Waste and resource management

ECC is both the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) and Waste Planning Authority (WPA) for Colchester. Household and commercial waste is collected by the Waste Collection Authorities (WCA), such as CCC.

Waste management facilities are currently operating at or near capacity throughout Colchester. ECC is currently exploring options for site expansion and/or reconfiguration at its waste transfer station (Ardleigh off the A120) and its waste recycling centres (Shrub End, West Mersea, Witham and Clacton). The adopted Waste Local Plan (2017-2032) has allocated two sites in Colchester (Bellhouse and Fingringhoe) for waste infrastructure and has earmarked potential 'areas of search' where waste infrastructure may be suitable in principle.

Requirements for LACW waste and resource management infrastructure is funded through the council taxpayer, and ECC may also seek developer contributions on a case by case basis. Delivery responsibility for projects identified above sits with CCC and ECC alongside private delivery partners.

ECC will seek to secure contributions towards much needed waste management capacity from all developments with 10 or more dwellings. Developer contributions will be used towards:

Reconfiguration of waste infrastructure, Recycling Centres for Household Waste (RCHW) and Waste Transfer Stations (WTS) alterations;

- Provision of new plant and equipment;
- Extensions and/or redevelopment of existing RCHWs and WTS;
- Construction of a new RCHW and WTS;
- Provision of reuse facilities;
- Increasing capacity for waste segregation;
- Provision of new logistical infrastructure, depots, vehicles and containers;
- Provision of new waste treatment facilities; and
- Activities that support waste minimisation, reuse, and recycling.

ECC notes that both regulatory and macro-economic changes and changing individuals' behaviours may have implications for waste management infrastructure demands over the Plan period. Changes to waste generations are hard to predict due to various complex factors. However, it is expected that regulatory changes will lead to greater waste and recycling segregation with space and logistics needed to accommodate this

Key findings

The Project Schedule (Appendix A) identifies 164 infrastructure projects which will help meet needs arising from development in Colchester to 2043. A number of line-items in the Project Schedule relate to the modelled estimates of demand and costs for social infrastructure, rather than existing planned projects.

Total costs of £1,306.9 million and secured funding of £367.2 million have been identified. This implies total net costs of £939.7 million to be met by public, private or third sector sources, including developer contributions, up to 2043. Transport projects account for 42% of the total costs identified and 49% of the net costs. Social and green infrastructure projects account for 37% of the total costs identified and 51% of the net costs. Hard infrastructure accounts for 21% of the total costs identified and 0% of the net costs.

The majority of the infrastructure projects for which a broad delivery date has been identified are set to come forward within the next 10 years.

The line items with the highest cost in the Project Schedule (excluding schemes which are located entirely or partly outside of Colchester albeit they will cater partly for Colchester's need) are: electricity substation upgrades in 15 locations to meet new demand (£243.6 million, assumed to be funded); a new strategic link road between the A120 and A133 (£86.0 million, assumed to be funded); primary school provision to 2043 (£86.0 million net cost); secondary school provision to 2043 (£73.8 million net cost); adult social services to 2043 (£71.2 million net cost); RTS extension City Centre to Marks Tey (£63.0 million net cost); and primary, acute and mental health care services (£59.6 million net cost).

This IADP demonstrates that work is well underway by CCC, service providers and partners to identify and deliver the future infrastructure required for development over the Plan period. The IADP has formed a basis for conversations about how future growth in Colchester can be delivered. Going forward, as a comprehensive assessment of infrastructure and projects needed to support growth, the IADP can provide a tool for future partnership working and co-ordination in the planning and delivery of services.

CCC has engaged with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) as part of the process for formulating the new Local Plan to 2043. CCC is also engaged with sub-regional partners through the North Essex Economic Board (NEEB). Essex County Council, Southend City Council and Thurrock Council were accepted onto the government's Devolution Priority Programme in February 2025. This is likely to result in the creation of a Strategic Authority for Greater Essex, which will initially take the form of a combined county authority. It has been proposed that Colchester, Braintree, and Tendring councils could form a North East Essex unitary authority by 2028. This is supported by the Government and is subject to Parliamentary approval through a Structural Changes Order.

Most infrastructure receives all or a major part of their funding from national government, whether that comes through ECC, CCC or via a central government agency. Funding also comes from the charitable sector and the private sector, in the form of private equity and financial or in-kind contributions from developers.

There is potential for many items in the Project Schedule to be funded by developers. In 2024/25, CCC reports that £5.84 million was received from planning obligations, and a total of £995,000 million was spent.

In addition to mainstream funding sources and developer contributions described above, other funding sources potentially available to fund infrastructure in Colchester include one-off public sector grants (e.g. the Towns Fund, the Safer Streets Fund, the Active Travel Fund), business rates retention, Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) supplement, parking revenue, Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) and a tourist tax.

The funding landscape is dynamic. Appendix C sets out a high level framework which CCC and partners can use to prioritise projects (or clusters or portfolios of projects) and to explore further which specific combination of funding sources is likely to be most appropriate in each instance. Through continued joint-working, CCC and partners will be in a strong position to respond promptly and effectively to infrastructure funding opportunities, and to attract investment.

1. Introduction

1.1. Objectives of the IADP

- 1.1.1. The Infrastructure Audit and Delivery Plan (IADP) aims to identify the infrastructure which is required to meet the growth anticipated in Colchester over the Local Plan period to 2043, along with the associated costs, timing and delivery arrangements for that infrastructure. The IADP forms part of the evidence base to support the Colchester Local Plan review.
- 1.1.2. The Stage 1 and 2 IADP Report produced by AECOM in mid-late 2024 set out in detail the baseline position for each infrastructure type. It also reviewed the high level options consulted on by Colchester City Council (CCC)⁴ as part of the Local Plan Issues and Options stage, in order to identify infrastructure implications of those options and thus inform CCC's work to select a preferred option for the Regulation 18 Draft Local Plan.
- 1.1.3. The Stage 3 IADP Report produced by AECOM in October 2025 supported the Draft Preferred Options Local Plan⁵. It considered, based on the emerging development trajectory provided by CCC, the demand which planned growth will generate for each infrastructure type, and how infrastructure will be provided to meet this demand.
- 1.1.4. This Stage 4 IADP is the final iteration and reflects the housing and employment sites identified within the Submission Local Plan.
- 1.1.5. The Project Schedule which accompanies the infrastructure assessment and is contained with Appendix A lists all infrastructure projects which have been identified through stakeholder consultation and documentation as planned to cater for demand over the Plan period, including where known costs, funding and delivery arrangements.

1.2. Scope and approach

- 1.2.1. The scope and approach of the IADP reflects national planning policy and guidance, best practice in infrastructure planning and discussion with CCC officers. The infrastructure types addressed, as shown in Table 1-1, include services serving a local catchment as well as those which are more strategic in nature.

Table 1-1 Scope of IADP by infrastructure type

Infrastructure type	Sub-category
Transport	Roads
	Active travel
	Public transport (rail, bus)
	Electric vehicle infrastructure
Utilities and water	Electricity and gas
	Renewable power
	Telecoms and digital
	Flood defence
	Flood alleviation/surface water management
	Wastewater
	Potable water

⁴ Throughout the report, 'Colchester' is used to describe the entire local authority area unless otherwise stated. Colchester Borough Council is now known as Colchester City Council (CCC); referencing throughout the report refers to the applicable local authority name at the time of publication of documents.

⁵ Available at: [Document.ashx](https://www.colchester.gov.uk/Document.ashx)

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Infrastructure type	Sub-category
Social and green infrastructure	Waste management
	Recycling and circular economy
	Early years and childcare
	Primary education
	Secondary education
	Further education (sixth form and post-16)
	Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND)
	Higher education
	Adult education
	Primary healthcare (GPs)
	Acute healthcare
	Community health services
	Social care (adult, specialist, and supported services for children)
	Indoor and outdoor sport and leisure facilities
	Playing pitches
	Open spaces
	Green infrastructure
	Playspace
	Youth facilities
	Community facilities (meeting places, community spaces, youth centres, libraries, places of worship)
	Arts, culture and civic facilities
	Police
	Ambulance
	Fire and rescue

1.2.2. The preparation of this IADP Stage 4 Report has involved the following tasks:

- A review of CCC's development trajectory;
- Stakeholder consultation, building on that undertaken at Stages 1, 2, and 3; and
- An updated assessment of future infrastructure needs drawing on the technical expertise and experience of AECOM team members and reflecting feedback from stakeholders.

1.3. Document structure

1.3.1. The remainder of this document is structured as follows:

- Section 2 summarises the policy framework and demographic context for the IADP, as well as setting out the development trajectory which underpins the infrastructure needs assessment;
- Sections 3, 4 and 5 describe for each infrastructure topic the needs likely to be generated by growth to 2043, planned projects to meet demand, any gaps in provision, and associated costs, funding and delivery arrangements; and

- Section 6 presents key findings, summarising Colchester's infrastructure needs to 2043, identified costs, and implications for funding and delivery.

2. Context and planned growth

2.1. Policy framework

- 2.1.1. National, regional and local policies and guidance relevant to the delivery of infrastructure in Colchester include: the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) (2025)⁶; the UK 10 Year Infrastructure Strategy (2025); the adopted Colchester Local Plan Section 1 (2021); the adopted Colchester Local Plan Section 2 (2022); and the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) Development Plan Document (2025). A full policy baseline is set out in Appendix B.
- 2.1.2. The NPPF (2025)⁷ makes clear that Local Plans should be prepared positively to accommodate housing and employment land needs, in a way that is aspirational but deliverable. Strategic policies should make sufficient provision for infrastructure, and should be underpinned by adequate and proportionate evidence. Plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development; where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless there are strong grounds for refusal.

2.2. Current profile of Colchester

- 2.2.1. The population of Colchester is growing and ageing. The economic activity rate is slightly below that of the region, and some pockets of deprivation exist, although these are limited in spatial extent.
- 2.2.2. The economy of Colchester is growing and there are good levels of educational attainment. Promoting sustainable communities in line with population growth will involve ensuring sufficient amounts of housing and employment opportunities are in place, and that communities are supported and connected by adequate physical and social infrastructure.
- 2.2.3. A full profile of Colchester has been outlined in Appendix B.

2.3. Growth in Colchester to 2043

- 2.3.1. As part of the Local Plan review process, CCC considered a range of approaches to the spatial distribution of growth. Seven spatial options were developed, varying in their driving aspirations and objectives. The implications of the spatial options in terms of infrastructure provision were considered within the Stage 1 and 2 IADP Report.
- 2.3.2. For the Stage 3 IADP, CCC provided a development trajectory for testing which represented a scenario for the delivery of housing and employment land in Colchester and was aligned with the Draft Preferred Options Local Plan⁸. For this Stage 4 IADP, the development trajectory has been updated to align with the Regulation 19 Local Plan.
- 2.3.3. The development trajectory is summarised below. Table 2-1 shows forecast housing delivery by key time bands (five-year phases) over the period of the Local Plan Review to 2043.

⁶ The Examination in Public (EiP) of the Colchester Local Plan will be against the NPPF December 2024 under transitional arrangements.

⁷ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, (2025); National Planning Policy Framework.

⁸ The Stage 3 IADP forecast the delivery of 20,441 dwellings between 2025 and 2041, comprising 11,936 dwellings on emerging allocations, 2,314 on existing allocations and 6,191 on existing commitments. Delivery was anticipated to comprise 10,086 dwellings between 2025/26 and 2029/30, 5,826 dwellings between 2030/31 and 2035/36, and 4,530 dwellings between 2036/37 and 2041/42. The current development trajectory forecasts 22,138 dwellings over the plan period, representing an increase of 1,697 dwellings compared with the Stage 3 IADP.

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Approximately 22,100 homes are forecast to come forward between 2026 and 2043, with the second phase (2031/32 to 2036/37) set to deliver the greatest proportion of homes (44%).

Table 2-1 Summary of housing growth by five-year phase

Planning Status	2026/27 to 2030/31	2031/32 to 2036/37	2037/38 to 2042/43	Total Housing Units
	1-5 years	5-10 years	10-15 years	
New Housing Units	3,993	9,810	8,335	22,138
Cumulative New Housing Units	3,993	13,803	22,138	22,138

Source: Colchester City Council, 2026.

- 2.3.4. The development trajectory has identified 233 sites on which housing units could potentially be delivered up to 2043, comprising 48 new allocations for inclusion within the revised Local Plan, 15 existing allocations carried forward from the adopted Local Plan, and 170 existing commitments which already have planning permission. In addition, approximately 2,600 dwellings will be delivered across various windfall sites.

Table 2-2 Summary of housing growth by planning category

Planning Status	2026/27 to 2030/31	2031/32 to 2036/37	2037/38 to 2042/43	Total Housing Units
	1-5 years	5-10 years	10-15 years	
New Allocations	285	5,120	5,710	11,115
Existing Allocations	-	574	555	1,129
Existing Commitments	3,708	2,796	750	7,254
Windfall	-	1,320	1,320	2,640
Total	3,993	9,810	8,335	22,138

Source: Colchester City Council, 2026.

- 2.3.5. Housing growth will be delivered across different locations within Colchester. The location of housing growth associated with the existing and new allocations is detailed in Table 2-3. A substantial number of homes will be delivered in Marks Tey (2,500), East Colchester (2,500), South Colchester (950), and Langham (860). Existing commitments are not broken out below but the location with the most homes to be delivered by 2043 is the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) (1,825). The location of the additional 2,640 dwellings to be delivered across various windfall sites is not currently known.

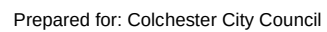
Table 2-3 Planned housing growth by location

Location	2026/27 to 2030/31	2031/32 to 2036/37	2037/38 to 2042/43	Total Housing Units
	1-5 years	5-10 years	10-15 years	
Existing and new allocations				
Colchester City Centre	0	226	265	491
North Colchester	0	140	345	485
East Colchester	0	1,050	1,200	2,250
Opportunity Area	0	300	150	450
South Colchester	0	450	500	950
West Colchester	5	0	0	5

Location	2026/27 to 2030/31 1-5 years	2031/32 to 2036/37 5-10 years	2037/38 to 2042/43 10-15 years	Total Housing Units
Tiptree	0	310	410	720
West Mersea	120	180	0	300
Wivenhoe	0	200	0	200
Abberton and Langenhoe	0	0	50	50
Boxted	0	150	0	150
Chappel and Wakes Colne	0	20	215	235
Copford	0	70	350	420
Dedham and Dedham Heath	0	0	15	15
Eight Ash Green	150	100	250	500
Fordham	0	0	25	25
Great Horkesley	0	438	375	813
Great Tey	0	100	100	200
Langham	10	400	450	860
Layer De La Haye	0	85	30	115
Marks Tey	0	1,350	1,150	2,500
Rowhedge	0	0	50	50
West Bergholt	0	90	280	370
Aldham	0	0	15	15
Birch	0	0	15	15
Fingringhoe	0	5	0	5
Messing	0	25	0	25
Peldon	0	5	25	30
Existing commitments				
Various wards	3,708	2,796	750	7,254
Windfall		1,320	1,320	2,640
Total	3,993	9,810	8,335	22,318

Source: Colchester City Council, 2026.

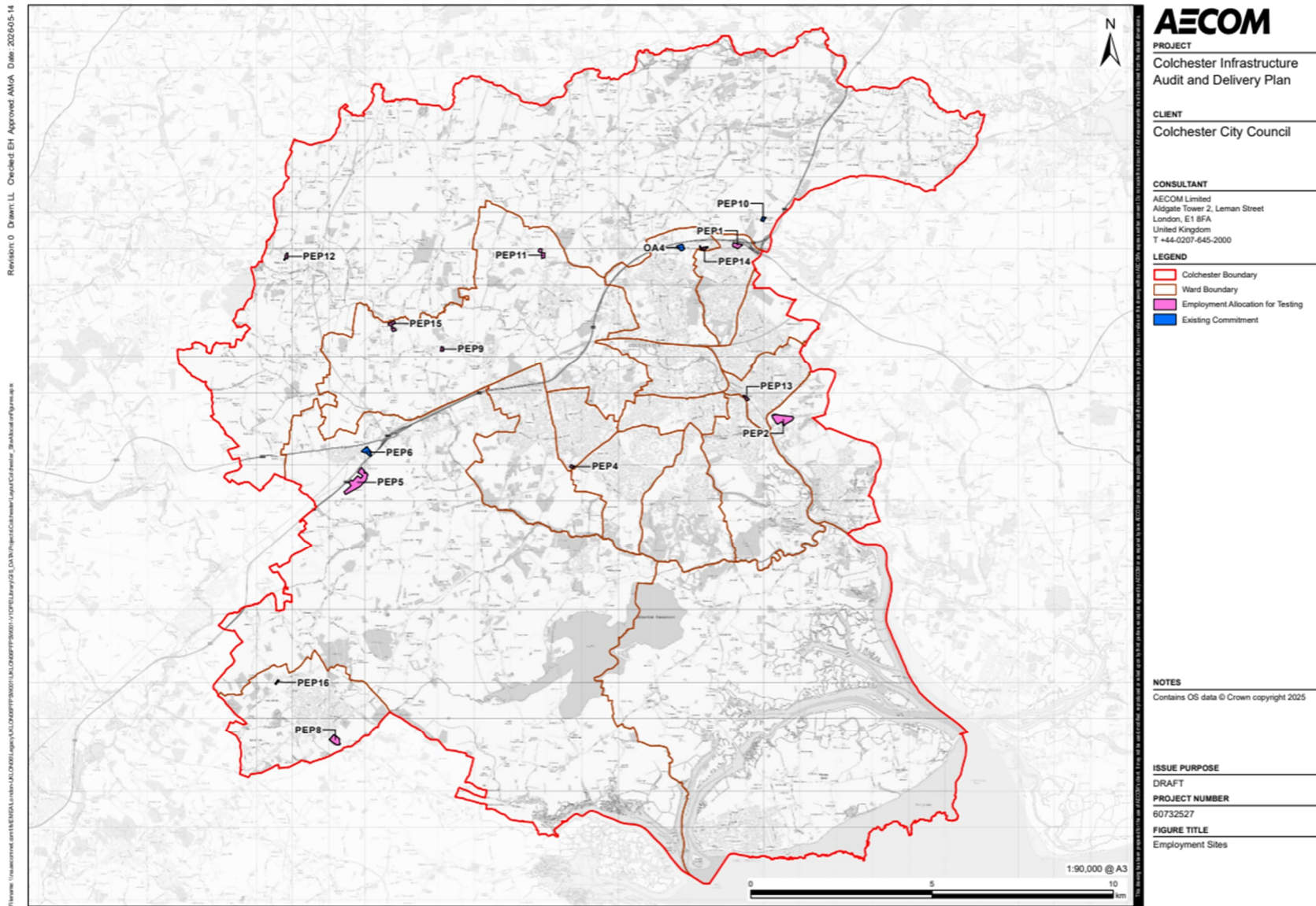
2.3.6. Figure 2.1 below illustrates the location of the potential housing sites to 2043.



Employment Sites

- 2.3.7. The development trajectory provided by CCC also identifies employment sites, which are shown in Figure 2.2.
- 2.3.8. The employment sites comprise existing allocations carried forward from the adopted Local Plan as well new employment sites allocated within the revised Local Plan. In addition, some committed employment sites which have planning permission and which are safeguarded for employment use within planning policy are identified.
- 2.3.9. Collectively, 17 sites are identified which total 54.1 hectares of employment land. This includes Tendring Colchester Border Garden Community (Policy ST9) which is covered by Policy GC5 and the Framework Plan within the TCBGC DPD; here, it is estimated that 3.5 hectares will come forward during the plan period.
- 2.3.10. One allocation is included with the data but not shown on Figure 2. Highland Nursery Tiptree (Policy PEP 7) is covered by Policy TIP 15 of the Tiptree Neighbourhood Plan, rather than being allocated within the Submission Local Plan.

Figure 2.2 Employment growth sites (existing commitments and allocations) 2026-2043



2.4. Summary

- 2.4.1. The policy framework relevant to population and economic growth in Colchester over the existing and emerging Local Plan periods emphasises the importance of ensuring the appropriate infrastructure is in place to meet the needs of current and future communities. This IADP is therefore set against the context of positively planning for growth in line with the historic achievement of housing delivery targets, and policy aspirations to deliver against future housing needs.
- 2.4.2. As shown in Appendix B, the population of Colchester is growing and ageing. The economic activity rate is slightly below the regional comparator, with lower levels of RQF4+ qualifications than the regional and national average. There are some pockets of deprivation, although these are limited in spatial extent. The economy of Colchester is growing, alongside an overall increase in dwelling stock.
- 2.4.3. For this Stage 4 IADP Report, CCC provided an development trajectory for testing. This represents a scenario for the potential delivery of housing and employment land in Colchester and is consistent with the Submission Local Plan.
- 2.4.4. Approximately 22,100 homes are forecast to come forward between 2026 and 2043, with the second phase (2031/32 to 2036/37) set to deliver the greatest proportion of homes (44%). The emerging development trajectory is made up of 233 housing sites comprising 48 new allocations to be included within the Submission Local Plan, 15 existing allocations included within the adopted Local Plan, and 170 existing commitments which already have planning permission. Housing growth will be delivered across different locations within Colchester. A substantial number of homes will be delivered in Marks Tey (2,500), East Colchester (2,250), TCBGC (1,825 units), South Colchester (950), and Langham (860).
- 2.4.5. In terms of employment land, the development trajectory provided by CCC identifies existing employment allocations carried forward from the adopted Local Plan as well new employment sites allocated within the Submission Local Plan. In addition, some committed employment sites which have planning permission and which are safeguarded for employment use within planning policy are identified. All together, 17 employment sites are identified which collectively make up 54.1 ha of development land.

3. Infrastructure assessment: social infrastructure

3.1. Primary education

Baseline

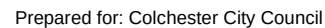
Current provision

- 3.1.1. There are 63 state funded primary schools in Colchester. Data from the January 2026 Schools Census shows that spare capacity in primary schools is reasonably limited: there were 15,986 primary school pupils on roll in Colchester with a capacity of 17,022⁹, equating to a surplus capacity of 1,036 primary school places¹⁰. It is estimated that at 95% capacity, there is a surplus of 185 primary school places¹¹. A map of primary schools in Colchester is shown in Figure 3.1.

⁹ UK Government (2025) School capacity, Academic year 2024/25.

¹⁰ Essex County Council, (2026); Academic Year 2025/2026 Number of Pupils on Roll – from January 2026 School Census.

¹¹ As referenced in the Essex County Council's '10 Year Plan' for school planning, the National Audit Office report 'Capital Funding for New School Places' (2013) refers to minimum 5% surplus that the Department for Education assumes in its planning as necessary to support operational flexibility.



Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.1.2. ECC tested the development scenario provided by CCC, which includes a total of 19,649 qualifying dwellings (a discount was applied to reflect that one bedroom houses are assumed to have a pupil yield of 0). Of the total, 17,902 were counted as houses and 1,474 as flats. Homes that would be completed beyond the Plan period, such as a proportion of the homes that will form the Colchester half of the TCBGC, were excluded from the figures provided. The sites were matched to their 'nearest' schools using ArcGIS. Phasing information was not used, as this test considers the full impact of growth by the end of the Local Plan period (2043).
- 3.1.3. The scenario has been assessed using ECC's standard per dwelling pupil product factors: 0.3 primary school children per qualifying house and 0.15 primary school children per qualifying flat. These factors are based on average demand. Starting with younger cohorts, actual numbers generally peak at higher levels in the period shortly after new homes are first occupied.
- 3.1.4. Analysis is by geographical 'school planning groups' that are agreed with the Department for Education as part of the annual School Capacity Survey (SCAP). Each site in the scenario test has been matched to its closest primary and secondary school. Minor adjustments are made, where appropriate, to aid analysis and reflect geographical constraints. The schools in each planning group are listed in ECC's Ten Year Plan¹².
- 3.1.5. The following measures have been applied to assess the likely surplus / deficit in provision:
- How much space do we have / need based on current numbers on roll plus the new housing but retaining 5%¹³ of the current capacity unfilled?
 - What is the surplus / deficit including all the housing at the highest point of underlying demand shown in the forecasts (no unfilled capacity retained)?
 - How much space is forecast by 2036/37 (the end of ECC's 10 Year forecast period) but retaining 5%¹⁴ of the current capacity unfilled?
- 3.1.6. These measures help identify 'worst case' and provide a robust benchmark against which the soundness of a Local Plan, in school place planning terms, can be assessed. Birth rates have been falling in recent years and, thereby, current Number on Roll (NOR) and peak forecasts may overstate demand if fertility rates do not return to previous levels. It is considered likely that the 'truth' is likely to sit within the range of need indicated by the three measures. Approximate mid-points have been used, adjusted to reflect officer knowledge of local geography and wider education considerations. Flexibility is also retained for the 760 primary school pupils expected from the windfall sites (2,534 qualifying houses).
- 3.1.7. The scenario test indicates that demand would be generated for 5,633 primary school places, which would translate into between 14.4 FE and 18.7 FE surplus demand.

Table 3-1 Primary School Demand Scenario Test Results

Group	Qualifying Units	Pupils from new housing	Pupils from new housing (FE)	Published Admission Number (2026)	January 2026 Reception Number on Roll	2026 No Housing Forecast Peak Reception Size	2036/37 Reception	Surplus Places After Housing		
								Using NOR but keeping 5% of capacity unfilled	Based on Peak Demand (all capacity filled)	2036/37 Demand keeping 5% of capacity unfilled
Colchester Primary A: North (Langham)	1,018	305	1.5	76	70	75	55	-1.4	-1.4	-0.9
Colchester Primary B: Northwest (Tey)	1,863	558	2.7	92	62	73	61	-1.8	-2.0	-1.8
Colchester Primary C: City north (Highwoods)	3,078	853	4.1	585	544	539	513	-3.7	-2.5	-2.6
Colchester Primary D: City east (Greenstead)	3,775	1,095	5.2	210	155	165	160	-3.7	-3.7	-3.9
Colchester Primary E: City southwest (Stanway)	3,018	905	4.3	500	447	440	364	-3.4	-2.3	-0.6
Colchester Primary F: City southeast (Berechurch)	2,253	535	2.5	600	475	513	498	0.6	0.4	-0.1
Colchester Primary G: East (Wivenhoe)	366	105	0.5	90	75	64	54	-0.2	0.4	0.5
Colchester Primary H: Southwest (Messing & Tiptree)	1,126	333	1.6	117	102	130	105	-1.3	-2.0	-1.4
Colchester Primary I: Southeast (Fingringhoe)	265	79	0.4	60	56	75	50	-0.3	-0.9	-0.1
Colchester Primary J: Mersea	353	106	0.5	60	42	44	38	-0.0	0.0	0.1
Windfall	2,534	760	3.6					-3.6	-3.6	-3.6
Grand Total	19,649	5,633	26.8	2,390	2,028	2,118	1,898	-18.7	-17.8	-14.4

¹² ECC (2025) 'Meeting the demand for mainstream school places in Essex'. Available at: <https://www.essex.gov.uk/schools-and-learning/schools/school-organisation-and-place-planning> [Accessed: July 2026].

¹³ Figure recommended by the Audit Commission.

¹⁴ Figure recommended by the Audit Commission.

Source: ECC. Notes: Pupil Numbers on Roll are from the January 2026 School Census. The pupil forecasts were produced in May 2026. These forecasts exclude pupils from new housing so as not to double count. School capacity is based on the Published Admission Numbers for September 2026 i.e. the number of places each school is expected to offer for the 2026/27 academic year in Reception (primary) or Year 7 (secondary). Negative figures in the final three columns suggest a potential deficit in provision.

3.1.8. The considerations and conclusions for each school planning group, regarding demand for primary school places and required provision to 2043, are set out below:

- Colchester Primary A: North (Langham): The majority of growth in this group relates to the 773 qualifying unit proposal at Park Lane in Langham (PP37). There is insufficient space to significantly expand Langham Primary on their current site, and a development of this size is unlikely to make two schools viable. Relocation of the existing school would result in a significant funding gap (borne by the taxpayer), and a dual campus solution would be sub-prime in education and management terms. Pre-application discussions with the promoters have not yet identified an acceptable alternative solution.
- Colchester Primary B: Northwest (Tey): The largest development within the group is 800 qualifying homes 'North of A120'. This level of growth is insufficient to sustain a new primary school in itself but is too great to be accommodated at St Andrew's CE Academy, which has limited expansion potential. It is understood that further growth in this location will be delivered beyond the emerging Local Plan period. Therefore, a school site should be allocated. In the medium term, capacity may have to be found in conjunction with Group E. Safe direct walking and cycling routes need to be established to avoid unsustainable travel patterns and school transport costs.
- Colchester Primary C: City north (Highwoods): The Department for Education plan to fund and add primary school accommodation at the Trinity School. The largest new allocation in this area, at Great Horkesley (PP34), should be within walking distance. Other school expansions may also be needed to make up any shortfall. Although there are drawbacks with each potential option, it should be possible to find solutions to meet demand towards the higher end of the range indicated by the assessment.
- Colchester Primary D: City east (Greenstead): This area includes 1,704 qualifying units within the TCBGC. Although this development should be self-sustaining, places in this Group are likely to be taken up until new schools are delivered. School land should also be allocated at 'North East Colchester (PP9)' (1,818 qualifying units). Most of the existing school sites in this area are not considered suitable for significant expansion. Willow Brook Primary does have sufficient land to expand but would not be the closest school for any of the sites included in this test.
- Colchester Primary E: City southwest (Stanway): The expected level of demand may be met by recommissioning capacity at Fiveways Primary and at Gosbecks Primary plus by establishing a new school on the London Road site (COL/21/2507). However, the 1,363 qualifying unit development South of Mark's Tey Village (PP17) could generate nearly 2 FE of demand and a new school to serve that development may also be needed to meet Group B demand if the minimum viable number for a new school in Mark's Tey, north of the A12 (PP18), cannot be guaranteed by the end of the Plan period.
- Colchester Primary F: City southeast (Berechurch): Some local schools have reduced their admission numbers. If necessary, recommissioning these places should be sufficient to meet demand.
- Colchester Primary G: East (Wivenhoe): In addition to the level of demand indicated above, pressure may fall on the Group's schools prior to new ones opening on the TCBGC. A scheme to expand Millfields Primary has been looked at but the level of demand indicated may not require additional permanent provision.
- Colchester Primary H: Southwest (Messing and Tiptree): Two local schools have been operating with reduced admission numbers and, with suitable works, could take more pupils (2 x 0.5FE). Additional land that would allow Milldene Primary to expand is also included in the Barbrook Lane (COL/18/2104) s106 agreement.

- Colchester Primary I: Southeast (Fingringhoe): Whilst Fingringhoe and Langenhoe are in a position to accommodate more local pupils, there is already a close match between local demand and capacity at St Lawrence in Rowhedge and this may lead to demand having to be managed across the area, with fewer pupils from outside the Group gaining a place at their preferred school.
- Colchester Primary J: Mersea: The number of children living on the island has been falling. Although the current forecasts suggest the number of pupils generated by this development scenario can be accommodated at the Mersea Island Primary, a high degree of flexibility is necessary given the lack of alternative options and any significant windfall development would be extremely problematic¹⁵.

3.1.9. Table 3.2 below shows ECC's recommendations regarding land allocations for education to 2043. There are four sites in Colchester where land has already been allocated for education within the extant Local Plan and s106 agreements (including the TCBGC where land is identified in the adopted Development Plan Document). ECC suggest that under the current scenario being tested for the new Local Plan to 2043, land for at least four additional schools should be allocated. 2.18ha sites are requested for new primary schools as, based on DfE Building Bulletin 103¹⁶; this is ideal for a 2FE primary with commensurate Early Years and Childcare provision (EY&C) but also provides space for the school to temporarily expand by a form of entry during 'bulge' periods.

Table 3-2 Education Land Allocations to 2043

Settlement	Education Land Allocations
Langham	2.22ha site for new primary including EY&C facility
North of A12, Marks Tey*	2.22ha site for new primary including EY&C facility
Chesterwell	Land in extant s106 to extend Trinity School's age range to include primary
TCBGC	Land for new schools (primary and secondary / all-through) as set out in the TCBGC Development Plan Document
Northeast Colchester	2.22ha site for new primary including EY&C facility
London Road, Stanway	Land in extant s106 for new primary and EY&C facility
South of Marks Tey / Copford	2.22ha site for new primary including EY&C facility
Barbrook Lane, Tiptree	Land in the extant s106 for Milldene Primary School

Source: ECC.

*ECC notes that the level of growth in Marks Tey may be insufficient to establish a new primary school within the Plan period. Provision should be planned in conjunction with land south of Marks Tey Village (PP17), which is closer to Copford Primary. The establishment of safe direct walking and cycling routes between the two areas is essential.

- 3.1.10. ECC commented that existing land for education use set out in extant s106 agreements should also be formally allocated for education and childcare use, to ensure the options relied upon in the above comments are retained in the event of any alternative permissions being sought.
- 3.1.11. ECC also commented that for capacity to be considered 'available', safe direct walking and cycling routes must be established to local schools. Particular attention to rural and edge of settlement sites is required, with bespoke policies possibly needed for any off-site works.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.1.12. At the time of writing and without further analysis, the costs of the primary school projects set out above is not yet known. A high level bench-marking approach has therefore been used to estimate costs of primary school provision to 2043.

¹⁵ ECC notes that the 'windfall' allocation of 2,534 qualifying homes in Colchester could be problematic if a high proportion is built in any area and generates a need for a new primary school which is not identified.

¹⁶ Department for Education (2014) Area guidelines for mainstream schools: Building Bulletin 103. Available at: https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/5f23ec238fa8f57acac33720/BB103_Area_Guidelines_for_Mainstream_Schools.pdf [Accessed: July 2026].

- 3.1.13. Based on ECC estimates¹⁷ the cost per pupil for a new primary school is estimated to be £25,089 and £21,014 for an extension to an existing primary school. The average of these two figures (£23,052) has been applied to the primary school pupils associated with the new allocations¹⁸. This gives an indicative cost of £86.0 million.
- 3.1.14. The Basic Need Fund is allocated by the Department for Education (DfE) to ECC to contribute towards school place sufficiency in areas of need where no other funding sources are available. The School Capacity Annual Survey (SCAP) determines the level of 'Basic Need' funding that ECC is allocated. In addition, Free School funding is available from the DfE¹⁹ which goes directly to schools and is independent of ECC.
- 3.1.15. ECC notes that the level of growth at Langham is not supported due to the cost of school transport (primary and secondary). If CCC endorse the Park Lane (PP37) allocation, 2.18ha of land for primary school and Early Years & Childcare use should be included to ensure all options remain open for an innovative solution to be found, which does not impact existing provision or require taxpayer subsidy.

Summary

- 3.1.16. There are 63 state funded primary schools in Colchester.
- 3.1.17. ECC tested the growth scenario implied by the development trajectory and found that demand would be generated for 5,633 primary school places, translating into 14.4 FE to 18.7 FE surplus demand across Colchester's 10 primary planning groups.
- 3.1.18. The overall impact of the development set out in the scenario on mainstream statutory age education can be mitigated through the allocation of the land for school use and planning obligations (set out the ECC Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions).
- 3.1.19. There are four sites in Colchester where land has already been allocated for education within the extant Local Plan and s106 agreements, including land for schools allocated within the TCBGC DPD. In addition, ECC has identified at least four locations where land should be allocated for additional primary schools, and a number of other locations where new or expanded schools will be required.
- 3.1.20. A high level benchmarking exercise indicates that the cost and funding gap associated with pupils arising from the new allocations would be £86.0 million.

3.2. Early years education and childcare

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.2.1. Local authorities must ensure that there is sufficient, affordable and accessible childcare for working parents or parents in education / training. ECC meets this statutory duty by working in partnership with a diverse range of early years providers including day nurseries, pre-schools, childminders and childminder agencies, primary school nurseries, independent nursery schools and maintained nursery schools.
- 3.2.2. The Government's programme of Childcare Reforms has increased eligibility for Funded Early Education Entitlement (FEEE) childcare places to include children from 9 months to statutory school age, and extended the offer to support more working families. Local authorities are required to assess the childcare provision in their area to ensure they can meet the needs of parents.
- 3.2.3. Based on ECC's latest childcare sufficiency assessment (summer 2025, see Table 3-3 below), there are 233 early years and education and childcare (EYEC) providers in

¹⁷ Essex County Council (2026) ECC Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions.

¹⁸ Demand associated with the new allocations only is estimated at 5,633 pupils. Existing allocations and existing commitments have not been included in the cost and net cost estimate because they are subject to extant s106 and Local Plan allocations.

¹⁹ Revenue funding for further education was previously provided by the Education and Skills Funding Agency (ESFA) up until April 2025. As of April 2025, the ESFA has become part of the DfE.

Colchester supplying a maximum of 5,098 places²⁰. The majority of EYEC provision is delivered by the Private, Voluntary, and Independent (PVI) sector in Colchester.

- 3.2.4. Overall, in summer 2025 there were 910 vacant EYEC places across Colchester. However, Tiptree, Shrub End, St Anne's & St John's, Marks Tey & Layer, Rural North, Greenstead, and Highwoods were all running at more than 90% occupancy. Wivenhoe, Stanway, Prettygate, New Town and Christchurch and Mile End are all running at over 80% capacity. This demonstrates a lack of sufficient childcare places to meet either current or predicted demand created by local housing growth. ECC data indicates that the waiting list for Colchester EY providers in summer 2025 was nearly 768, 15% of the total capacity.
- 3.2.5. ECC predicts a drop in the number of under fives in Colchester over the next two years, however numbers are forecast to increase from 2027.

²⁰ Essex County Council (2025) Colchester Childcare Sufficiency Data.

Table 3-3 Provision and capacity of EYEC facilities in Colchester (Summer 2025)

Ward	Number of EYEC facilities							Capacity		
	Nursery	Primary school	Pre-school	Independent school	After-school clubs/ wraparound	Childminder (funded)	Childminder (not funded)	Capacity total	Vacancy total	Vacancy total %
Berechurch	1	1	1	0	0	10	0	192	60	31.3%
Castle	6	2	2	0	0	0	4	444	166	37.4%
Greenstead	2	2	3	0	0	1	1	225	22	9.8%
Highwoods	2	0	3	0	1	4	1	240	9	3.8%
Lexden and Braiswick	4	0	2	1	0	4	2	540	188	34.8%
Marks Tey and Layer	2	0	4	1	3	1	0	389	8	2.1%
Mersea and Pyefleet	2	2	4	0	2	7	1	318	83	26.1%
Mile End	5	0	2	0	1	10	7	536	107	20.0%
New Town and Christ Church	2	1	4	2	2	2	1	287	45	15.7%
Old Heath and the Hythe	2	0	1	0	0	8	0	199	82	41.2%
Prettygate	1	1	4	0	0	8	2	308	48	15.6%
Rural North	1	0	5	1	3	3	3	147	1	0.7%
Shrub End	2	3	0	0	1	21	6	399	23	5.8%
St Anne's and St John's	1	1	4	0	2	3	4	244	10	4.1%
Stanway	1	0	3	0	0	3	4	193	23	11.9%
Tiptree	2	0	2	0	0	5	1	181	5	2.8%
Wivenhoe	2	0	1	0	0	4	1	256	30	11.7%
Total	38	13	45	5	15	94	38	5,098	910	17.9%

Source: Essex County Council, (2026); Colchester Childcare Sufficiency Data.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.2.6. ECC indicates that the standard per dwelling early years pupil product factor is 0.12 per qualifying house and 0.06 per qualifying flat. Based on the qualifying dwellings to be accommodated on the Local Plan allocations, ECC estimate that there will be demand for an additional 1,251 early years places to 2043.
- 3.2.7. ECC's consultation response noted that where new housing developments create additional need for childcare places, new nursery buildings are required to accommodate the delivery of sufficient new places to meet the additional demand. ECC has is curently finalising a design brief for Early Years and Childcare buildings that will create either a 30, 56 or 72 place provision. This brief will be applied depending on need. The Ofsted Regulation Framework governs how space is apportioned to the varying age groups and needs of young children. It also gives guidance on additional facilities required, over and above the classroom or playspace.
- 3.2.8. Where possible, new Early Years provisions will be co-located on school sites although in some instances, standalone provision is preferable. ECC propose that new demand will be met by the creation of four 72 place Early Years facilities co-located on new Primary School sites identified in Table 3.2 above. In addition, there is a requirement for five 56 place, seven 30 place and two 72 place standalone Early Years Facilities on other allocations. S106 financial contributions will also be requested to support the expansion of existing provision in areas of greatest need. This is summarised in Table X below. Land requirements are as follows: 0.11 ha for a 30 places standalone facility; 0.18 hectares for a 56 place nursery, and 0.22 ha for for a 72 place nursery.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.2.9. The ECC Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions²¹ estimates that the cost of a new EYEC facility per place will be £24,416 and £20,450 per place for an extension. The average of these two figures (£22,433) has been applied to the early years pupils associated with the potential emerging allocations²². This gives an indicative cost of £28.8 million.
- 3.2.10. Where needs arise, developers will be required to either provide a building (on larger sites) or financial contributions towards EYEC facilities.
- 3.2.11. EYEC provision in Colchester is primarily led by the Private, Voluntary, and Independent (PVI) sector, and therefore will be delivered through a market-led commissioning approach reflecting population growth and market demand.

Summary

- 3.2.12. ECC meets its statutory duty to provide childcare by working in partnership with a diverse range of early years providers, including day nurseries, pre-schools, childminders and childminder agencies, primary school nurseries, independent nursery schools and maintained nursery schools. The majority of EYEC provision in Colchester is delivered by the Private, Voluntary, and Independent (PVI) sector.
- 3.2.13. Overall, in summer 2025 there were 910 vacant EYEC places across Colchester. However, 7 of the 17 Colchester wards have less than 10% available occupancy. The waiting list for Colchester EY providers in summer 2025 was 15% of the total capacity.
- 3.2.14. There is a predicted drop in the number of under fives in Colchester over the next two years, however numbers are forecast to increase from 2027. The Government's programme of Childcare Reforms has increased eligibility for Funded Early Education Entitlement (FEEE)

²¹ Essex County Council (2025) Essex County Council Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions.

²² Demand associated with the emerging potential allocations only is estimated at 1,302 pupils. Existing allocations and existing commitments have not been included in the cost and funding gap estimate because it is assumed they are subject to extant s106 and Local Plan allocations.

childcare places to include children from 9 months to statutory school age and the offer is extended to support more working families.

- 3.2.15. Using ECC's standard early years pupil product factor, ECC estimate that the Local Plan allocations will create demand for an additional 1,251 early years places to 2043. ECC propose that new demand will be met by the creation of four 72 place Early Years facilities co-located on new Primary School sites identified in Table 3.2 above. In addition, there is a requirement for five 56 place, seven 30 place and two 72 place standalone Early Years facilities on other allocated sites. S106 financial contributions will also be requested to support the expansion of existing provision in areas of greatest need.
- 3.2.16. Using cost benchmarks within the ECC Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions, costs to provide for early years pupils associated with the potential emerging allocations are estimated at £28.8 million.

3.3. Secondary education

Baseline

Current provision

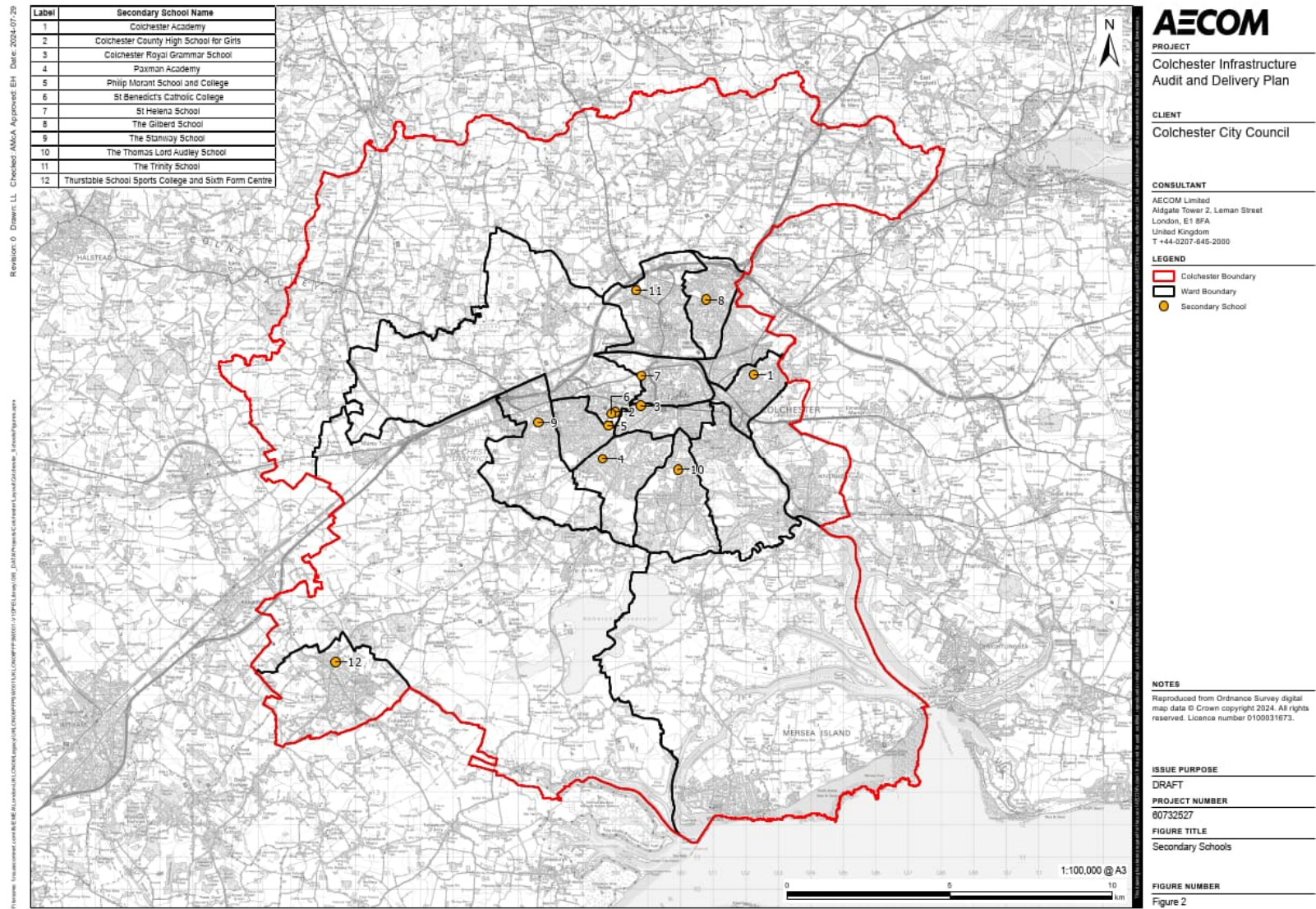
- 3.3.1. There are currently 12 state-funded secondary schools in Colchester. These schools are a mixture of sizes and comprise of 11 academy schools and 1 voluntary aided school. A map of secondary school provision is shown in Figure 3.2.
- 3.3.2. Data from the January 2026 Schools Census²³ shows that there are 13,438 secondary school pupils on roll in Colchester, compared with a capacity of 14,044 secondary school places²⁴, suggesting there is a surplus capacity of 606 secondary school places. It is estimated that at 95% capacity²⁵, there is a deficit of 96 secondary school places.

²³ Essex County Council, 2026; 'Academic Year 2025/2026 Number of Pupils on Roll – from January 2026 School Census.

²⁴ UK Government (2025) School capacity, Academic year 2024/25.

²⁵ As referenced in the Essex County Council's '10 Year Plan' for school planning, the National Audit Office report 'Capital Funding for New School Places' (2013) refers to minimum 5% surplus that the Department for Education assumes in its planning as necessary to support operational flexibility.

Figure 3.2 Secondary schools in Colchester



Infrastructure requirements to 2043

3.3.3. ECC used the same approach as for primary school pupils to estimate demand for secondary school pupils to 2043 (see section 3.1 above). ECC's standard per dwelling pupil product factor is 0.2 secondary school age children per qualifying house and 0.1 secondary school age children per qualifying flat. ECC's two planning areas for CCC are Mid (Colchester) which covers most of the local authority area and South (Thurstable) which covers Thurstable.

Figure 3.3 Secondary School Demand Scenario Test Results

Group	Qualifying Units	Pupils from new housing	Pupils from new housing (FE)	Published Admission Number (2026)	January 2026 Year 7 Number on Roll	2026 No Housing Forecast		Surplus Places After Housing		
						Peak Year 7 Size	2036/37 Year 7	Using NOR but keeping 5% of capacity unfilled	Based on Peak Demand (all capacity filled)	2036/37 Demand keeping 5% capacity unfilled
Colchester Secondary A: Mid (Colchester)	15,973	3,023	20.2	2,318	2,387	2,339	1,744	-26.3	-20.9	-4.9
Colchester Secondary B: South (Thurstable)	1,142	225	1.5	200	168	199	150	-0.8	-1.5	-0.2
Windfall	2,534	507	3.4					-3.4	-3.4	-3.4
Grand Total	19,649	3,755	25.0	2,518	2,555	2,538	1,894	-30.5	-25.7	-8.4

Source: ECC. Notes: Pupil Numbers on Roll are from the January 2026 School Census. The pupil forecasts were produced in May 2026. These forecasts exclude pupils from new housing so as not to double count. School capacity is based on the Published Admission Numbers for September 2026 i.e. the number of places each school is expected to offer for the 2026/27 academic year in Reception (primary) or Year 7 (secondary). Negative figures in the final three columns suggest a potential deficit in provision.

3.3.4. The housing scenario generates around 25.0 FE additional secondary age pupils for whom a Colchester school would be their closest. Based on the approach outlined in section 3.1 above, additional capacity for between 8.4 FE and 30.5 FE and may need to be considered.

3.3.5. The considerations and conclusions for each school planning group, regarding demand for secondary school places and required provision to 2043, are set out below.

- Colchester Secondary Group A: Mid (Colchester): Due to the current low birth rate, the three measures show a significant spread in need for this large group. However, it is likely that most of the 'windfall allowance' will need to be accommodated in this area. Therefore, even towards the lower end of the estimates, it is unlikely that the full need could be met through school expansion projects alone. Approximately 2.3 FE of demand is generated by the 1,704 qualifying units from the TCBGC. A new school, as part of that development, will eventually be built to meet that need. However, without another new school to serve Colchester, demand arising from the new Local Plan may not be fully met. Aside of the TCBGC, the area served by the Stanway School includes the most development in this scenario, but the associated demand would not be sufficient to fund or fill a new school in its own right. Land could be allocated for a new secondary school in this area, but it would be poorly located to serve the majority of other new homes that are included in this scenario. If, as indicated, further development north of the A120 (PP18) is allocated for delivery beyond the Plan period, this could be a good location as travel patterns would improve over time. The next Local Plan would then need to consider appropriate 'replacement' capacity.
- Colchester Secondary Group B: Thurstable School, Tiptree: The Thurstable School have recently closed their sixth form and, with remodelling works, this accommodation could be commissioned to meet 11-16 age range need.

3.3.6. These projects have been included within the Project Schedule.

3.3.7. ECC recommend an allocation of 12.4ha of land for a new secondary school to cater for growth in the Mid (Colchester) planning area. The location would be determined by CCC in consultation with ECC, but should be on a sufficiently large housing allocation to support a new secondary school, or alternatively in a location well connected to serve the majority of smaller allocations. Unsustainable travel patterns should be avoided.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.3.8. At the time of writing and without further analysis, the costs of the secondary school projects set out above is not yet known. A high level bench-marking approach has therefore been used to estimate costs of secondary school provision to 2043.
- 3.3.9. Based on ECC estimates²⁶ the total cost per pupil for a new secondary school is estimated to be £30,394; the cost is £28,902 for an extension to an existing secondary school (based on Q1 2026 prices). The average of these two figures (£29,648) has been applied to the secondary school pupils associated with the new allocations. This gives an indicative cost of £73.8 million²⁷.
- 3.3.10. As outlined above, contributions for school provision are secured through s106 agreements, where development creates additional education requirements. The current trigger for developer contributions towards secondary education is 20 or more dwellings. ECC negotiate and secure necessary provision, capacity, and contributions towards capacity where there is demand as a result of development.
- 3.3.11. Furthermore, the DfE uses the SCAP to determine the level of 'Basic Need' funding that is allocated for secondary school provision in ECC. The Basic Need Fund contributes towards school place sufficiency in areas of need where no other funding sources are available.
- 3.3.12. The majority of secondary schools in Colchester are Academy Trusts or Academy Converters, and therefore receive funding directly from central government. ECC is increasingly acting as a commissioner, establishing requirements for provision, rather than a provider of new schools.

Summary

- 3.3.13. There are 12 state funded secondary schools in Colchester with 13,438 pupils on roll, compared with a capacity of 14,044 secondary school places, suggesting there is a surplus capacity of 606 secondary school places. It is estimated that at 95% capacity, there is a deficit of 96 secondary school places.
- 3.3.14. ECC tested the growth scenario implied by the development trajectory and found that demand would be generated for between 8.4 FE and 30.5 FE.
- 3.3.15. The TCBGC will include its own secondary school provision, in the form of either one or two secondary schools. In addition, ECC suggests that land for secondary school provision should be allocated at an alternative location within the Mid (Colchester) planning area (either on a large housing allocation to support a new secondary school or in a location well connected to serve the majority of smaller allocations). Provision could also be expanded at Thurstable School in Tiptree.
- 3.3.16. A high level benchmarking exercise indicates that the cost of providing for pupils associated with the new allocations would be £73.8 million.
- 3.3.17. The provision of new secondary schools will primarily be delivered through developer contributions. ECC acts as a commissioner, negotiating and securing funds to establish provision. However, during operation it is likely new schools will be academies and therefore not run by ECC.

²⁶ Essex County Council (2024) ECC Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions.

²⁷ Demand associated with the emerging potential allocations only is estimated at 2,170 pupils. Existing allocations and existing commitments have not been included in the cost and net cost estimate because they are subject to extant s106 and Local Plan allocations.

3.4. Further education

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.4.1. There are three sixth forms that comprise part of secondary schools in Colchester; these are shown in Table 3-4. All are academy converter schools and two are selective grammar schools.

Table 3-4 Secondary schools with sixth form facilities

Secondary schools with sixth form facilities	Pupils on roll	Type of school
Colchester County High School for Girls	257	Academy Converter
Colchester Royal Grammar School	381	Academy Converter
Philip Morant School and College	214	Academy Converter

Source: Essex County Council, (2024); Academic Year 2023/24 Secondary NOR – from January 2024 School Census.

- 3.4.2. In addition to the secondary schools listed above, further education is also provided by one college and one sixth form college. Table 3-5 lists the further education facilities available in Colchester.

Table 3-5 Further education colleges in Colchester

Further education college	Type	Full time students
Colchester Institute (three campuses)	College	3,850
The Sixth Form College, Colchester	Sixth Form College General	3,133

- 3.4.3. The Colchester Institute is the largest further education provider in North Essex and offers both further and higher education opportunities in Colchester. The Institute has campuses across Colchester, Braintree, as well as the Harwich Energy Skills Centre in Tendring. Across these campuses, the Institute provides opportunities for students to study T-Levels, apprenticeships, and vocational study programmes in a wide range of subjects. In 2022/23, there were 1,644 apprentices and 3,742 young learners (16 to 18-year olds) enrolled at Colchester Institute²⁸.
- 3.4.4. The Sixth Form College, Colchester offers A-Levels, BTECs, and applied general certificates/extended certificates to students in Essex. A recent Ofsted report from March 2024²⁹ states that there are currently 3,133 students on education programmes, predominantly on A-level courses. It is estimated that half of all students commute to the college from across Essex.
- 3.4.5. The latest data available from ECC³⁰ shows that 2,688 Colchester residents started a further education or higher education course in September 2023³¹. In addition, 80 Colchester residents started an intermediate level apprenticeship, 91 started an advanced level apprenticeship, and 38 started a higher-level apprenticeship.
- 3.4.6. Colchester Institute's recently opened Green Energy Skills Centre provides training in low-carbon and renewable technologies, in response to growing regional demand for green skills. In April 2026, Colchester Institute was selected as a Clean Energy Technical Excellence College (CETEC)³² by Central Government. Aligned to major regional developments including offshore wind, nuclear, solar, domestic renewables and grid

²⁸ Colchester Institute Corporation (2023) Annual Report and Financial Statements.

²⁹ Ofsted, (2024); Inspection of The Sixth Form College Colchester.

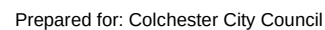
³⁰ Information derived from consultation with the Commissioner for Skills Development at Essex County Council conducted in July 2024.

³¹ Please note data received from ECC combines further education and higher education and data is not separated out by age.

³² Colchester Institute (2026) Clean Energy Technical Excellence College. Available at: <https://www.colchester.ac.uk/2026/04/14/clean-energy-technical-excellence-college/> [Accessed: June 2026].

infrastructure, the CETEC will play a leading role in coordinating high-quality provision, supporting employers, and creating clear pathways into skilled, sustainable employment.

3.4.7. Figure 3.4 shows the distribution of further education facilities in Colchester.



Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.4.8. The wide choice of education routes for 16 to 18-year olds means pupils often travel further afield. Therefore, the requirement for further education facilities in ECC is assessed on a case-by-case basis, and contributions will only be required if a need can be justified.
- 3.4.9. Housing growth in Colchester, and the supporting infrastructure requirements, are driving the demand for construction skills, as well as modern green and digital skills to adapt a changing sector. To support this growth, the Colchester Institute and CCC are progressing the development of a Sustainable Skills Innovation Centre in the TCBGC. The project will move to an Outline Business Case (OBC) in late 2026.
- 3.4.10. The Sustainable Skills Innovation Centre is a proposed two storey c. 900 sqm dedicated training facility to meet the scale and range of demand for skilled construction workers generated by the TCBGC development³³. The centre will offer workshops (i.e. wood occupations, mechanical and electrical technology, flexible construction), an innovation space to utilise the latest construction techniques (i.e. Virtual Reality and Augmented Reality), a PC suite with computer-aided design software to support digital skills, and multiple classrooms, offices, and communal space. By its third year of operation, the centre will be able to support 150 full-time learns and 150 part-time learners.
- 3.4.11. To estimate demand associated with growth to 2043, the approach set out within ECC's Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions has been adopted. Based on 17,902 qualifying houses and 1,747 qualifying flats, and a pupil yield of 0.02 for flats and 0.04 for houses, total demand is estimated to be 751 full time post-16 places will arise from growth in Colchester to 2043.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.4.12. Further education contributions are assessed by ECC on a case-by-case basis. If a demand has been identified, the cost per place for full-time post 16 places is £28,613 for a new facility and £30,394 for an extension³⁴.
- 3.4.13. The average of these two figures (£29,504) has been applied to further education pupils associated with the potential emerging allocations (estimated at 509 pupils). This gives an indicative cost of £15.0 million.
- 3.4.14. Revenue funding for further education is mainly provided by the DfE, to fund institutions that provide study programmes for:
- Students aged 16 to 19;
 - Students up to the age of 25 when they have an EHC Plan;
 - 14- to 16-year-olds who are directly enrolled at further education providers; and
 - Home educated students at compulsory school age at further education providers.

Summary

- 3.4.15. There are three secondary schools with sixth forms in Colchester. Further education is also provided by one college and one sixth form college.
- 3.4.16. Colchester Institute is the largest further education provider in North Essex and offers both further and higher education opportunities. A Sustainable Skills Innovation Centre in the TCBGC is being progressed to expand provision for further education and adult learners.
- 3.4.17. Based on pupils yields within ECC guidance, it is estimated that Colchester's emerging development trajectory would create additional demand for 751 full time further education places to 2043.

³³ Commissioned Strategy Outline Business Case - Essex County Council

³⁴ Essex County Council, (2026); Essex County Council Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions.

- 3.4.18. Using a high level benchmarking approach, it is estimated that the cost of meeting demand associated with the potential emerging allocations would be £15.0 million.
- 3.4.19. As well as funding from central and local government, developer contributions may be required to contribute towards capital projects. As of April 2025, revenue funding for further education is mainly provided by the DfE.

3.5. Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND)

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.5.1. There are 223,487 pupils attending schools in Essex, of which 39,802 have been identified with SEND. In the school year 2024/25, 10,118 students in Essex had an EHC plan (4.5%) and 29,684 students required SEN support (13.3%)³⁵. EHC plans are designed to last until an individual is 25.
- 3.5.2. There are currently four special schools in Colchester as shown in Table 3-6 catering for different types of special need.

Table 3-6 Special schools in Colchester

Name	Age range	Specialism	Type	Students on roll as of Jan 2026
Kingswode Hoe School*	5-16	Other Difficulty/Disability, Autistic Spectrum Disorder, and Moderate Learning Difficulty	Academy special converter	167
Langham Oaks School*	10-16	Boys school – Social, Emotional, and Mental Health	Academy special sponsor led	82
Lexden Springs School	3-19	Autistic Spectrum Disorder, Severe Learning Difficulty and Profound and Multiple Learning Difficulty	Community special school	301
Market Field School and College	4-19	Moderate Learning Disabilities	Academy social converter	519

Source: Essex County Council, (2025); Essex Schools List – Academic Year 2025/26.

*Both schools are a part of the SEAX Trust, which is formed of five academies across Essex, each with their own specialism.

- 3.5.3. Pupil numbers at special schools in Colchester increased by 20% between 2022 and 2026 (from 890 pupils to 1,069 pupils). Schools have found accommodating additional pupils difficult, and the number of children and young people being accommodated within some classrooms is challenging. There is no physical capacity to expand Lexden Springs and Kingswode Hoe on their current site and limited capacity to expand Market Field.
- 3.5.4. Specialist provision that is delivered within mainstream schools is shown in Table 3-7.

Table 3-7 Specialist provision in Colchester

School name	Age range	Enhanced provision type
Cherry Tree Primary School	4 to 11	Speech, language and Communication
Lexden Primary School with Unit for Hearing Impaired Pupils and Nursery	3 to 11	Hearing Impairment
The Philip Morant Hearing Impaired Provision Secondary	11 to 18	Hearing Impairment
Braiswick Primary	4 to 11	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
Monkwick Junior	7 to 11	Social, Emotional and Mental Health

³⁵ Department of Education, (2026); Age and Gender, by type of SEN provision and type of need - 2016 to 2025.

School name	Age range	Enhanced provision type
Stanway School	5-11	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
North East Co-operative Academy	5-16	Social, Emotional and Mental Health
Honywood School	11-16	Autism support centre
King's Ford Academy	7-11	Autism support centre

Source: Essex County Council, (2024); Essex Schools List – Academic Year 2023/24 Issued 19 April 2024; Essex County Council consultation response.

- 3.5.5. Both nationally and within Essex, the number of children and young people with an EHCP is increasing every year. Essex has seen a 32% increase in the number of EHCPs in the last 5 years. Less than 1% of EHC plans were issued within the legal time limit of 20 weeks. The county is experiencing a greater number of parents using the appeal process to seek a place at an Essex special school³⁶. The increased numbers of children and young people with SEND in Essex schools has placed pressure on resources, and has led to continued need for ECC to commission school places from independent special schools. Currently, there are 72 pupils from Colchester travelling an average distance of 18 miles to an independent school. Travelling long distances to school can be very challenging for children and young people and can reduce the effectiveness of placements.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.5.6. ECC has a statutory responsibility to plan for and deliver special education needs and disabilities (SEND) facilities. Special needs may be met in a mainstream school, a specially resourced or enhanced provision within a mainstream school or in a special school depending upon the level of need..
- 3.5.7. ECC tested the development scenario set out within the emerging development trajectory, which assumes 17,902 qualifying houses and 1,747 qualifying flats to 2043 (this excludes one bedroom houses, please see section 3.1 for more detail). ECC found that development to 2043 could result in SEN requirements for 188 pupils requiring an EHCP in mainstream school and a further 116 requiring a special school placement or placement in a mainstream school with a specialist SEN provision. This demand would be significant enough to warrant a combination of expansion of existing specialist provision (most likely through the creation of a satellite special school) and the development of resourced provision in new or existing mainstream primary and secondary schools.
- 3.5.8. Based on BB104 guidance, a 50-place provision would require between 0.98 and 1.36 hectares if formal team games are not included; ECC would seek provision at the upper end of this range to ensure flexibility and future adaptability.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.5.9. The costs of SEN provision to meet demand to 2043 have been estimated at a high level based on cost benchmarks.
- 3.5.10. ECC advise that the cost of SEND provision is £102,697 per place (both primary and secondary), based on a review of projects commissioned by ECC since 2016.
- 3.5.11. This per pupil cost has been applied to the pupils associated with the emerging potential allocations. This gives an indicative cost of £24.3 million³⁷.

³⁶ Essex County Council, (2023); Essex SEND Sufficiency Plan.

³⁷ Demand associated with the emerging potential allocations only is estimated to be 58% of total demand, reflecting the proportion of the homes within the emerging development trajectory which emerging potential allocations. Existing allocations and existing commitments have not been included in the cost and funding gap estimate because they are subject to extant s106 and Local Plan allocations.

Summary

- 3.5.12. Special needs may be met in a mainstream school, a specially resourced or enhanced provision within a mainstream school or in a special school depending upon the level of need.
- 3.5.13. Demand has outstripped the capacity of SEND service provision in Essex and a greater proportion of high needs students are now in mainstream schools.
- 3.5.14. There are currently four special schools in Colchester. Specialist provision is also made at nine mainstream schools.
- 3.5.15. Pupil numbers at special schools in Colchester increased by 20% between 2022 and 2026 (from 890 pupils to 1,069 pupils). Schools have found accommodating additional pupils difficult, and physical capacity for further expansion is extremely limited.
- 3.5.16. ECC tested the development scenario set out within the emerging development trajectory, and found that development to 2043 could result in SEN requirements for 188 pupils requiring an EHCP in mainstream schools and a further 116 requiring a special school placement. This demand would be significant enough to warrant new provision within a mainstream school and the expansion of a SEN school within the district via a satellite provision.
- 3.5.17. A high level cost estimate based on cost benchmarks indicates that special needs provision to meet demand associated with the emerging potential allocations would cost £24.3 million.

3.6. Higher education

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.6.1. There is one university in Colchester, the University of Essex. The University of Essex has a total student population of approximately 15,500 across its three campuses in Essex, however there is no precise breakdown of student numbers between the campuses³⁸. The profile of the student population is 5% postgraduate research, 30% postgraduate taught, and 65% undergraduate.
- 3.6.2. Given the large catchment areas associated with universities and their specialisation into particular fields of study, it is likely that a large proportion of the university's student base will come from outside the local authority area. Figures from the 2021 student register³⁹ show that 12.9% of students are from the European Union, and 21.5% are from overseas. It is also likely that many residents of Colchester will choose to attend universities outside of the local authority area.
- 3.6.3. 2,688 Colchester residents started a further education or higher education course and 38 started a higher-level apprenticeship in September 2023⁴⁰.
- 3.6.4. In terms of domestic students, the number of 18-year-olds who choose to attend university has decreased nationally in recent years⁴¹. Furthermore, in 2023 the University of Essex reported that their intake of home undergraduate students fell for the third year in a row⁴². Despite this the University is still confident that they will reach their target to grow the University to 1,000 researchers and 20,000 students by 2028. Partnerships have been created with regional international offices and the school network to encourage students to attend.

³⁸ University of Essex, (2025) Financial Statements 2024-5.

³⁹ University of Essex, (2021); Total number of students registered on Essex courses in 2021.

⁴⁰ Please note data received from ECC combines further education and higher education and data is not separated out by age.

⁴¹ House of Commons Library, (2026); Higher education student numbers.

⁴² University of Essex, (2023); Economic Impact Report 2022-23.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.6.5. Major infrastructure projects completed in 2023-24 included⁴³ Smart Working at Essex (SWAE) Phase 1 – this £7.9 million project will improve digital infrastructure across the University.
- 3.6.6. The University of Essex will be opening a new Centre for Coastal Communities as part of the Clacton Civic Quarter redevelopment. A £20 million Levelling Up Fund grant has been awarded to ECC and Tendring District Council to transform the existing Clacton Library site to deliver a building that will host a brand-new library, Adult Community Learning centre, local registration services, and the new Centre for Coastal Communities. The Centre will form part of the Institute of Public Health and Wellbeing which was established by the University in 2022.
- 3.6.7. The TCBGC DPD⁴⁴ sets out details of higher education facilities which are anticipated to be required as part of the garden community proposals:
- A Sports and Leisure Park is proposed that will deliver a sports hub for the local community, as well as expand sports facilities for the University of Essex.
 - Employment land is allocated for the expansion of the University of Essex Knowledge Gateway⁴⁵ to the north of the A133.
 - Student accommodation will be encouraged in accessible locations with the South of the TCBGC development, along with good sustainable travel links to the University of Essex.
 - The expansion of the Rapid Transit System will connect the University of Essex to the TCBGC, City of Colchester, Colchester General Hospital, Colchester railway stations, and Colchester Sports Park.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.6.8. Three higher education projects are listed in the Project Schedule; costs for only one of these projects is known (Smart Working at Essex Phase 2, which is assumed to be funded).
- 3.6.9. The University of Essex is in a strong financial position to invest in future land and buildings, as well as high quality equipment to meet future requirements. The University will be the lead funder of any expansion of facilities to accommodate greater demand.
- 3.6.10. In 2024/25, the primary source of income for the University of Essex was tuition fees which totalled £154.3 million, with £80.7 million raised from international fees⁴⁶. The second highest source of income was classified under 'other income' which include approximately £67.5 million from commercial services income.

Summary

- 3.6.11. There is one university in Colchester, the University of Essex. On account of the large catchment areas associated with universities, and the high international student population at the University of Essex, it can be assumed that a large number of students come from outside of Colchester.
- 3.6.12. The University of Essex plans to increase its intake of students to approximately 20,000 students and 1,000 researchers, as well as establish two new departments or disciplines to meet the University's needs. Despite numbers of domestic and EU undergraduates declining, the University is confident it can expand its operation through partnering with international organisations and promoting postgraduate courses.

⁴³ University of Essex, (2023); Financial Statement 2023-24.

⁴⁴ Colchester City Council, Essex County Council, Tendring District Council, (2023); Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community: Development Plan Document.

⁴⁵ The Knowledge Gateway Innovation Centre at the University of Essex is a dynamic hub designed to support innovators, entrepreneurs, and businesses. University of Essex (n.d.) Knowledge Gateway. Available at: [Knowledge Gateway | University of Essex](#) [Accessed: July 2026].

⁴⁶ University of Essex, (2025); Financial Statement 2024-25.

- 3.6.13. Three infrastructure projects for the University have been identified. The largest projects identified include the opening of a new Centre for Coastal Communities as part of the Clacton Civic Quarter Development and the land allocation in the TCBGC DPD for the potential expansion of the Knowledge Gateway, sport facilities, and student accommodation.
- 3.6.14. The University will be the lead funder of any expansion of facilities to accommodate greater demand.

3.7. Adult education

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.7.1. As set out in Section 3.4, 2,688 Colchester residents started a further education or higher education course and 209 started an apprenticeship in September 2023⁴⁷. Common courses represented in these figures include functional skills qualifications. A proportion of further education/higher education/apprenticeship starts will be adult learners; however, a breakdown of adult learners relative to younger learners in Colchester is not currently available.
- 3.7.2. There are two adult education colleges in Colchester: Adult Community Learning (ACL) Essex and Colchester Institute. The location of these facilities within Colchester city centre is shown in Figure 3.4.
- 3.7.3. ACL Essex is linked to ECC and provides apprenticeship programmes that meet the needs of local employers, vocational courses, and professional qualifications. Currently, it has eight adult community learning centres across Essex. The latest Ofsted report from December 2023 states that 2,159 adult learners were studying accredited courses, 1,030 adult learners were studying community learning courses, and 168 adult learners were enrolled in apprentices⁴⁸.
- 3.7.4. Colchester Institute is formed of three campuses: two large sites in Colchester and Braintree, as well as a smaller engineering training facility in Harwich. It also has four 'Adult Skills Centres' for unemployed adults located in Colchester (located at Colchester Institute Campus), Braintree, Clacton-on-Sea, and Dovercourt. The 2022/23 cohort was formed of 33% adult learners. This includes 1,896 learners on adult learning programmes and 438 learners on higher education courses. A breakdown of adult learners on apprenticeships was not available⁴⁹.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.7.5. The ACL Essex Strategic Plan⁵⁰ outlines a commitment to providing well equipped learning spaces. Planning permission has been granted for the Clacton Civic Quarter redevelopment led by ECC and Tendring District Council, where ACL Essex will have a co-located centre alongside other community and educational facilities.
- 3.7.6. The Colchester Institute's plans for a Sustainable Skills Innovation Centre in the TCBGC are described fully in the Further Education chapter as it is assumed that both younger learners (aged 16-18) and adult learners will benefit from these new facilities.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.7.7. The Strategic Outline Business Case (SOBC) for the Colchester Institute's Sustainable Skills Innovation Centre at TCBGC costed the facility at £5 million. This cost is now some years out of date; it is likely that the Outline Business Case (targeted for late 2026) will indicate a higher cost.

⁴⁷ Please note data received from ECC combines further education and higher education and data is not separated out by age.

⁴⁸ Ofsted, (2023); Inspection of Essex County Council.

⁴⁹ Colchester Institute, (2023); Annual Report and Financial Statement.

⁵⁰ Adult Community Learning (ACL) Essex, (2022); Strategic Plan 2022-2025.

- 3.7.8. The Clacton Civic Quarter Redevelopment (which will include an Adult Learning Centre) has received funding from the Levelling Up Fund and so it is assumed that this project is funded.
- 3.7.9. ACL Essex receives the majority of its funding from the DfE to deliver courses to Essex residents. The DfE has a defined Adult Education Budget which is used to fund programmes that engage adults and provide the skills and learning they need to progress into work or equip themselves with an apprenticeship or other training. Furthermore, some learners pay fees towards the costs of their courses. The latest ACL Strategy states that the commercial goals of the college are to make best use of funding, increase fee income, and generate alternative sources of funding⁵¹.
- 3.7.10. Colchester Institute receives the majority of its funding in Government recurrent and specific grants (85% of total income).

Summary

- 3.7.11. There are two adult education colleges in Colchester: ACL Essex and Colchester Institute.
- 3.7.12. Adult education colleges have a key focus on basic skills such as Basic English, Maths and ESOL to enable individuals to upskill or enter the workplace. However, adult education provision and the types of courses made available are also shaped by the demand arising from the local economy and community. The TCBGC, Freeports East, and a variety of renewable energy projects in Essex are increasing demand for construction, green, and digital skills.
- 3.7.13. Population and housing growth is driving the demand for construction skills, as well as modern green and digital skills to adapt a changing sector. To support this growth, a Sustainable Skills Innovation Centre is planned within the TCBGC, with a cost of at least £5 million.
- 3.7.14. The Clacton Civic Quarter Redevelopment will include an Adult Learning Centre and this is recorded as a second adult learning project within the Project Schedule. This project will be funded by the Levelling Up Fund.

3.8. Indoor and outdoor sports and leisure facilities

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.8.1. The Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy (PPOSS) Update 2026 report identified the following outdoor sports and leisure provision in Colchester: one athletics track with numerous running clubs, four golf facilities, one dedicated cycling track in addition to numerous trails and routes, and four MUGAs. These facilities are shown in Table 3-8. These facilities are primarily located in the Colchester urban area and its immediate surroundings.

Table 3-8 Outdoor sports and leisure facilities in Colchester

Outdoor facility type	Asset
Athletics	Colchester Garrison Athletics Stadium
Golf	Birch Grove Golf Club
	Colchester Golf Club
	Lexden Wood Golf Club
	Tiptree Golf Driving Range
Cycling	Colchester Northern Gateway Sports Park
Multi-Use Games Areas (MUGAs)	Old Heath Recreation Ground
	Pondfield Open Space

⁵¹ Adult Community Learning, (2022); Strategic Plan 2022-2025.

Outdoor facility type

Asset

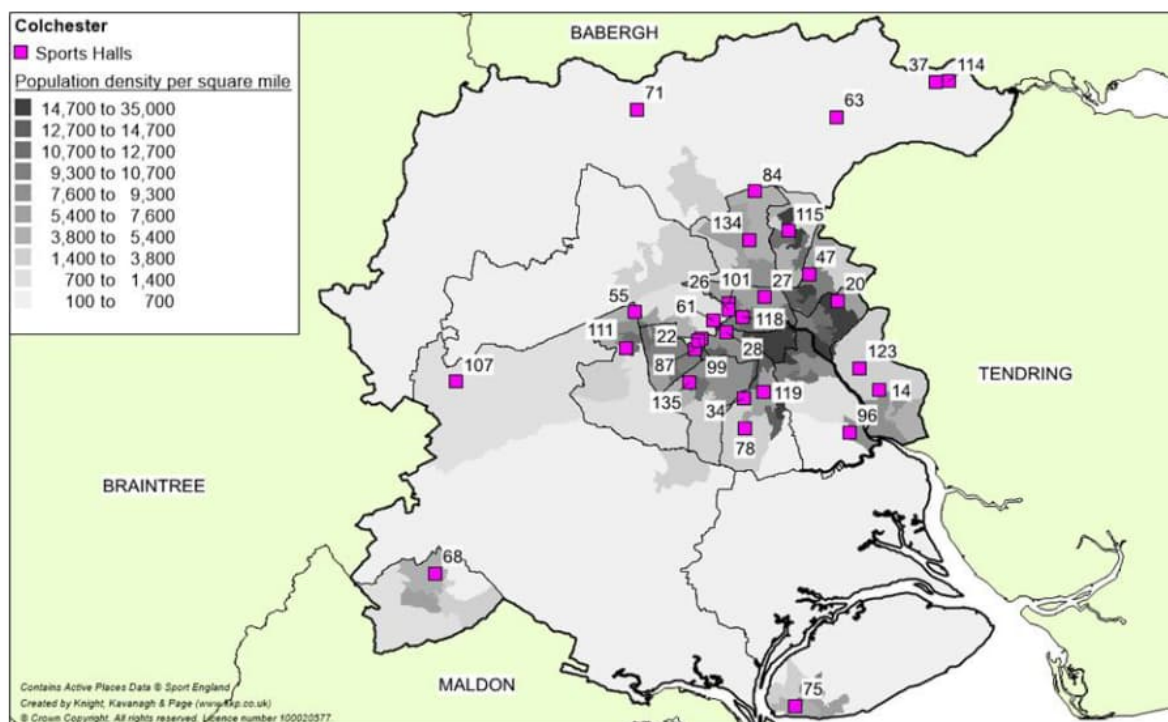
Magnolia Fields

ADI Zone / Monkwick Open Space

Source: Colchester City Council, (2026); Playing Pitch & Outdoor Sport Strategy Update 2026.

- 3.8.2. Additionally, CCC commissioned an Indoor and Built Sports Facilities Needs Assessment (IBSFNA)⁵². This identified 46 sports halls comprising a total of 106 badminton courts in Colchester, of which 35 are available for community use. The locations of all sports hall sites are shown in Figure 3.5. These are primarily located in the urban area of Colchester where the IBSFNA finds there to be a degree of unmet demand.

Figure 3.5 Sports Halls in Colchester

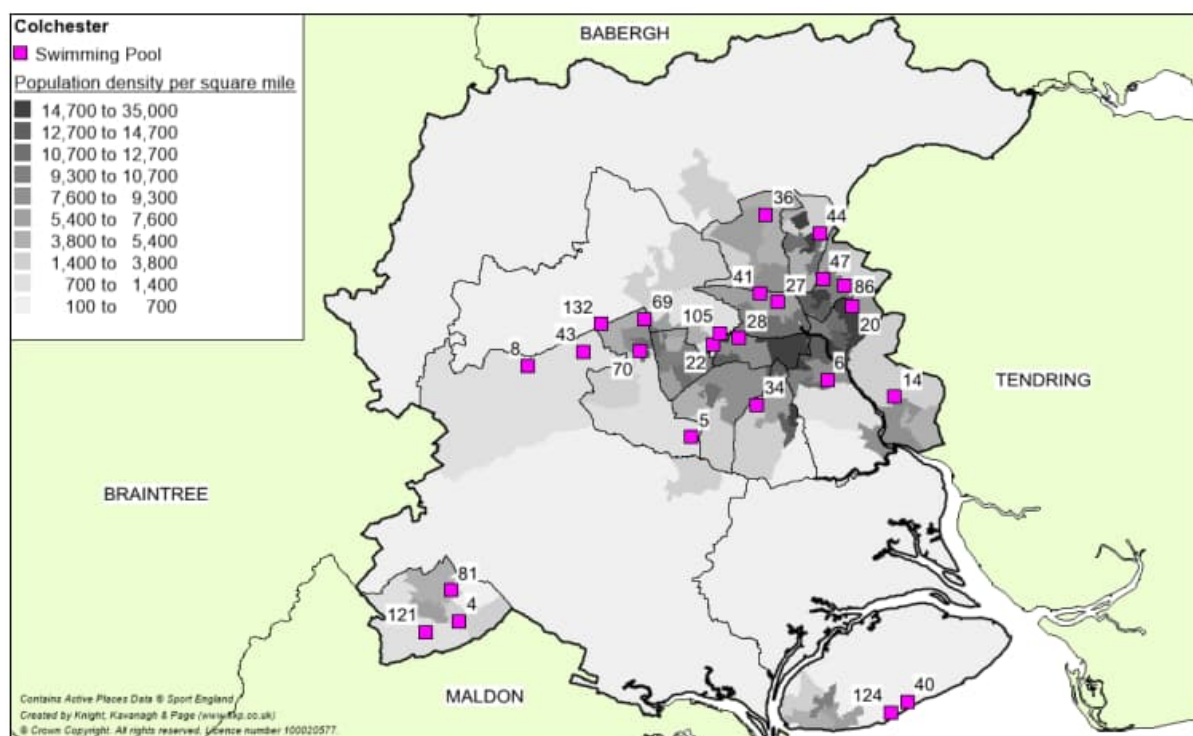


Source: Knight, Kavanagh and Page/Colchester City Council, (2023); Indoor and Built Sports Facilities Needs Assessment.

- 3.8.3. There are 28 swimming pools at 24 sites across Colchester identified by the IBSFNA, as shown in Figure 3.6. These swimming pools have varying accessibility. Colchester Leisure World is the only community pay and play swimming pool with access for all Colchester residents. Some other facilities offer some form of availability for community use, as follows: Colchester Leisure World (pay and play), Bannatyne Health Club Kingsford Park (registered membership), Bannatyne Heath Club Colchester (registered membership), Corporal Budd VC Gymnasium (sports club and community association use which can be withdrawn at short notice), David Lloyd Colchester (registered membership) and Waldegrave Holiday Park (unsecured pay and play). The IBSFNA states that there are potential aspirations to review the role and condition of Colchester Leisure World and whether it will continue to meet community needs into the future. The IBSFNA recommends that provision of new facilities in the east of Colchester would most effectively meet the most unmet demand, and suggests that the TCBGC will need to provide a swimming pool facility.

⁵² Knight, Kavanagh and Page/Colchester City Council, (2023); Indoor and Built Sports Facilities Needs Assessment.

Figure 3.6 Swimming pools in Colchester



Source: Knight, Kavanagh and Page/Colchester City Council, (2023); Indoor and Built Sports Facilities Needs Assessment.

3.8.4. A summary of identified current and future needs with respect to indoor and outdoor sports facilities is shown below. It can be seen that a key focus for additional new provision will be swimming pool facilities.

Table 3-9 Current and future picture for indoor and outdoor facilities

Facility type	Current picture	Future picture
Athletics	No need for additional provision.	Track resurfacing required in the near future. Considerations should be made for the installation of mini, compact, or active tracks to increase supply.
Cycling	Strong demand for organised cycling facilities, particularly for safe, off-road environments.	Explore opportunities to expand access at Northern Gateway Sports Park. Assess feasibility of additional cycling disciplines on underutilised open spaces and parks.
Golf	Reasonable supply.	Maintain good quality provision. Diversify golf experiences.
MUGAs	Widely used by informal and recreational users. All MUGAs located to the central / east area of the city.	Maintain good quality provision. Explore introducing smart lighting to extend usable hours. Promote structured and inclusive programming to maximise use.
Swimming pools	Lack of spare capacity for water space, requirement for additional provision and refurbishment of existing facilities	Additional provision required
Sports halls	Good supply with spare capacity in some locations, some unmet demand particularly to east of Colchester urban area	Plan for future provision jointly with neighbours for TCBGC

Source: Colchester City Council, (2026); Playing Pitch & Outdoor Sport Strategy Update 2026. Knight, Kavanagh and Page/Colchester City Council, (2023); Indoor and Built Sports Facilities Needs Assessment.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.8.5. As outlined in the TCBGC Sports Strategy⁵³, the hybrid planning application submitted in March 2026⁵⁴ proposed 12.6 ha of land for sports provision, comprising up to 10.1 ha for the Southern Fields Masterplan Area and approximately 2.5 ha within or adjacent to schools and public open space. The overall requirement for indoor sports facilities (by 2058 when the scheme is fully built out) is identified as four lanes of swimming, four badminton courts and 0.45 of an indoor bowl court. As the planning application has yet to be determined, details of the facilities to be delivered remain to be confirmed, and financial contributions may be made as part of the delivery strategy. The overall requirement for outdoor sports is estimated to be around 5.43 ha, with provision suggested across a number of hubs, including as part of the Southern Fields development and a co-located secondary school site.
- 3.8.6. The Sport England Active Places Power Sport Facility Calculator⁵⁵ is a tool that can be used to help estimate the additional demand for key community sports facilities created by new development. It indicates that a population increase of 32,363 persons in Colchester by 2043⁵⁶ would generate a demand for an additional 2,144 visits per week in the peak period (VPWPP) to swimming pools with an additional 2,441 VPWPP to sports halls. Table 3-10 outlines the estimated facilities requirements and costs.

Table 3-10 Indoor sports facility requirements and costs

Swimming Pools		Sports Halls	
Lanes	6.64	Courts	8.29
Pools	1.66	Halls	2.07
Visits per week in peak period	2,144	Visits per week in peak period	2,441
Cost	£8,071,261	Cost	£6,601,907

Source: Sport England (2026). Active Places Power Sports Facilities Calculator. Contains Data © Sport England

- 3.8.7. The Sport Facility Calculator also indicates that a population increase of 32,363 by 2043 would generate a demand for an additional 797 VPWPP to artificial grass pitches with an additional 671 VPWPP to outdoor tennis courts. The estimated facilities requirements and costs are set out below.

Table 3-11 Outdoor sports facility requirements and costs

Artificial Grass Pitches		Outdoor Tennis Courts	
Pitches	1.08	Courts	4.3
VPWPP	797	VPWPP	671
Cost if 3G	£1,238,612	Cost	£524,522

Source: Sports England, Sport England Active Places Power Sport Facility Calculator. Contains Data © Sport England.

- 3.8.8. Demand and costs for MUGAs are covered in the analysis of playspace requirements within Chapter 3.12.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.8.9. As set out above, the Sport England Sport Facilities Calculator indicates that meeting the requirements of the additional population to 2043 would generate a total cost of £16,436,302

⁵³ Strategic Leisure Limited (SLL) (2025) Tendring/Colchester Border Gardens Community Sports Strategy. Available at: <https://idox.tendringdc.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=TBQUFDQB0EL00> [Accessed: June 2026].

⁵⁴ Colchester City Council (2026) Planning Applications. Available at <https://www.colchester.gov.uk/planning-search-results/> application reference number 260386 and at Tendring District Council (2026) Planning Applications. Available at: <https://idox.tendringdc.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=simple&searchType=Application> application reference 26/00424/TCBGC. [Accessed: June 2026].

⁵⁵ Sport England (2026). Active Places Power Sports Facilities Calculator. Contains Data © Sport England.

⁵⁶ This additional population is estimated by multiplying the number of homes associated with new allocations and windfall dwellings (13,755) by the average household size in Colchester as per the Census 2021 (2.35 people per household).

for indoor and outdoor sports and leisure facilities. These costs are shown in the Project Schedule.

- 3.8.10. The 12.6 ha of land proposed for sports provision as part of TCBGC, including the Southern Fields Masterplan Area and land within or adjacent to schools and public open space, is identified in the Project Schedule. The costs associated with this provision is unknown.
- 3.8.11. Within the Project Schedule it is currently assumed that the sports facilities required to 2043 are not funded. Delivery is likely to be by developers, the local authority, and the private sector. Sport England recommends that developer contributions should be sought in order to supplement investment from the local authority in indoor and outdoor sports facility provision⁵⁷.
- 3.8.12. Proposals for new facilities should be cognisant of the existing areas of surplus and deficit identified by the PPOSS or IBSFNA so that either pooled funds or on-site provision are pursued to effectively address need in appropriately accessible locations.

Summary

- 3.8.13. There is a good supply of indoor and outdoor sports and leisure facilities to meet existing demand and likely new demand as the population of Colchester grows. There is, however, unmet demand for swimming pool facilities, and a degree of unmet demand for sports halls in the urban area as well as a need for additional MUGAs to meet informal demand in some locations. More rural, peripheral parts of the local authority area are less well-served and experience gaps in provision.
- 3.8.14. As outlined in the TCBGC Sports Strategy⁵⁸, up to 12.6 ha of land is proposed for sports provision, comprising up to 10.1 ha for the Southern Fields Masterplan Area and approximately 2.5 ha within or adjacent to schools and public open space. The TCBGC proposals include the provision of both indoor and outdoor sports and leisure facilities, which are assumed to meet the additional demand arising from the development.
- 3.8.15. The Sports England Active Places Calculator indicates that the new population arising from the new allocations to 2043 would require 6.64 swimming pool lanes and 8.29 sports courts at a cost of £14.67 million. It would also generate demand for 1.08 artificial grass pitches and 4.2 tennis courts at a cost of £1.76 million.
- 3.8.16. Future facilities are currently assumed to be unfunded. Where significant development is planned, it is expected that developer contributions will be sought to supplement investment from the local authority in indoor and outdoor sports facility provision⁵⁹.

3.9. Playing pitches

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.9.1. The Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy Assessment Report⁶⁰ (PPOSS) and PPOSS Update 2026 report⁶¹ identified the following playing pitch provision in Colchester: 196 football pitches, 20 3G pitches, 43 rugby union pitches, three hockey pitches, 30 grass wicket cricket facilities and five non-turf pitches (NTPs), 34 tennis courts⁶², 63 netball courts, and 10 bowling greens.

⁵⁷ Sport England, (2018); CIL and Planning Obligations Advice Note: Meeting the need for sporting provision that may be generated from new development.

⁵⁸ Strategic Leisure Limited (SLL) (2025) Tendring/Colchester Border Gardens Community Sports Strategy. Available at: https://idox.tendringdc.gov.uk/online-applications/files/9A11317D23F20594B983DE205BCFB3B9/pdf/26_00424_TCBGC-SPORTS_STRATEGY_-_REC_D_11.03.26-2266935.pdf [Accessed: June 2026].

⁵⁹ Sport England, (2018); CIL and Planning Obligations Advice Note: Meeting the need for sporting provision that may be generated from new development.

⁶⁰ Knight, Kavanagh and Page/Colchester City Council, (2023); Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy: Assessment Report.

⁶¹ Knight, Kavanagh and Page/Colchester City Council, (2026); Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy: Update 2026 Report.

⁶² Note: The PPOSS Update 2026 Report outlines that the exact number of courts for both tennis and padel are unclear.

- 3.9.2. The PPOSS Action Plan and PPOSS Update 2026 report summarise the current and future supply/demand balance for playing pitches in terms of match equivalent sessions. The current and future supply/demand balance varies across types of facility and by geography; however it can be seen that:
- There is a current and future shortfall of adult football grass pitches in all analysis areas (Central/East, North, South and West);
 - There is a current and future shortfall of football 3G pitches in three out of four analysis areas;
 - There is a current and future adequate supply of cricket facilities in the Central/East analysis area, but provision in the remaining three analysis areas is at capacity or there is a shortfall;
 - There is an estimated demand for 14 padel courts, however, exact court data is required to understand the scale of deficiency; and
 - There are likely to be some future potential shortfalls in supply and over use of facilities with regard to tennis and bowls respectively.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.9.3. The PPOSS describes range of stated ambitions and proposals for expansion or refurbishment of existing facilities, as well as installation of new playing pitches, at the following locations:
- Poors Land: planned conversion of mini 7v7 football pitch to youth 9v9 football pitch;
 - Northern Gateway Sports Park: drainage solutions to deal with poor ground conditions; three football pitches to be installed;
 - Mile End Sports Ground: additional two adult football pitches to be installed;
 - Trinity Secondary School: installation of grass football pitches;
 - Broad Lane Sports Ground: potential site for installation of new 3G pitch;
 - Shrub End Sports Ground: potential site for installation of new 3G pitch;
 - The Glebe (West Mersea): potential site for installation of new 3G pitch;
 - Langham Recreation Ground: cricket square being re-installed;
 - Mile End Recreation Ground: third square to be signed off by CCC, potential capacity for fourth square;
 - Langham Tennis Club: ambitions to add a third court;
 - Lexden Hill Lawn Tennis Club: ambition to install a padel tennis court;
 - Trinity Secondary School: netball courts to be installed;
 - Tiptree Heath FC: new changing room provision; and
 - West Bergholt FC/Bergholt Heath: upgrades to toilet facilities at Poors Land, West Bergholt.
- 3.9.4. As outlined in Playing Pitch and Outdoor Sport Strategy Update 2026 report, Colchester City Council has secured £35,700 from the Football Foundation and S106 funding to install 13 new sets of mobile football goals to reduce pitch wear and cancellations. In addition, new mobile goals have arrived at Mile End, Shrub End, and Lexden King George Playing Fields, funded by the Football Foundation (£14,700) and S106 agreements (£21,000) to benefit local teams.
- 3.9.5. In terms of cricket, facility and club developments have occurred in Abberton, West Bergholt, Wivenhoe Town, and Chappel & Wakes Colne, including updates to ground condition, facilities, club house, new training equipment, upgraded changing room provision, and

improved accessibility provisions. Further improvements are required at Colchester Cavaliers and Colchester & East Essex.

- 3.9.6. Park Tennis Courts at Colchester Tennis Centre (Leisure World) and four outdoor tennis courts have been converted to three Padel courts. New tennis courts have been provided at Colchester Trinity Secondary School, and two at Delta Marriott Hotel.
- 3.9.7. As outlined in the TCBGC Sports Strategy⁶³, the overall requirement for pitches to 2058 is estimated to be around 5.43 hectares, with provision suggested across a number of hubs, including as part of the Southern Fields development and a co-located secondary school site. A need has been identified for 6 adult grass football pitches, seven youth football pitches, three mini football pitches, one senior rugby union pitch, one cricket square, 0.11 hockey pitches, one full size 3G pitch, 7 MUGAs, and two tennis/netball courts.
- 3.9.8. Fields in Trust guidance⁶⁴ indicates a requirement of 1.2ha grass pitch provision per 1,000 population. Accordingly, a population increase of 32,363 persons in Colchester by 2043 would generate a demand for an additional 38.8 ha of grass pitches, with associated costs of £6.9 million⁶⁵. Table 3-12 outlines the estimated facilities requirements and costs. Requirements for artificial pitches are covered in under the heading of outdoor sports within the previous chapter of this report.

Table 3-12 Grass pitch and cricket square requirements and costs

Grass pitch provision

Recommended ha per 1,000	1.2 ha
Demand (ha) to 2043	38.8 ha
£ per ha grass pitch (average)	£175,549
Cost	£6,835,162

Note sums may not add due to rounding.

Source: Fields in Trust, (2024) Fields in Trust Standards.; Sport England, (2026); 4th quarter 2025 facility cost updates.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.9.9. As noted above, the PPOSS Assessment Report and PPOSS 2026 Update Report identify a number of proposed playing pitch projects to meet future demand but there is at present no evidence that these projects are committed or funded. These proposals have been recorded within the Project Schedule as a single entry with unknown costs and funding status.
- 3.9.10. As set out above, it is estimated meeting the requirements of the additional population to 2043 would generate a cost of £6.8 million for grass playing pitches. This high level, Colchester-wide estimate is recorded within the Project Schedule. The PPOSS identifies existing areas of surplus and deficit and will thus help ensure that where new provision is proposed, duplication of facilities is avoided, and overuse is not exacerbated.
- 3.9.11. Pitches within the TCBGC are also included within the Project Schedule; however, currently costs are unknown and it assumed the facilities are unfunded.
- 3.9.12. Sport England recommends that developer contributions should be sought in order to supplement investment from the local authority in playing pitch provision⁶⁶. Where significant developments are planned, developers would be expected to provide or contribute towards the installation of new playing pitch facilities to meet arising demand. For the purposes of the Project Schedule, the assumption is that required playing pitch projects are currently unfunded.

⁶³ Strategic Leisure Limited (SLL) (2025) Tendring/Colchester Border Gardens Community Sports Strategy. Available at: https://idox.tendringdc.gov.uk/online-applications/files/9A11317D23F20594B983DE205BCFB3B9/pdf/26_00424_TCBGC-SPORTS_STRATEGY_-_REC_D_11.03.26-2266935.pdf [Accessed: June 2026].

⁶⁴ Fields in Trust, (2023); Fields in Trust Standards: Creating great spaces for all.

⁶⁵ Cost per square metre of grass pitch is taken as £17.70; this is an average based on Sport England, (2026); 4th quarter 2025 facility cost updates.

⁶⁶ Sport England, (2018); CIL and Planning Obligations Advice Note: Meeting the need for sporting provision that may be generated from new development.

Summary

- 3.9.13. The following playing pitch provision in Colchester has been identified: 196 football pitches, 20 3G pitches, 43 rugby union pitches, three hockey pitches, 30 grass wicket cricket facilities and five NTPs, 34 tennis courts, 63 netball courts, and 10 bowling greens.
- 3.9.14. The majority of these facilities are spatially concentrated in and around the urban area of Colchester in areas of higher population density. There is additional provision which is not available for community use in private and educational settings.
- 3.9.15. The PPOSS Action Plan assesses current and future deficits and surplus provision of playing pitches. It finds that the current and future supply/demand balance varies across types of facility and by geography; however it can be seen that there is a current and future shortfall of adult football grass pitches in all analysis areas; there is a current and future shortfall of football 3G pitches in three out of four analysis areas; and there are some future potential shortfalls in supply and over use of facilities with regard to tennis and bowls respectively.
- 3.9.16. The TCBGC Sports Strategy⁶⁷ has calculated the overall requirement for pitches to be around 5.43 ha, with provision suggested across a number of hubs, including Southern Fields and co-located on or adjacent to a secondary school.
- 3.9.17. The PPOSS describes range of stated ambitions and proposals for expansion or refurbishment of existing facilities, as well as installation of new playing pitches. However there is at present no evidence that these projects are committed or funded. These proposals have been recorded within the Project Schedule as a single entry.
- 3.9.18. Based on Fields in Trust Guidance, the population associated with the new allocations in Colchester could generate demand for 38.8ha grass pitches. Drawing on Sports England benchmarks, the costs of provision are estimated at £6.8 million (also assumed to be unfunded at this stage).
- 3.9.19. Sport England recommends that developer contributions should be sought in order to supplement investment from the local authority in playing pitch provision. The future delivery of new facilities or upgraded or expanded existing facilities should be cognisant of the assessments and recommendations set out in the PPOSS.

3.10. Open spaces

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.10.1. There are 440 open spaces⁶⁸ in Colchester comprising 954 ha of land use coverage^{69,70}. A breakdown of the number of sites and total land area by open space typology is shown in Table 3-13. Natural and semi-natural greenspace contribute the highest number of sites, while amenity greenspace contributes the largest land area.

Table 3-13 Open spaces in Colchester

Typology	Primary purpose	Number of sites	Total amount (hectares)
Parks and gardens	Parks and formal gardens, open to the public. Accessible, high-quality opportunities for informal recreation and community events.	3	49

⁶⁷ Strategic Leisure Limited (SLL) (2025) Tendring/Colchester Border Gardens Community Sports Strategy. Available at: https://idox.tendringdc.gov.uk/online-applications/files/9A11317D23F20594B983DE205BCFB3B9/pdf/26_00424_TCBGC-SPORTS_STRATEGY_-_REC_D_11.03.26-2266935.pdf [Accessed: June 2026].

⁶⁸ Open spaces assessed by the Open Space Report omitted those less than 0.2 hectares in size which did not provide a specific function for users.

⁶⁹ Colchester Borough Council/Knight Kavanagh and Page, (2023); Open Space Report.

⁷⁰ Colchester Borough Council (2024) Green Network & Waterways Guiding Principles.

Typology	Primary purpose	Number of sites	Total amount (hectares)
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	Supports wildlife conservation, biodiversity and environmental education and awareness.	62	604
Amenity greenspace	Opportunities for informal activities close to home or work or enhancement of the appearance of residential or other areas.	134	267
Provision for children and young people	Areas designed primarily for play and social interaction involving children and young people.	118	6
Allotments	Opportunities to grow own produce. Added benefits include the long term provision of sustainable living, health and social inclusion.	23	28
Total		440	954

Source: Colchester Borough Council/Knight Kavanagh and Page, (2023); Open Space Report.

- 3.10.2. Sufficiency of provision of open space can be assessed in terms of benchmark space standards within an appropriate catchment area from populations. This assessment has been conducted with respect to analysis sub-areas in Colchester: Central/East, North, South and West. A summary of the current provision against the benchmark standard is shown for each of the open space typologies in Table 3-14 and Table 3-15.
- 3.10.3. The Central/East sub-area (aligning within the Colchester urban area) has good provision of all open space typologies. All other areas of the local authority area have a reported deficit in parks and gardens. The South and West analysis sub-areas overall have a deficit of open spaces given their respective combined provision levels are below the appropriate standard. The West analysis sub-area has a deficit of 1.9 hectares per 1,000 population.

Table 3-14 Open space provision against standards

Analysis area	Parks and garden		Natural and semi-natural		Amenity greenspace		Combined	
	ha	+/-	ha	+/-	ha	+/-	ha	+/-
Standard (hectares per 1,000 population)								
	0.25	-	3.07	-	1.35	-	4.67	-
Current provision (hectares per 1,000 population)								
Central/East	0.34	+0.09	3.27	+0.20	1.32	+0.03	4.93	+0.26
North	-	-0.25	2.95	-0.12	2.06	+0.71	5.01	+0.34
South	-	-0.25	3.10	+0.03	0.93	-0.42	4.03	-0.64
West	-	-0.25	1.22	-1.85	1.55	+0.20	2.77	-1.90

Source: Colchester Borough Council/Knight Kavanagh and Page, (2023); Open Space Report.

Table 3-15 Open space provision against standards (continued)

Analysis area	ha	+/-	ha	+/-
Standard (hectares per 1,000 population)				
	0.14	-	0.03	-
Current provision (hectares per 1,000 population)				
Central/East	0.15	+0.01	0.03	Level
North	0.16	+0.02	0.06	+0.03
South	0.11	-0.03	0.03	Level
West	0.11	-0.03	0.04	+0.01

Source: Colchester Borough Council/Knight Kavanagh and Page, (2023); Open Space Report.

- 3.10.1. The types of open space which are most frequented by Colchester's existing residents are natural and semi-natural greenspace, coasts and riversides, country parks, and local parks or gardens. According to existing residents, priority improvement measures for Colchester's open spaces include introducing more wildlife and promoting habitats.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.10.1. Existing Local Plan policy⁷¹ requires new development to provide 10% of the total gross site area as local open space, with large sites of 5 ha or more expected to provide one strategic area of open space within the site (noting the value of large contiguous spaces as well as doorstep smaller spaces). According to the Provision of Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities SPD⁷² adopted in 2006, new development increases demand for open space and this must be mitigated by provision of open space or contribution to ensure the development is acceptable and does not exacerbate existing constraints in provision.
- 3.10.2. Many of the allocated sites within the existing Local Plan make provision for contributions of open space of varying scales, including at those sites below (noting that some of these may have been implemented):
- Land at and adjacent to the Rugby Club, North Colchester;
 - North Station Special Policy Area, Colchester;
 - Land at Braiswick;
 - ABRO Site, Colchester;
 - East Colchester/Hythe Special Policy Area, Colchester;
 - Site off Barrington and Bourne Roads, Colchester;
 - Stanway Residential Sites;
 - Land at Chitts Hill, Colchester;
 - Land off Dyers Road including Fiveways Fruit Farm, Stanway;
 - Open Space East of Tollgate Road, Stanway;
 - Land between Church Lane and Maldon Road including Stanway Hall Farm and Bellhouse Pit, Stanway;
 - Land to the North of London Road, Stanway;
 - Land off Greenfield Drive, Great Tey;
 - Policy SS10: Layer de la Haye;
 - Dawes Lane, West Mersea;
 - Brierley Paddocks, West Mersea;
 - Rowhedge;
 - Barbrook Lane, Tiptree; and
 - Policy SS16: Wivenhoe.
- 3.10.3. The Open Space Report recommends that sites serving catchment gaps should be prioritised for enhancement; applicable sites are shown in Table 3-16. These sites therefore represent potential targets for investment towards improvement and enhancement. Those sites which are highlighted are deemed to be of low quality/value and therefore should be prioritised further for improvement and enhancement.

⁷¹ Colchester City Council, (2022); Colchester City Council Local Plan 2017 – 2033: Section 2. Policy DM18: Provision of Public Open Space.

⁷² Colchester Borough Council, (2006); Provision of Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Supplementary Planning Document.

Table 3-16 Open space sites serving catchment gaps which should be prioritised for enhancement

Site name	Typology	Helps to serve provision gap in:
Abbey Field	Amenity	Parks
Berechurch Road	Amenity	Parks
Camulodunum Way	Amenity	Natural
Cassino Road	Amenity	Natural
Catherine Hunt Way	Amenity	Natural
Chesthunt Field	Natural	Parks
Cymbeline Meadows	Natural	Amenity
Elmwood Avenue	Amenity	Natural
Glebe View Sports Ground AGS	Amenity	Parks
High Woods Country Park	Natural	Parks
Hilly Fields Nature Reserve	Natural	Amenity
King George V Playing Fields	Amenity	Parks
Layer Road	Amenity	Natural
Lexden King George Field	Amenity	Parks
Lilianna Road	Amenity	Parks
Mile End Recreation Ground	Amenity	Parks
Old Heath Recreation Ground	Amenity	Parks
Reed Hall Avenue	Amenity	Natural
Saint John's Playing Field	Amenity	Parks
Sandmartin Crescent	Amenity	Parks
Spring Lane Park	Amenity	Parks
West Mersea Park	Amenity	Parks
Westlands Country Park	Natural	Parks

Source: Colchester Borough Council/Knight Kavanagh and Page, (2023); Open Space Report. Table 10.4.1. Table 10.4.2.

3.10.4. As outlined in the TCBGC DPD, the TCBGC will create a multi-functional network of primary green spaces and corridors. This will include creation of the new Country Park at Salary Brook, green corridors, and the provision of sports and leisure facilities. Local open spaces and facilities will be distributed appropriately across the development, to ensure that provision remains in sync with housing delivery.

3.10.5. Applying the Open Space Report standards to the new allocations to 2043, a population increase of 32,363 persons in Colchester by 2043⁷³ would generate demand for a total of 155.67 ha of open space. Table 3-17 outlines the estimated demand for each open space type.

Table 3-17 Open space requirements to 2043

Open space typology	Open Space report standards (ha per 1,000 population)	Demand area (ha) to 2043
Parks and gardens	0.25	8.09
Natural and semi-natural greenspace	3.07	99.36
Amenity greenspace	1.35	43.69

⁷³ This additional population is estimated by multiplying the number of homes associated with new allocations and windfall sites (13,755) by the average household size in Colchester as per the Census 2021 (2.35 people per household).

Open space typology	Open Space report standards (ha per 1,000 population)	Demand area (ha) to 2043
Allotments	0.14	4.53
Total		155.67

Source: Colchester Borough Council/Knight Kavanagh and Page, (2023); Open Space Report.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.10.6. In total, 19 allocated sites within the existing Local Plan make provision for open spaces of varying scales. These proposals have been recorded within the Project Schedule as a single entry with unknown costs and funding status though it is likely that costs and delivery will be via the developer.
- 3.10.7. In addition, the PPOSS has identified 23 additional open sites serving catchment gaps that would benefit from enhancements. The proposals relating to these sites are included within the Project Schedule as a single entry; they are currently assumed to be uncommitted and unfunded.
- 3.10.8. Benchmark costs have been applied for the different types of open space⁷⁴. This implies that meeting all the open space requirements of the additional population associated with the new allocations to 2043 (155.67 ha) would generate a cost of £34,126,618. It should be noted that this excludes the playspace element (0.97 ha) which is covered within the playspace chapter.
- 3.10.9. The Project Schedule assumes that this infrastructure is unfunded. Developers will be expected to provide open space on-site and / or contribute to off-site provision to cater for demand arising from new development. Funding may also come forward from public sector and third sector sources.
- 3.10.10. The TCBGC network of green spaces and corridors, including the Salary Brook Country Park, is also included in the Project Schedule and assumed to be unfunded.

Summary

- 3.10.11. There are 440 open spaces in Colchester comprising 954 hectares of land use coverage.
- 3.10.12. There is a good provision of open space in Colchester, particularly in the urban area of Colchester. There is a current deficit of provision when accessibility catchment areas and benchmark space standards are taken into account in the South and West of the local authority area.
- 3.10.13. In total, 19 allocated sites within the existing Local Plan make provision for open spaces of varying scales. Also, the PPOSS has identified 23 additional open sites serving catchment gaps that would benefit from enhancements. Costs and funding status for these projects is unknown, though it is likely that funding and delivery would be via the developer.
- 3.10.14. The TCBGC will create a multi-functional network of primary green spaces and corridors, including creation of the Country Park at Salary Brook, green corridors, and the provision of sports and leisure facilities.
- 3.10.15. Applying quantitative standards for provision of different types of open space to projected population increase associated with the new allocations (32,363 residents), and a benchmark cost, indicates an estimated cost of £34.1 million for open space over the Local Plan period to 2043. This has been recorded in the Project Schedule. Planning policy requires either on-site provision or financial contribution towards open spaces in order to meet the demands of new residents.

⁷⁴ £270,000 per hectare parks and gardens, £220,000 per hectare natural/ semi-natural greenspace, £200,000 per hectare amenity greenspace, £297,000 per hectare allotments/ orchards. Source: AECOM cost consultants (2026).

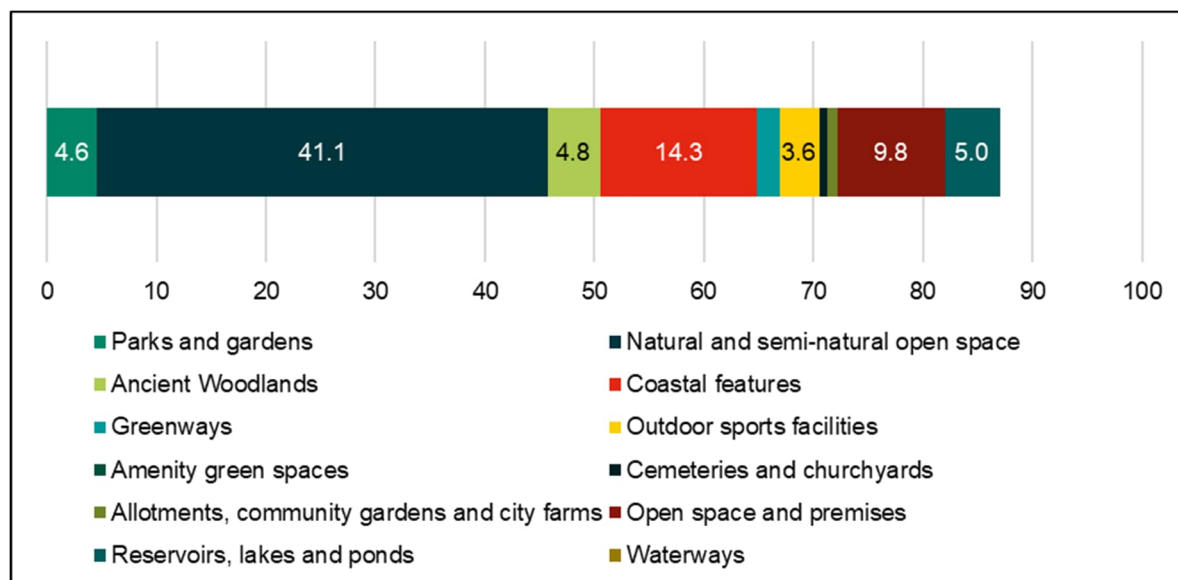
3.11. Green infrastructure

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.11.1. As assessed in 2020, around 26.1% of the local authority land area of Colchester would be considered to be green infrastructure⁷⁵. This represents around 87.0km² of 333.0km². A breakdown of the land area by green infrastructure type is shown in Figure 3.7.

Figure 3.7 Green infrastructure land use in Colchester by infrastructure type (km²)



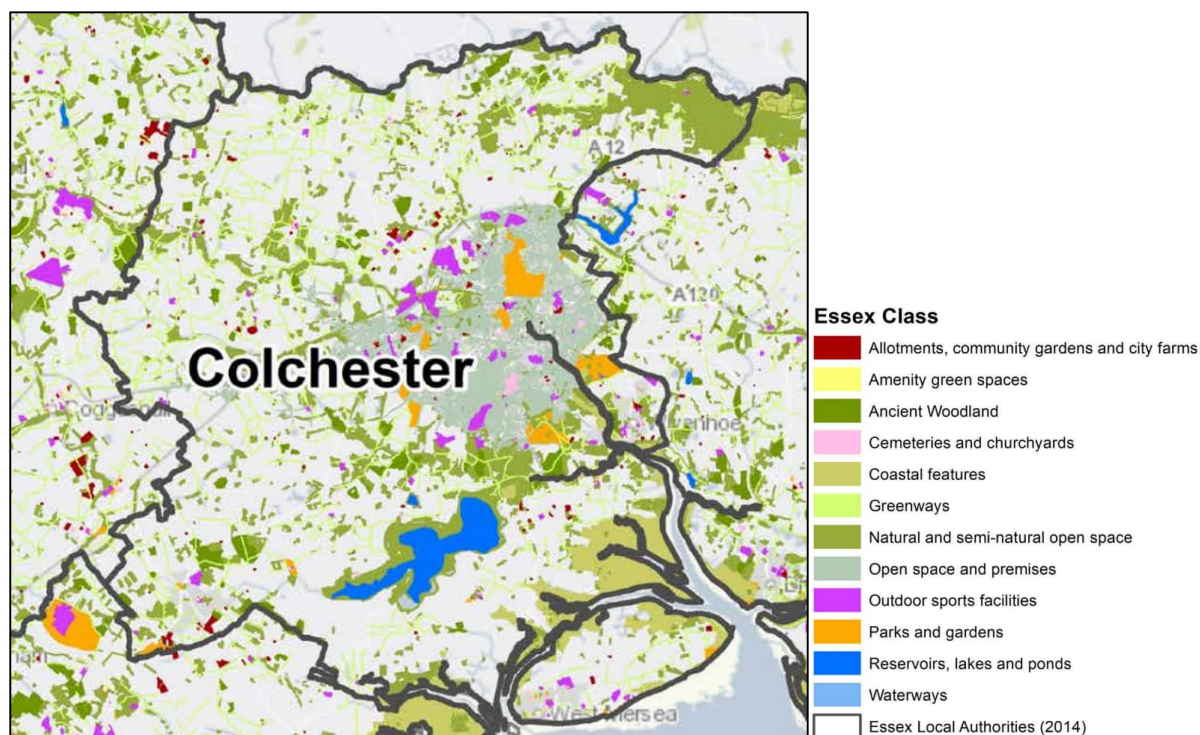
Source: Essex County Council, (2020); Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy. Appendix B4 – Green Infrastructure Asset Data.

- 3.11.1. The spatial distribution⁷⁶ of green infrastructure types across Colchester is shown in Figure 3.8. A large proportion of green infrastructure in terms of land use coverage is natural and semi-natural open space, of which the largest contiguous area is Dedham Vale. A significant portion of the green infrastructure is also coastal features, particularly at Fingringhoe Wick and Mersea Island. Examples of green infrastructures located in proximity to population centres and providing multiple functions to communities include High Woods Country Park, Abberton Reservoir and surrounds, as well as contiguous green infrastructure between Colchester and Halstead (Braintree).

⁷⁵ Essex County Council, (2020); Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy.

⁷⁶ The mapping of green infrastructure derives from Essex County Council analysis, however CCC have also produced interactive mapping of green networks and waterways, which is available online: <https://colchester.oc2.uk/document/48>

Figure 3.8 Green infrastructure in Colchester



Source: Essex County Council, (2020); Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.11.2. The provision and enhancement of green infrastructure is promoted by planning policy, guidance and proposals within the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy⁷⁷ and CCC's Green Network and Waterways Guiding Principles⁷⁸.
- 3.11.3. The current Local Plan sets out an aspiration to complete the Colchester Orbital Route. Going forward, there are aspirations to further enhance access and connectivity to the Orbital, and development proposals in relevant locations should contribute to this⁷⁹. The Orbital route is included within the Project Schedule.
- 3.11.4. Many of the allocated sites within the existing Local Plan make provision for contributions of new or enhanced green infrastructure elements, including those below (noting that some of these may have been implemented already):
- North Colchester and Severalls Strategic Economic Area;
 - North Station Special Policy Area;
 - Knowledge Gateway and University of Essex Strategic Economic Area;
 - East Colchester / Hythe Special Policy Area;
 - Stanway Residential Sites;
 - Land at Chitts Hill; and
 - Land at Irvine Road.
- 3.11.5. Demand for green infrastructure has not been modelled for this IADP given the overlap with the open space typologies covered within the previous chapter. However new development is at the forefront of delivering green infrastructure to Colchester. All development should integrate and/or improve green infrastructure given its ability to promote active and sustainable transport. New development can allow for easier integration of green infrastructure principles and benchmark standards if incorporated at early stages of design.

⁷⁷ Essex County Council, (2020); Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy.

⁷⁸ Colchester City Council, (2024); Green Network and Waterways Guiding Principles.

⁷⁹ Colchester Borough Local Plan 2017 – 2033, Section 2.

Development and expansion of existing communities should be cognisant of the opportunities to enhance existing green infrastructure or address deficits in provision or access.

- 3.11.6. Since April 2024 both minor and major development has been required by policy to delivery 10% Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) such that natural environment is in a measurably better state following development. This policy will therefore apply to all scales of development regardless of spatial option pursued, however there may be opportunities to achieve higher BNG whereby habitat creation is in areas of strategic conservation importance throughout landscapes⁸⁰.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.11.7. Costs have not been modelled for green infrastructure given the overlap with the open space chapter.
- 3.11.8. As noted above, the Colchester Orbital Route is included in the Project Schedule but costs and funding status are currently unknown. Also, there are seven allocated sites which the Local Plan identifies as making for provision for contributions of new or enhanced green infrastructure elements; these sites have been included in the Project Schedule within a single entry. Costs for these projects are unknown and it is that they are currently unfunded, though it is likely that developers play a role in their delivery.
- 3.11.9. The Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy⁸¹ identifies proposals under the following themes, and considers how each might be delivered:
- Marketing, branding and promotion;
 - Re-designation of green infrastructure;
 - Environment net gain and offsetting;
 - Improve, repurpose and create new multi-functional green infrastructure;
 - Natural flood management techniques;
 - Connect people to green infrastructure through active travel; and
 - Delivering environmental therapies and activities.
- 3.11.10. The planning and delivery of these priorities can be promoted through new developments and integrated with infrastructure development.
- 3.11.11. The multi-functionality of green infrastructure is important from a cost perspective, given the ability of green infrastructure to provide a range of services, meaning services such as drainage, recreation, biodiversity, and connectivity can be achieved through the same interventions without incurring 'doubling' of costs.
- 3.11.12. Green infrastructure provision can be funded through developer contributions as well as a range of other funding sources, as shown in Table 3-18. Further detail on how these are accessed and which types of infrastructure these might be applicable to are provided by the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy Appendices.

Table 3-18 Potential funding sources for green infrastructure

Potential funding sources		
The National Lottery	EU funds	Natural England
Landfill Tax	Landfill restoration programmes	S106
S106 / CIL	Countryside Stewardship	Capital Programme
Capital Programme	Charitable Trust	Flood defence funding
Natural Flood Management Fund	Love Every Drop / Make Rain Happy	Future High Street Fund

⁸⁰ UK Parliament, (2024); Biodiversity net gain. Available at: <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/POST-PN-0728/POST-PN-0728.pdf> [Accessed: July 2026].

⁸¹ Essex County Council, (2020); Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy.

Partnership between councils	Community partnerships, such as "friends of" groups	Social Prescribing
Out Source	RAMS – Recreational disturbance Avoidance and Mitigation Strategy	Other – Generating income from existing and adding additional value to green infrastructure assets

Source: Essex County Council, (2020); Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy: Appendix Part B - Appendix B13.

Summary

- 3.11.13. Around 26.1% of the Colchester local authority area is considered green infrastructure. A large proportion of this is natural and semi-natural open space (of which the largest contiguous area is Dedham Vale) and also coastal features (particularly at Fingringhoe Wick and Mersea Island). Examples of green infrastructures located in proximity to population centres and providing multiple functions to communities include High Woods Country Park, Abberton Reservoir and surrounds, as well as contiguous green infrastructure between Colchester and Halstead (Braintree).
- 3.11.14. The provision and enhancement of green infrastructure is promoted by planning policy, guidance and proposals within the Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy⁸² and CCC's Green Network and Waterways Guiding Principles⁸³.
- 3.11.15. The current Local Plan sets out an aspiration to complete / improve the Colchester Orbital Route; improvements to access and connectivity to this route is included within the Project Schedule. Also, many of the allocated sites within the existing Local Plan make provision for contributions of new or enhanced green infrastructure elements; these projects are recorded in the Project Schedule as a single line entry. Costs and funding status are currently unknown.
- 3.11.16. Demand and costs for green infrastructure associated with new allocations to 2043 has not been quantified given the overlap with the open space typologies covered within the previous chapter. However, new development is at the forefront of delivering green infrastructure to Colchester. All development should integrate and/or improve green infrastructure given its ability to promote active and sustainable transport, and to integrate green infrastructure principles at early stages of design.
- 3.11.17. A range of potential funding sources and delivery arrangements exist for green infrastructure including developer contributions, public sector and third sector sources.

3.12. Playspace

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.12.1. The latest data identified a total of 118 sites providing playspace in Colchester, including 11 Local Area for Play (LAPs), 54 Local Equipped Area for Play (LEAPs), 15 Neighbourhood Equipped Area for Play (NEAPs), and 38 casual sites⁸⁴. CCC's website states the Council manages 81 playgrounds, with additional playgrounds provided by Parish and Town Councils and the Ministry of Defence.
- 3.12.2. No shortfalls in quantity have been identified with current playspace provision in Colchester. The total area of land occupied by playspaces in Colchester is 6.21 ha, which works out to 0.03 ha per 1,000 population. The Open Space Report used the current provision levels to identify potential shortfalls in existing provision; a sub-area analysis is shown in Table 3-19. Overall, all the sub-areas in Colchester are shown as having a sufficiency or being level (i.e. provision balanced with need).

⁸² Essex County Council, (2020); Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy.

⁸³ Colchester City Council, (2024); Green Network and Waterways Guiding Principles.

⁸⁴ Colchester Borough Council/Knight Kavanagh and Page, (2023); Open Space Report.

Table 3-19 Playspace provision against standards

Analysis area	Number	Play provision	
		ha	+ / -
Central/East	73	0.03	Level
North	16	0.06	+0.03
South	13	0.03	Level
West	16	0.04	+0.01
Colchester	118	0.03	-

Source: Colchester Borough Council/Knight Kavanagh and Page, (2023); Open Space Report.

3.12.3. Just over half the playspace sites identified in the Open Space Report have been rated above the quality threshold. It was identified that CCC should consider delivering improvements to playspace provision in regard to the maintenance/appearance and/or the quality of equipment on sites. Small LAPs can often be left in poor condition, highlighting the challenge of maintaining multiple sites across Colchester.

3.12.4. In terms of accessibility, no significant catchment gap was identified for playspace. Areas with greater population density were identified to generally be within walking distance from play provision.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

3.12.5. The current Local Plan⁸⁵ identifies provision for some allocated sites such as Layer de la Haye (Policy SS10) and West Mersea Dawes Lane (Policy SS12a). Some of these sites may have already been delivered. The Colchester and Tendring Open Space Strategy⁸⁶ also set out playspace requirements for the TCBGC.

3.12.6. As outlined in Table 3-20, it is estimated that a population increase of 32,363 persons in Colchester by 2043⁸⁷ would generate a demand for an additional 0.97ha of children's playspace. This is based on the demand benchmarks set out in the Open Space Report⁸⁸.

Table 3-20 Open space requirements

Open space typology	Open Space report standards (ha per 1,000 population)	Demand area (ha) to 2043
Playspace	0.03	0.97

Source: Colchester Borough Council/Knight Kavanagh and Page, (2023); Open Space Report.

Costs, funding and delivery

3.12.7. The above-mentioned projects identified within the existing Local Plan (some of which may already have been delivered) are included within the Project Schedule as a single entry; costs and funding status are currently unknown, but it is likely that the developer would be responsible for funding and delivery.

3.12.8. The most recent planning policy relating to the costs, funding, and delivery of playspaces is the Provision of Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Supplementary Planning Document (SPD)⁸⁹ (2006). However, a supplementary planning guidance document setting out the updated costs for open space, playspace, and sports facilities was published in April 2019⁹⁰. This indicates that a NEAP costs £167,647.

⁸⁵ Colchester City Council, (2017); Colchester Borough Local Plan 2017-2033 Section 2.

⁸⁶ Knight, Kavanagh, and Page, 2023; 'Colchester and Tendering Open Space, Playing Pitch, Outdoor Sports and Built Facility – Overarching Strategy Feb 2023'.

⁸⁷ This additional population is estimated by multiplying the number of homes associated with new allocations (13,755) by the average household size in Colchester as per the Census 2021 (2.35 people per household).

⁸⁸ Colchester Borough Council/Knight Kavanagh and Page, (2023); Open Space Report.

⁸⁹ Colchester Borough Council, (2006); Provision of Open Space, Sport and Recreational Facilities Supplementary Planning Document.

⁹⁰ Colchester Borough Council, (2019); Supplementary Planning Document – Charges Effective from 1 April 2019.

- 3.12.9. Fields in Trust guidance indicates that a NEAP is typically 1,000 sqm in size. A cost of £200,000 per NEAP (based on AECOM cost consultant data) is applied to the demand estimate of 0.97 ha set out above. This indicates a cost of £1,941,807 for playspace, which has been included within the Project Schedule.
- 3.12.10. In most instances it will be the developer that delivers playspace facilities. Provision of facilities in other locations could be the responsibility of either CCC or the parish/town council in question⁹¹. For the purposes of the Project Schedule, it is assumed that this investment in playspace is currently unfunded.

Summary

- 3.12.11. No shortfalls in quantity have been identified with current playspace provision in Colchester. There are 118 sites totalling 6.21 ha of land; including 11 LAPs, 54 LEAPs, 15 NEAPs, and 38 casual sites.
- 3.12.12. Just over half the playspace sites identified in the Open Space Report have been rated above the quality threshold. It was identified that CCC should consider delivering improvements to playspace provision in regard to the maintenance/appearance and/or the quality of equipment on sites.
- 3.12.13. In terms of accessibility, no significant catchment gap was identified for playspace. Areas with greater population density were identified to generally be within walking distance from play provision.
- 3.12.14. The existing Local Plan identifies open space requirements on some allocated sites; costs and funding status are currently unknown, but it is likely that the developer would be responsible for funding and delivery.
- 3.12.15. It is estimated that the additional population associated with the new allocations will generate demand for 0.97 ha playspace to 2043, with an associated cost of £1.94 million. For the purposes of the Project Schedule, it is assumed that this investment in playspace is currently unfunded.

3.13. Youth facilities

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.13.1. Essex Youth Services and CCC provide youth services in Colchester. There are three youth centres in Colchester, as shown in Table 3-21, including Colchester Townhouse Youth Centre, Highwoods Youth Centre and Stanway Youth Centre. All three youth centres were recently renovated using funding from the Town Deal programme (£1.3 million)⁹². Improvements included a new entrance, modernised kitchen, upgraded restrooms, improved accessibility features, and additional facilities such as a gaming room, teaching kitchen, traversing wall, and basketball hoops, with a music recording studio to come.
- 3.13.2. Additionally, youth activities and clubs are hosted in facilities such as village halls and other venues across Colchester. The Scout Association runs a range of active groups which provide skills and activities for young people across the local authority area from dedicated scout huts and rented venues. Non-dedicated facilities such as these will be considered a part of the specific community facilities chapter (Section 3.14).

⁹¹ Colchester Borough Council/Navigus, 2017; Colchester Infrastructure Delivery Plan.

⁹² Essex County Council (2024) Revamp underway for Colchester youth centres.

Table 3-21 Youth facilities in Colchester

Youth facility	Activities and services
Colchester Townhouse Youth Centre	Police Cadets Duke of Edinburgh's Award Leaving and After Care Team Kinetix Young Essex Assembly Home Ed Youth Club CLIP College Lunch Club Dry Skate Project Boys and Men Youth Club African Families in the UK
Highwoods Youth Centre	InterAct Highwoods Youth Club
Stanway Youth Centre	Inclusive Club InterAct Action for Family Carers

Source: Essex Youth Services, (2026); Find a youth group.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.13.3. Beyond this, demand for youth facilities will increase to 2043 due to planned development. Department for Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) guidance suggests that facilities used for youth services could be accommodated within in youth centres, community halls or schools as well as other fit-for-purpose and appealing settings. This may be within local authority owned buildings and other locations. Therefore while demand for youth facilities specifically to 2043 has not been modelled, it is assumed that at least some of this demand could be accommodated by community centres, demand for which is covered within the next chapter.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.13.4. The cost of meeting demand to 2043 have not been quantified, though it can be assumed that at least some proportion are covered within the community centre costs identified within the next chapter.
- 3.13.5. The local authority has a statutory obligation to provide, where practicable, a sufficient quantity of youth services. Local authorities may work with a variety of delivery partners, as set out in Table 3-22.

Table 3-22 Potential delivery partners for youth services

Potential delivery partners		
Young people	Central government	District and parish councils
Youth workers	Schools, colleges and other educational settings	Voluntary, community and social enterprise sector
Businesses and employers	Health, care and well-being workers and bodies	Family support services
Agencies including health and police	Other organisations offering activities for young people	

Source: Department of Culture, Media and Sport, (2023); Statutory Guidance for Local Authorities on Services and Activities to Improve Young People's Well-being.

- 3.13.6. In the context of constrained budgets, it is for the local authority to decide how limited funds can have the greatest impact and in doing so address barriers to participation and gaps in provision. Provision of services may be funded in part through service charges to users.

- 3.13.7. The Local Government Association⁹³ highlights a range of programmes and funding opportunities for youth services, underpinned by the 2022 Government pledge⁹⁴ as part of the National Youth Guarantee to ensure access for every young person to regular youth services. These include, but are not limited to, those opportunities shown in Table 3-23.

Table 3-23 Youth services funding opportunities and programmes

Funding opportunity or programme	Description
#iwill fund	Organisation providing social action opportunities for young people
Building Futures Programme	£15 million programme aimed at supporting young people at risk from becoming not in employment, education and training (NEET)
Youth Endowment Fund	Fund aimed at the prevention of youth participation in violence
National Citizen Service	Provider of residential and community experiences
The Duke of Edinburgh's Award	Youth awards programme, including volunteering, physical, skills, and expedition components
King's Trust	Support young people into education, training, and employment.
Scouts and Girlguiding	Youth development programmes.

Source: Local Government Association, (2026); Must know for youth services.

Summary

- 3.13.8. Essex Youth Services and CCC provide youth services in Colchester, including at three dedicated youth facilities, as well as across other non-dedicated venues.
- 3.13.9. Demand for youth facilities will increase to 2043; this has not been modelled as part of this report but it is assumed that at least some of this demand could be accommodated by community centres which are covered within the next chapter.
- 3.13.10. The local authority may work with a variety of delivery partners to provide youth services.
- 3.13.11. Local authorities may charge service users, although funding where available should be directed where needs are identified such that barriers to access are overcome, particularly in communities where specific gaps are identified. National funds may represent additional funding sources available to youth organisations and other delivery partners.

3.14. Community facilities

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.14.1. CCC keeps an up-to-date audit of community facilities. The audit records 135 community facilities, comprising 33 church halls, 23 community centres, eight scout huts, 31 village halls, 34 other/miscellaneous facilities, and six libraries. These are shown in Table 3-24 and Figure 3.9.

Table 3-24 Community facilities in Colchester

Facility type	Count
Church hall	33
Community centre	23

⁹³ Local Government Association, (2026); Must know for youth services. Available at: <https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/must-know-youth-services-updated-january-2026> [Accessed: July 2026].

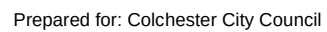
⁹⁴ Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport, (2022); Youth Review: Summary findings and government response.

Facility type	Count
Scout huts	8
Village hall	31
Other	34
Library	6
Total	135

Source: Colchester City Council/AECOM analysis. Essex Library Service, (2026); Our library locations and opening times.

- 3.14.2. As outlined in the ECC Developer's Guide to Infrastructure Contributions⁹⁵, ECC's library capacity does not currently meet the standard set by Museums, Libraries and Archives' (MLA) recommendation of 30 sqm per 1,000 population.

⁹⁵ Essex County Council (2026) The Essex County Council Developer's Guide to Infrastructure Contributions. Available at: https://www.essex.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2026-03/Master%20Version_Developers%20Guide%202025_Feb%202026.pdf [Accessed: June 2026].



Future Baseline including planned schemes

- 3.14.3. The Local Plan Section 2⁹⁶ comments on the availability of community services in different locations across Colchester as well as policy aspirations for the future delivery of community facilities necessary to support growth, where applicable. These are summarised in Table 3-25. While some locations have a wide range of facilities and appear to be well-served, many would benefit from new or enhanced facilities. These include Greenstead in the urban area which could benefit from upgrades. For a number of district centres (Tollgate, Turner Rise and Peartree Road), their role and function could be enhanced by new facilities. A lack or limited range of facilities is highlighted for Wivenhoe, Dedham, and Boxted. Interdependency on shared facilities is identified in Chappel and Wakes Colne.

Table 3-25 Local Plan commentary on community facilities

Location	Availability and future aspirations
Urban Area of Colchester	Greenstead could benefit from comprehensive upgrading of community facilities
Tollgate	Role and function as district centre would be enhanced through introduction of new...community facilities. Policy WC1 promotes introduction of new facilities.
Turner Rise	Role and function as district centre would be enhanced through introduction of new...community facilities
Peartree Road	Role and function as district centre would be enhanced through introduction of new...community facilities
Tiptree	Wide range of community uses
West Mersea	Wide range of community uses. Brierley Paddocks site could deliver community facilities if need identified.
Wivenhoe	Limited range of community facilities
Dedham	Limited range of community facilities
Boxted (Workhouse Hill, Mill Road)	No community facilities
Boxted (Boxted Cross)	Few community facilities
Chappel and Wakes Colne	Interdependency in respect of shared facilities
Fordham	Well served by community facilities
Layer de la Haye	Well served by community facilities
West Bergholt	Range of community facilities

Source: Colchester Borough Council, (2022); Local Plan 2017 – 2033 Section 2.

- 3.14.4. The Everyone's Library Service 2022 – 2026⁹⁷ strategy covers the provision of library services across Essex and makes clear that ECC is committed to the continued operation of all libraries across the county. One of the county's four flagship libraries is located in Colchester.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.14.5. The Heart of Greenstead scheme is part of Colchester's Town Deal Funding awarded in 2022. It will include an improved community centre, a library, a community cafe, and flexible community space. This project has been recorded in the Project Schedule (under the category of cultural facilities rather than community centres).
- 3.14.6. With regard to additional requirements arising from growth to 2043, the Community Infrastructure SPD⁹⁸ sets out that need for community facilities will be identified using the

⁹⁶ Colchester Borough Council, (2022); Local Plan 2017 – 2033 Section 2.

⁹⁷ Essex County Council/Essex Library Services, (2024); Everyone's Library Service 2022 – 2026. Available at: <https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/digital-content/our-strategies-policies-and-terms/everyones-library-service-20222026> [Accessed: July 2026].

⁹⁸ Colchester Borough Council, (2013); Provision of Community Facilities Supplementary Planning Document.

existing evidence base, including by identifying where high levels of deprivation can be addressed with the delivery of specific services. The SPD states that the standard community floorspace to be provided by each new dwelling would be 0.75m², which is used to derive developer contributions. This benchmark indicates a high level estimate of needs associated with the new allocations and windfall sites identified within the development trajectory (13,755 homes) of 10,316 sqm of community space.

3.14.7. The Everyone's Library Service 2022 – 2026⁹⁹ strategy sets out the commitments with regard to the provision of library services across Essex. As part of the planned improvements to infrastructure, there will be a planned programme of building improvements as well as developing the mobile and outreach service. These commitments are included within the Project Schedule, noting that further detail including cost and funding status is currently lacking. As outlined in the ECC Developer's Guide to Infrastructure Contributions¹⁰⁰, ECC currently has no plans to increase the number of libraries in Essex (potential exceptions include the provision of new space on strategic sites/garden communities). In most cases, it will seek instead to meet the need generated by new growth by:

- Improving existing facilities;
- Refits and reconfiguration, and intensification of use;
- To create additional capacity within existing libraries, extending the public space will be considered where possible, this could include:
 - o Converting space previously used by staff into public space by reducing the number or size of offices, workrooms, or storage space.
 - o Making staff space available for community use at certain times.
 - o Reconfiguring libraries to allow more flexible use of space that can be used by different customer groups at different times of day.

3.14.8. An assessment of need will be made at the point of planning application, taking account of capacities of facilities serving the development.

3.14.9. In Essex the requirement for a new standalone facility would be triggered when a discrete population of 7,000 or more is introduced in location that is not connected to existing services¹⁰¹. Likewise a new facility is required when a projected population more than doubles within an existing library catchment area. Contributions would typically be sought for the library most affected by the new development (likely a sub-regional library even if further away).

3.14.10. The Essex County Council Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions indicates that there is typically a requirement of 30 sqm library space per 1,000 population. This implies that the population associated with the potential emerging allocations to 2043 would requirement 970 sqm additional library space to 2043.

3.14.11. TCBGC DPD sets out the provision of at least one 'Neighbourhood Centre' per 'Garden Community Neighbourhood'. These centres will complement one another and support a diverse range of uses such as community meeting places. The hybrid planning application submitted in March 2026 identifies four Local Centres which will provide community space.

Costs, funding and delivery

3.14.1. The Heart of Greenstead scheme is shown in the Project Schedule as funded, as it is a key part of the £18.2 million Town Deal Funding that Colchester was awarded in August 2022.

⁹⁹ Essex County Council/Essex Library Services, (2024); Everyone's Library Service 2022 – 2026. Available at: <https://libraries.essex.gov.uk/digital-content/our-strategies-policies-and-terms/everyones-library-service-20222026> [Accessed: July 2026].

¹⁰⁰ Essex County Council (2026) The Essex County Council Developer's Guide to Infrastructure Contributions. Available at: https://www.essex.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2026-03/Master%20Version_Developers%20Guide%202025_Feb%202026.pdf [Accessed: June 2026].

¹⁰¹ Essex County Council, (2025); The Essex County Council Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions.

- 3.14.2. As set out within the Community Facilities SPD¹⁰², CCC expects a financial contribution from developers from all residential development which creates new units of accommodation. Where the additional population as part of the proposed development is large enough a new community facility on-site may be warranted. The SPD indicates financial contribution of £1,086 per dwelling based on 2013 build costs of community centres; this is £1,607 per dwelling when updated to March 2026 prices¹⁰³. On this basis, an additional 13,755 homes implies total contributions of £22,104,285 million.
- 3.14.3. The Community Facilities SPD¹⁰⁴ also sets out how the contribution will be used, namely either:
- 'a capital contribution to invest in and develop existing facilities in the local area';
 - 'a capital contribution towards developing a dedicated community space';
 - 'the provision of a purpose built and equipped centre together with financial contribution towards the running and management costs for the first three years';
 - 'the provision of a plot of land of appropriate size and location to enable a centre to be built'; or
 - 'a financial contribution towards a borough wide facility'.
- 3.14.4. It is a statutory duty of ECC to provide a library service which is comprehensive and efficient for any resident or student wishing to use it¹⁰⁵. Any development of 10 or more dwellings or a site size of 0.5 ha and above will be assessed and could generate a request for additional library build and/or additional stock, shelving, and technical equipment to increase capacity and enhance the offer. The suggested costs associated with these interventions, as reported in 2024, are shown in Table 3-26.

Table 3-26 Developer contributions for library provision, calculation costs

Intervention	Cost	Notes
Stock only contribution	£73.53 per dwelling	Assumes £20.00 per stock item (Askews Library Services) and recommended stock level of 1,532 items per 1,000 population (National Library Standard) Where a library building is able to accommodate the extra demand created by a new development, but it is known that the stock levels are only adequate to meet the needs of the existing catchment population
Shelving and furniture contribution	£20.82 per dwelling	Based on increased user activity and increased space requirements
Equipment and resources to enhance service provision (e.g. It, self-service equipment, digital access)	£15.67 per dwelling	
New library build	£264.09 per dwelling	

Source: Essex County Council, (2026); The Essex County Council Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions.

- 3.14.5. A required contribution of £110.02 per dwelling is assumed, calculated as the total for additional stock, shelving and furniture, and equipment and resources contributions. This

¹⁰² Colchester Borough Council, (2013); Provision of Community Facilities Supplementary Planning Document.

¹⁰³ Build cost has been updated based on ONS Construction Output Price Indices (All new work index). Available at: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/businessindustryandtrade/constructionindustry/datasets/interimconstructionoutputpriceindices> [Accessed: July 2026].

¹⁰⁴ Colchester Borough Council, (2013); Provision of Community Facilities Supplementary Planning Document.

¹⁰⁵ Essex County Council, (2020); The Essex County Council Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions.

generates a high level estimate of £1,513,325 required to cater for demand arising from the new allocations to 2043.

- 3.14.6. As well as funding from developers and local authorities, there are various charitable funds and programmes available (at the time of writing) to communities in Colchester, as set out by CCC¹⁰⁶. Table 3-27 summarises these funds which could be applicable to the delivery of community facilities and services.

Table 3-27 Community funding opportunities in Colchester

Charity/fund	Description
Anglian Community Trust	£400,000 available from ACT for community projects in North East Essex.
One Stop Community Partnership Programme	Supporting community groups focusing on food poverty, supporting the vulnerable, elderly and low-income families, local sports teams, improving the environment and reducing waste.
Enovert Community Trust	Support for community and environmental projects, including improving community halls, creating new children's play areas, restoring green spaces and habitats, and enhancing community sports and recreation facilities.
Royal British Legion's Everyday Needs Grants Programme	Help for UK Armed Forces veterans and their families who are struggling with the cost-of-living crisis.
Persimmon Community Champions	Grant funding to registered charities, clubs, schools and other organisations which have already raised money for projects helping the local community.
Friends of the Elderly – Grants for Older People	Support for older people struggling with loneliness and those living on a low income.
National Lottery Awards for All England	Supporting communities with what matters most to them, including the cost of living crisis.
Screwfix Foundation	Supports projects that improve, fix and repair buildings, homes and facilities specifically used by people in need throughout the UK.
Veterans Foundation	Provides grants to organisations supporting serving and previous members of the armed forces.
National Lottery Community Fund	Funding organisations that bring different communities together, especially projects that join people from different backgrounds together, connect online and offline worlds and ensure everyone gets a say in the future of their community.
Tudwick Foundation	The foundation invites applications for community projects, mainly voluntary organisations and community groups that are addressing outstanding social needs, offering between £300 and £3,000.
Essex Community Foundation (ECF)	Funding for charity, voluntary and community organisations.
Tesco Community Grants	Community groups across the UK are being asked to apply for funding for local projects (up to £1,500) that matter to them. Eligible projects include breakfast or holiday lunch clubs, food banks, youth clubs or schools.
Community Enterprise Fund	Supports community organisations making an impact. The fund offers packages of blended loan and grant fund of up to £50k.
BandQ Foundation	An independent charity set up in 2020 to build on BandQ's commitment to make a positive difference in communities.
Mortgage Advice Bureau Foundation / Crowdfunder	Crowdfunder and Mortgage Advice Bureau Foundation are working together to make £100,000 available for sustainable community projects across England, Scotland and Wales.
Biffa Award	Gives grants to community projects near landfill sites.

¹⁰⁶ Colchester City Council, (2024); Funding opportunities – Community. Available at: <https://www.colchester.gov.uk/community-funding-opportunities/funding-opportunities/?id=andpage=community> [Accessed: July 2026].

Charity/fund	Description
Trusthouse Charitable Foundation	Provide grants to small and medium local organisations in the UK who have successfully addressed local issues in communities with extreme urban deprivation and deprived rural districts.
The Henry Smith Charity	Aims to help people and communities in need and create positive change. They fund organisations working with people to lower social and economic disadvantage.
Warburtons Community Grants	Offers small grants up to £400 to support charities that are improving health, place or skills for families in their community.
The Wakeham Trust	Provides grants to help people rebuild their communities. They are particularly interested in neighbourhood projects, community arts projects, projects involving community service by young people, or projects set up by those who are socially excluded.
Grassroots Charity Grants	There are hundreds of voluntary and community groups delivering social welfare to the residents of North East Essex. Grassroots provides grants to those organisations which are delivering social welfare services to improve the lives of people in Colchester and Tendring.

Source: Colchester City Council, (2026); Funding opportunities – Community. Available at:

<https://www.colchester.gov.uk/community-funding-opportunities/funding-opportunities/?id=andpage=community>

Summary

- 3.14.7. CCC maintains an audit of community facilities which identifies 33 church halls, 23 community centres, eight scout huts, 31 village huts, six libraries and 34 other facilities in Colchester. The current Local Plan identifies that while some locations in Colchester have a wide range of community facilities and appear to be well-served, many would benefit from new or enhanced facilities, including Greenstead in the urban area, a number of district centres and some villages.
- 3.14.8. The Heart of Greenstead scheme is part of Colchester's Town Deal Funding awarded in 2022. It will provide a multi-use community campus including a library and community space.
- 3.14.9. Developer contributions may be sought to provide additional community space where large new populations are planned, or may be pooled to provide upgrades to existing facilities where smaller population increases are anticipated. Based on benchmarks within CCC's SPD on Provision of Community Facilities, estimated costs associated with meeting new demand arising from the new allocations to 2043 are £22.1 million.
- 3.14.10. ECC/Essex Library Services would only typically seek to build new library facilities where a new population in excess of 7,000 people is expected, and developer contributions would be sought to support this. Contributions towards the expansion of existing facilities or mobile services might otherwise be sought. Based on benchmarks within the ECC Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions, estimated costs associated with meeting new demand arising from the new allocations to 2043 are £1.5 million.
- 3.14.11. The hybrid planning application for the TCBGC submitted in March 2026 identifies four Local Centres which will provide community space.
- 3.14.12. As well as developer and local authority funding, there are a number of charitable funds/grants which are available to support grassroots projects including Colchester's community facilities.

3.15. Cultural and civic facilities

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.15.1. The category of cultural facilities is wide-ranging and includes art galleries, museums, heritage and public realm assets. This chapter also covers civic facilities covering courts and burial grounds / crematoria.
- 3.15.2. Colchester hosts a range of cultural facilities. A selection of the key facilities and venues are set out in Table 3-28.

Table 3-28 Cultural facilities and venues in Colchester

Type of asset	Asset
Creative education	University of Essex Department of Literature, Film and Theatre Studies
	Colchester School of Art (Colchester Institute)
Heritage sites	Colchester Castle
	Roman Circus
	Layer Marney Tower
	Chappel Viaduct
	Holy Trinity Church
	St Botolph's Priory
	Jumbo Water Tower
	Gosbecks Archaeological Park
Museums and art galleries	Firstsite
	Natural History Museum
	Munnings Art Museum
	Colchester Castle Museum
	Hollytrees Museum
	East Anglian Railway Museum
	The Minories
	Art Exchange (University of Essex)
Live music	Colchester Arts Centre
	Charter Hall
	Castle Park
	St Botolph's Church
	JobServe Community Stadium
	Colchester Town Hall
Theatre	Mercury Theatre
	Headgate Theatre
	Lakeside Theatre
	Colchester Arts Centre
Environment and nature	Beaches of Mersea
	Castle Park

Type of asset	Asset
	Highwoods Country Park
	Dedham Vale National Landscape (formerly AONB)
	Fingringhoe Wick Nature Discovery Park
	Abberton Reservoir Nature Discovery Parks
Signals Essex Media Centre	
Major visitor attractions	Colchester Zoo
	Colchester Castle

Source: Colchester Borough Council, (2022); Colchester Cultural Strategy.

- 3.15.3. His Majesty's Courts and Tribunals Service (HMCTS), which is the executive agency of the Ministry of Justice for England and Wales, is responsible for the criminal, civil and family courts and tribunals in Colchester.
- 3.15.4. The structure of the courts and tribunals system requires that different types of case are attributed to specific types of court (e.g. Magistrates Court, Crown Court, County Court or High Court) as they arise¹⁰⁷. There is one court in Colchester: Colchester Magistrates' Court and Family Court. The nearest Crown Courts are in Ipswich, Chelmsford and Southend.
- 3.15.5. Burial grounds in Colchester are usually overseen by associated religious institutions and managed locally, including determining whether there is space for new burials and/or if new burials are being accepted. Burial grounds are usually located adjacent to places of worship. As set out in the Stage 1 and 2 IADP Report, there are 24 burial grounds within the city and many of the surrounding villages have one or more burial grounds.
- 3.15.6. Nationally, a large proportion (around 83%) of the population who die are cremated¹⁰⁸ and the absolute number of cremations per year is rising. Colchester Cemetery and Crematorium provides cremation services in Colchester, and is operated and maintained in association with CCC. This crematorium has a theoretical capacity of 3,120 cremations per annum¹⁰⁹. In Colchester, there were 1,831 cremations in 2022 and 1,491 cremations in 2023.

Infrastructure Requirements to 2043

- 3.15.7. Colchester was awarded £18.2 million from the Government's Town Deal fund in 2022 which will be invested in projects including cultural facilities. The Town Deal provided funding for a range of cultural initiatives, including:
- Transformed youth facilities;
 - Digital connectivity;
 - Public realm developments (Mercury Theatre and St Nicholas Square);
 - New gateway locations in Vineyard Street;
 - Heart of Greenstead; and
 - Preserving and improving key historic buildings ('Jumbo' Water Tower and Trinity Church).
- 3.15.8. In addition to the Town Deal funded projects mentioned above, the Cultural Strategy sets out an action plan for delivering and supporting cultural activities and assets across Colchester up to 2030. Those action plan items relating to cultural infrastructure/facilities and their

¹⁰⁷ Courts and Tribunals Judiciary, (2024); Structure of the Courts and Tribunal system. Available at: <https://www.judiciary.uk/about-the-judiciary/our-justice-system/court-structure/> [Accessed: July 2026].

¹⁰⁸ The Cremation Society of Great Britain, (2025); The Progress of Cremation in the British Islands 1885-2024: 2024 figure.

¹⁰⁹ Information provided by Colchester City Council.

timescales for delivery, resource requirements and delivery responsibilities are set out in Table 3-29..

Table 3-29 Cultural Strategy action plan items relating to cultural facilities

Action	Timescale	Resources	Owner
Develop a programme of collaborative site-specific events including multiple partners	Medium-term	Potential for ACE and other project grant funding	Creative Colchester, BID, Colchester Events (CCC), commercial sector, NPOs
Make the most of the public realm and create opportunity for art and heritage outside of cultural venues and museums	Medium-term	TBD	Creative Colchester, BID, NPOs, CCC, commercial sector
Develop a Parks and Open Space Strategy maximising the opportunities for creative and cultural activities in these important spaces	Medium-term	Existing resources	CCC
Increase the focus on Colchester's military heritage within existing museums and cultural venues	Medium-term	NLHF and/or other project grants, existing exhibition budgets	Colchester and Ipswich Museums (CCC), Garrison
Explore the potential for additional heritage 'interventions' outside of museums, such as the placement of a Roman mosaic under Lion Walk's pavement; finding more ways to work with developers and planning to bring important historical finds to life and interpret them, such as heritage related features in the built environment	Medium-term	Grant funding; fundraising and sponsorship, existing resources	CCC, landowners, heritage organisations, funding partners, developers
Continue the programme to enhance the interpretation of historic sites across the Borough working with and responding to communities and heritage groups	Ongoing	Heritage Grant funding, Section 106	CCC, landowners, heritage organisation, funding partners
Seek to improve the availability and accessibility of ancillary music industry infrastructure (e.g., record and equipment stores), studios (rehearsal, recording) and venues	Long-term	Consider rent incentives	Creative Colchester, commercial landlords, CCC
Walking and cycling corridor	Medium-term	TBD	TBD
Deliver 5G provision	Medium-term	Town Deal funding	We Are Colchester / CCC
Kerbless streets	Medium-term	Town Deal funding	We Are Colchester / CCC
Replace town centre pedestrian signage	Short-term	Existing funding	BID
Transformed Youth Facilities Building on existing youth provision, with a significant investment in facilities for young people	Medium-term	Town Deal funding	We Are Colchester / CCC
Deliver Queen Street Digital Working hub capital project	Medium-term	SELEP funding	We Are Colchester / CCC
Deliver Wilson Marriage Centre (Refurbishment and digital learning)	Medium-term	Town Deal funding	We Are Colchester / CCC
Redevelop Colchester Natural History Museum	Medium-term	NLHF funding and trusts and foundations	Colchester and Ipswich Museums (CCC)
Deliver Heart of Greenstead capital project	Medium-term	Town Deal funding	We Are Colchester / CCC
Deliver St Nicholas Square capital project	Medium-term	Town Deal funding	We Are Colchester / CCC

Action	Timescale	Resources	Owner
Deliver Jumbo capital project and develop feasibility study for future development	Short-term	Town Deal funding and NLHF	We Are Colchester / CCC
Deliver Balcerne Gate capital project	Short to medium-term	Town Deal funding	We Are Colchester / CCC
Deliver Holy Trinity and Trinity Square capital project	Medium-term	Town Deal funding	We Are Colchester / CCC
Deliver Vineyard Cultural Gateway and Essex County Hospital capital project	Medium-term	Town Deal funding	We Are Colchester / CCC

Source: Colchester Borough Council, (2022); Colchester Cultural Strategy.

3.15.9. New and expanded cultural infrastructure above those projects and aspirations described above may be required to 2043. A range of quantitative benchmarks published by national organisations have been applied to the population associated with the emerging potential allocations to 2043, though it is noted that such benchmarks do not reflect the quality and value of assets such as heritage assets. As shown in Table 3-30, the projected increase of 32,363 people in Colchester implies an estimated total requirement of 2,557 sqm cultural floorspace.

Table 3-30 Local benchmarks for provision of cultural facilities

Facility type	Source	Benchmark for provision	Demand (sqm) to 2043
Arts facilities	Arts Council England, and Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, 2009	45m ² per 1,000 people	1,456
Archive facilities	Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, 2008	6m ² per 1,000 people	194
Museums	Arts Council England, and Museums, Libraries and Archives Council, 2009	28m ² per 1,000 people	906
Total			2,557

Source: Town and Country Planning Association, (2013); Improving Culture, Arts and Sporting Opportunities through Planning. A Good Practice Guide.

3.15.10. Ensuring there is appropriate capacity across the range of courts is the responsibility of the centralised HMCTS which operates at a larger geography than Colchester, and the catchment areas applicable to different courts varies. In terms of ensuring the appropriateness of the courts estate in the context of growing populations, HMCTS analyse:

- Whether areas without an existing court or tribunal presence should have one;
- The largest/smallest impact of a court or tribunal closure; and
- The optimum layout of court and tribunal buildings for a given sub-region, such as for multi-site reconfigurations (in the Spending Review 2025) ¹¹⁰.

3.15.11. It is reasonable to assume that population growth will lead to an increase in the demand for courts and tribunal infrastructure, though no planned projects have been identified and no demand quantification has been undertaken for this Stage 4 IADP Report.

3.15.12. Estimates of future demand for cremation services at Colchester Cemetery and Crematorium are not available. However, given the absolute number of cremations per year is rising nationally it can be expected that expanded or new facilities will be required to support population growth to 2043.

3.15.13. During consultation, CCC Bereavement Services indicated that there will be no additional bereavement services demand specifically associated with the emerging development trajectory sites. However, a strategic review of Colchester Cemetery and Crematorium is being undertaken with a view to delivery of a new crematorium building or facility in 2027/28.

¹¹⁰ HM Courts and Tribunal Service, (2022); HMCTS Estates Strategy 2021 to 2031.

A refit approach would be expected to cost £4.0 million whereas a new building would cost between £12.0 - £14.0 million. This project has not been entered into the Project Schedule as the requirement has not yet been confirmed by the strategic review.

- 3.15.14. If required, new crematoria in Colchester could be sited within the new Local Plan such that appropriate levels of expansion are considered alongside future proofing the proposed new facility for suitable expansion.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.15.15. Costs have not been identified for the delivery of cultural and civic facilities.

- 3.15.16. There are a number of funding sources available to support cultural facilities including:

- Organisations such as Arts Council England, Historic England, National Lottery Heritage Fund and other major cultural organisations¹¹¹;
- Developer contributions and planning obligations through S106 or CIL where related to a development proposal; and
- Smaller organisations offering grant funding such as The Headley Museums Archaeological Acquisition Fund; Benefact Trust, Essex Heritage Trust, and The Hervey Benham Charitable Trust¹¹².

- 3.15.17. The delivery of cultural infrastructure could be pursued/supported through the following mechanisms¹¹³:

- Use Classes Order and flexible use;
- Local Development Orders;
- Public-private partnerships;
- Social enterprises;
- Community asset transfer;
- Community Land Trusts;
- Development Trusts;
- Community development finance initiatives; and
- Local asset-backed vehicles.

- 3.15.18. It is not appropriate to report the funding sources, expenditures and delivery structure¹¹⁴ of HMCTS here given the centralised organisation operates at a national scale and specific information related to Colchester is not publicly available.

- 3.15.19. The building costs for crematoria are variable. As noted above, CCC indicates that if a new crematorium building or facility is determined as required in Colchester, a refit approach would be expected to cost £4.0 million whereas a new building would cost between £12.0 - £14.0 million.

- 3.15.20. Crematoria derive income from fees; gross revenue from Colchester's existing facilities is estimated by CCC to be £1.6 million per annum. As well the local authority, other potential delivery options include Joint Crematorium Boards, Joint Crematorium Committee, private companies or joint ventures.

¹¹¹ Town and Country Planning Association, (2024); Culture and Sport Planning Toolkit. Available at: <https://cultureandsportplanningtoolkit.org.uk/> [Accessed: July 2026].

¹¹² Colchester City Council, (2024); Funding Opportunities – Arts and Heritage. Available at: <https://www.colchester.gov.uk/community-funding-opportunities/funding-opportunities/?id=andpage=arts--and--heritage> [Accessed: July 2026].

¹¹³ Town and Country Planning Association, (2013); Improving Culture, Arts and Sporting Opportunities through Planning. A Good Practice Guide.

¹¹⁴ HM Courts and Tribunal Service, (2024); Annual Report and Accounts 2022-23.

Summary

3.15.21. Key findings regarding the provision of cultural facilities in Colchester are:

- A wide range of cultural facilities are located in Colchester including heritage assets, art galleries and museums.
- £18.2 million was awarded to Colchester in 2022 from the Government's Town Deal of which a proportion will be dedicated to funding cultural projects; £8 million has also recently been awarded to the 'Jumbo' Water Tower preservation project from NLHF.
- The Colchester Cultural Strategy sets out an action plan containing a number of other potential projects which will enhance Colchester's cultural assets to 2030, along with respective delivery responsibilities.
- CCC may wish to promote the enhancement of existing facilities, particularly where these heritage assets are in situ, or consider the development of new facilities at appropriate provision levels, to support future population growth. Charitable organisations and developer contributions (where related to the development) are potential funding sources to support this.
- Employing national benchmarks indicates that the population associated with the new allocations to 2043 would generate demand for 2,557 sqm floorspace to accommodate expanded arts galleries, archive facilities, and museums.

3.15.22. Key findings regarding the provision of civic facilities in Colchester are:

- HMCTS is responsible for the management of courts nationally, including Colchester Magistrates' Court and Family Court. Cases are dealt with at the appropriate court across local authority boundaries where necessary.
- HMCTS plans and manages demand including considering demographic trends and population growth over time to ensure the correct facilities are available in the correct locations. While it is reasonable to expect demand for these facilities to increase with population growth, it is not possible to quantify this demand or estimate associated costs.
- There are a number of burial grounds in Colchester adjacent to places of worship. In addition, Colchester Cemetery and Crematorium provides cremations to support the needs of Colchester's population.
- Demand and costs arising from growth for bereavement services have not been quantified. However, CCC is undertaking a strategic review of the ways in which Colchester Cemetery and Crematorium could be expanded or supplemented with an additional facility.

3.16. Police

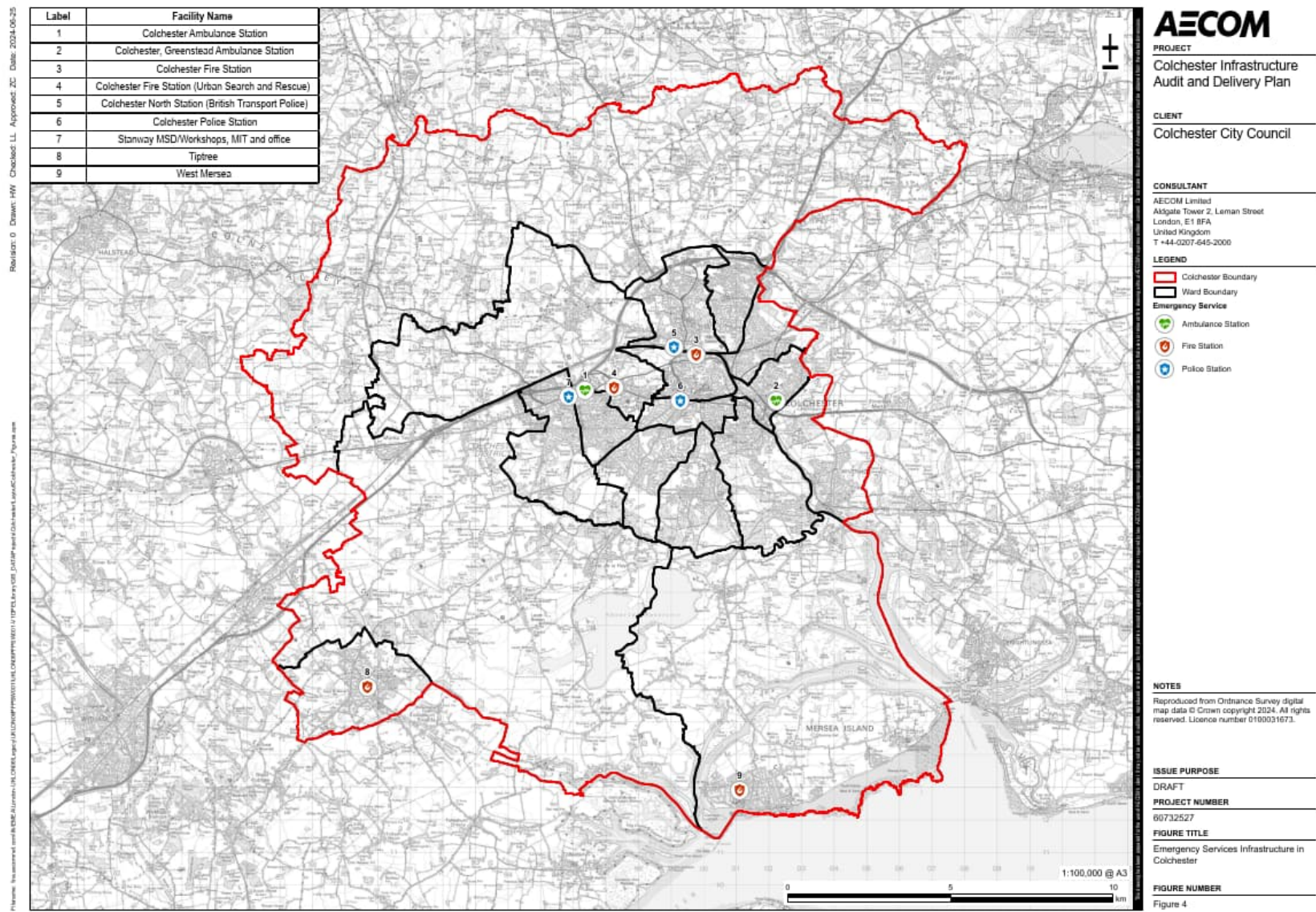
Baseline

Current provision

- 3.16.1. Essex Police were consulted during formulation of the IADP and responded with evidence in December 2024, June 2025 and June 2026. This chapter is largely based on the information contained within those documents.
- 3.16.2. Essex Police operates a 'Local Policing Area' (LPA) policing model. Each LPA is resourced by a dedicated Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT), consisting of Police Officers, Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) Community Safety Engagement Officers, Children & Young Persons Officers, and support functions, including integrated local partners, and partnerships within co-located Community Safety Hubs. The Colchester Local Plan Area is covered by the Colchester District Policing Area. The baseline police resources within the Local Policing Area are operating at capacity.

- 3.16.3. There is one police station in Colchester; this is shown in Figure 3.10. There is also a British Transport Police station. The Stanway site is no longer operational.
- 3.16.4. The NPPF advises that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, incorporating a social objective to support strong, vibrant, and healthy communities by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment. The NPPF requires planning policies and decisions to achieve healthy, inclusive safe places which are accessible, so that crime and disorder, and the fear of crime do not undermine the quality of life or community cohesion.
- 3.16.5. Planning policies should also promote public safety, including through the layout and design of developments. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Section 17) places a duty on local authorities to reduce crime and disorder within the community.

Figure 3.10 Emergency services infrastructure in Colchester



Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.16.6. Essex Police state that both the construction and occupation phases of residential development lead to an increase in the incidence of criminal activity. At the construction phase this includes property-based theft and vandalism, which leads to an increased impact on police facilities and a greater draw on Neighbourhood Policing Team (NPT) resources. At the occupation phase, increased populations give rise to an increase in crime and incidents against persons (e.g. violence, sexual, burglary, vehicle theft and criminal damage). New residents would be the victims of such crime, leading to an increased impact on police facilities and a greater draw on its NPT resources, including specialist unit support officers.
- 3.16.7. In addition, emerging new communities need to be integrated with existing communities, and an appropriate level and duration of community safety, cohesion, and policing would therefore need to be provided across the occupation phase of developments.
- 3.16.8. Overall, major new housing developments give rise to significant additional resource needs and implications for NPTs (including specialist officers supporting NPTs). Essex Police therefore requires additional police infrastructure/ facilities(police facilities) to be funded and/or provided by developers. Any requests for Section 106 or CIL funding would be supported by evidence to identify the need, which may be in the form of the following police facilities:
- Additional or enhanced police station floor space and facilities (including fit out and refurbishment);
 - Custody facilities;
 - Mobile police stations;
 - Communications including ICT;
 - Speed camera/Automatic number plate recognition technology;
 - Police vehicles; and
 - Funding for additional staff resources, incorporating the recruitment, training, equipping and tasking of Police Community Support Officers (PCSO's) during the construction phase of residential development, and recruitment, training and equipping of Neighbourhood Policing Team Officers (NPTO's) during the occupation phase of residential development.
- 3.16.9. Essex police have identified ten 'Growth Areas' (totalling 8,905 dwellings), where developer contributions towards police facilities would be required to mitigate and manage the impacts arising on community safety, cohesion and policing. The Growth areas reflect the location of new allocations with capacity of 250+ homes.
- 3.16.10. Taking the existing ratio of police staff to population in Colchester as the baseline, and assuming that this ratio is maintained going forward (with an average household size of 2.35 people), Essex Police forecast that the 8,905 dwellings located within the identified 'Growth Areas' would generate demand for an additional 21.3 officers and supporting infrastructure/ facilities.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.16.11. Essex Police considered the costs associated with the policing needs which might arise in Colchester due to the Development Trajectory.
- 3.16.12. Where developers are promoting major new housing developments of 250 dwellings or more, it is recommended that the pre-application advice is sought from Essex Police at an early stage, to agree a sustainable level of police facilities provision. Essex Police require additional police facilities demand resulting from development to be funded and/or provided by developers. Any request for S106 or CIL funding would be supported by evidence to identify the need.

3.16.13. The estimated budget for the level of developer funding requirements for the ten 'Growth Areas' across the plan period is £5,531,571 . This sum is included within the Project Schedule. Table 3-31 sets out the developer funding requirements by Growth Area.

Table 3-31 Developer funding requirements for police facilities by Growth Area

Area	Officers	Set-up costs officers	PCSO tasking costs	Vehicles costs	Accommodation costs	Traffic management	Total
Colchester Total	21.3	£267,592	£3,863,434	£187,804	£924,742	£288,000	£5,531,571
North Colchester	0.6	£7,538	£0*	£5,290	£25,961	£24,000	£62,789
East Colchester	4.8	£60,302	£1,058,475	£42,322	£207,691	£24,000	£1,393,790
South Colchester	2.1	£26,382	£423,390	£18,516	£90,865	£24,000	£583,153
Tiptree	1.6	£20,101	£317,543	£14,107	£67,499	£24,000	£443,250
Marks Tey	5.7	£71,609	£1,217,246	£50,258	£247,152	£48,000	£1,634,265
West Mersea	0.7	£8,794	£0*	£6,172	£31,154	£24,000	£70,120
Eight Ash Green	1.2	£15,076	£0*	£5,290	£51,922	£24,000	£96,288
Great Horkesley	1.9	£23,870	£423,390	£16,753	£83,076	£24,000	£571,089
Langham	2.0	£25,126	£423,390	£17,634	£88,268	£24,000	£578,418
Copford	0.7	£8,794	£0*	£6,172	£31,154	£24,000	£70,120

Source: Essex Police, (2026).

* Sites only qualify for PCSO funding when there is capacity for 500 dwellings or more.

3.16.14. In 2025/6, data indicated that Essex Police was the 12th highest (out of 43) funded force (funding from grants and council tax) per head of population¹¹⁵. In the short term, the force is expected to borrow £68.0 million between 2023/24 and 2027/28 for capital investment plans¹¹⁶.

Summary

3.16.15. Essex Police provides policing services across Colchester. The Colchester Local Plan Area is covered by the Colchester District Policing Area. The baseline police resources within the Local Policing Area are operating at capacity.

3.16.16. There is one police station within Colchester, as well as a British Transport Police station.

3.16.17. Essex Police indicates that both the construction and occupation phases of major new housing developments require additional police infrastructure/ facilities (police facilities) to provide for the necessary community safety, cohesion, and policing to mitigate and manage the crime impacts arising from the increased population.

¹¹⁵ His Majesty's Inspectorate of Constabulary and Fire and Rescue Services, (2026); Value for Money Profiles: 2025/6. Available at: <https://hmicfrs.justiceinspectorates.gov.uk/our-work/article/value-for-money-inspections/value-for-money-dashboards/> [Accessed: June 2026].

¹¹⁶ Essex Police, (2023); Force Management Statement 2023.

- 3.16.18. Essex Police has identified ten 'Growth Areas' within the Development Trajectory, where sites providing 250+ dwellings would be located which would require additional or enhanced police facilities such as police floor space, police vehicles, accommodation, traffic management facilities, PCSOs during construction, and NPTOs during occupation.
- 3.16.19. To fund the additional demand on police facilities resulting from the population increase associated with growth, Essex Police will require funding from developers. It is anticipated that the total developer funding requirements for the ten Growth Areas across the plan period will be £5.5 million.

3.17. Ambulance

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.17.1. The East of England Ambulance Service (EEAST) provides accident and emergency services, minor injuries services, and where commissioned non-emergency patient transport services across the East of England.
- 3.17.2. EEAST receives over 1.3 million 999 calls every year and provides care for over 6.3 million patients per year across the region as a whole¹¹⁷. EEAST also provides urgent and emergency responses to healthcare professionals requiring ambulance assistance, and inter-facility transfers between hospitals and other healthcare settings. The Non-Emergency Patient Transport Services provided by EEAST give an essential lifeline for people unable to use public or other transport due to their medical condition.
- 3.17.3. Across the counties which EEAST serves there are two ambulance emergency operation centres (EOCs) which are found in Chelmsford and Norwich. The fleet operated by EEAST is comprised of 521 frontline vehicles, 67 rapid response vehicles, 180 non-emergency ambulances; and 37 hazardous response team (HART), major incidents and resilience vehicles¹¹⁸.

¹¹⁷ East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust, (2025); Annual Report and Accounts 2024 – 2025.

¹¹⁸ East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust, (2025); About Us. Available at: <https://www.eeastamb.nhs.uk/about-us> [Accessed: July 2026].

Figure 3.11 EEAST service area



Source: East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust, (2025); Annual Report and Accounts 2024 – 2025.

3.17.4. 2024/25 EEAST activity in North East Essex is shown in Table 3-32 below.

Table 3-32 EEAST activity in North East Essex, 2024/25

Treatment Type	No. Incidents
Face to Face	24,027
Conveyances	14,683
Hear and Treat	4,632
Community First Responders attendances	612

Source: EEAST, June 2026.

3.17.5. Within Colchester there are two ambulance stations, located in Colchester town centre and Greenstead. These are shown in Table 3-33 and Figure 3.11.

Table 3-33 Ambulance infrastructure in Colchester

Facility Location	Function	Size (GIA sqm)	Year Built
Colchester	'Make ready' hub where emergency ambulances can be cleaned, restocked, serviced, and repaired.	428 sqm	1953
Colchester, Greenstead	Ambulance Response Post (ARP)	N/A - leasehold	N/A - leasehold

- 3.17.6. Neighbouring ambulance stations which will support residents in the Colchester area are located in Braintree, Halstead, Maldon, Sudbury (response post), Weeley and Witham.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.17.7. EEAST indicated through consultation that a new purpose-built ambulance hub is required in Colchester to meet current demand, which will support ambulance stations and response posts in the vicinity. EEAST would expect this to be operational for around 30 years.
- 3.17.8. Ideally, EEAST will also need more ambulance response posts in order to target 90% of the Colchester area in 6-17 minutes; these response posts would all be served by the Colchester hub. Response Posts would be more flexible and likely be leasehold with a life span of 5-10 years (as they would move depending on population growth). EEAST plans to model the exact locations for additional ambulance response posts against the spatial growth option.
- 3.17.9. The specifications for ambulance hubs and ambulance response posts are summarised in Table 3-34.

Table 3-34 Ambulance infrastructure specifications

Asset type	Description	Specification
Ambulance hub	Key hub location, main operational base	1 hectare of land close to local hospital (building circa 2,200 m² GIA) (this size hub is for 34 ambulances)
	Start and finish location for ambulances to travel to Response Posts	- Good road network links - Sufficient space for 41 dual staffed ambulances, 7 rapid response vehicles - Offices - Make Ready centre - Vehicle workshop - Parking for staff vehicles and bicycles - Health and wellbeing garden - Power supply to enable charging of electric ambulance/rapid response vehicles. - Located in Flood Zone 1
Ambulance Service Response Post (ASRP)	ASRP no more than 45 minutes from the hub	- Accessible 24 hours a day/seven days a week. - Rest room with access to vehicles within 30 seconds from activation. Ground floor is preferred.
Reporting Base (only when access is more than 45 minutes from the Ambulance Hub)	ASRP ideally are co-located with other emergency services or NHS facility	- Appropriately located to support operational requirements, i.e. enable response times - Suitably sized for number and type of vehicles - Welfare facilities, kitchen, rest room, toilets and multi-purpose room - External parking close to building entrance/exit - Staff parking (reporting base only) - External vehicle charging facilities

Asset type	Description	Specification
		Digital, radio, Wi-Fi and other telecoms enabled

Source: East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust, (2026); Ambulance Response Post Specifications.

- 3.17.10. Generally, EEAST assumes an additional ambulance for every additional 10,000 residents. EEAST identify the requirement for two additional ambulances from 2025 to meet demand from the existing commitments and existing allocations identified within the development trajectory, and an additional two ambulances (the first from 2025 and the second from 2037) to meet demand from the new allocations.
- 3.17.11. EEAST also identified the following needs as likely to arise from population growth:
- Additional resources would be required at regional call centres: this could include new technology, digital systems to improve call handling, staff well-being and improvements to patient care (e.g. diagnostics, telematics, auto connections to acute hospitals). There may also be changes in technology which affect how diagnostics/ treatment is provided in future.
 - Recruitment, equipment and training of Community First Responders. The skills mix in terms of ambulance staff is likely to increase with more specialised/higher qualified paramedics and EMTs. Training and employment opportunities within the Colchester area could support this development.
- 3.17.12. It is noted that Policy OA4 Northern Gateway Mixed Use in the Regulation 19 Local Plan supports the provision of an emergency services hub subject to other policies within the Local Plan.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.17.13. According to EEAST, building costs of a new hub are in the region of £15-22 million (higher value includes land costs and additional power infrastructure to enable charging of electric vehicles (2025 prices) depending on size and design). No funding is currently committed to the new Hub.
- 3.17.14. Each Dual Service Ambulance (DSA) can cost around £140,000 and last for up to 5 years before requiring replacement (these costs do not include servicing, repairs, running costs or fuel). HART vehicles cost more, whilst Rapid Response Vehicles are less.
- 3.17.15. EEAST indicated potential financial contributions (s106/CIL) which it will seek towards meeting the needs arising from growth to 2043. The estimates are based on 2023/24 activity figures and assume on an average household size of 2.2 people, adjusted to 2.3 for Colchester Local Authority. A contribution of £340 per 2.2 dwelling (adjusted pro-rata) and £155 per care home bedroom is assumed. EEAST uses an activity rate of 0.23 incident responses per person per annum for all ages, and 0.11 incident rate for adults of working age (19-65 years).
- 3.17.16. On this basis, the new allocations (13,755 homes) generate 7,276 additional incidents per annum and a required contribution of £4,676,700. This cost has been included within the Project Schedule.
- 3.17.17. In addition, EEAST use the benchmark of one additional ambulance and Rapid Response Vehicle per 10,000 residents. Therefore, based the population growth from the new allocations, an additional two ambulances and Rapid Response Vehicles will be required.
- 3.17.18. EEAST will apply to NHS England for funding for the new ambulance hub but anticipate that S106/CIL will provide additional funding. Developer contributions will also potentially support establishment of new ambulance response posts, provision of additional ambulances and recruitment / equipment / training of Community First Responders.

- 3.17.19. EEAST is also contracted to provide Patient Transport Services subject to competitive tender¹¹⁹. A capital allocation is provided from Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC) including additional funding for chemical, biological, radiological and nuclear response training.

Summary

- 3.17.20. East of England Ambulance Service Trust (EEAST) provides the ambulance service in Colchester. There are currently two ambulance stations comprising the Colchester 'make-ready' hub and the Greenstead ARP. Information received during stakeholder consultation illustrates that demand is high and increasing, and the service is strained by handover delays at hospitals impacting on incurred costs.
- 3.17.21. EEAST indicated that a new purpose-built ambulance hub is required in Colchester to meet current demand, which will support ambulance stations and response posts in the vicinity. An ambulance hub is expected to have a lifespan of 30 years. Ideally, EEAST will also need more ambulance response posts in order to target 90% of the Colchester area in 6-17 minutes. EEAST identify the requirement for four additional ambulances from 2026 to meet demand to 2043. Additional resources would also be required at regional call centres, and for recruitment, equipment and training of Community First Responders.
- 3.17.22. According to EEAST, building costs of a new hub are in the region of £15-22 million (higher value includes land costs and additional power infrastructure to enable charging of electric vehicles (2025 prices) depending on size and design). No funding is currently committed to the new hub. Each Dual Service Ambulance can cost around £140,000.
- 3.17.23. Based on EEAST benchmarks, the new allocations (13,755 homes) would generate 7,276 additional incidents per annum and developer contributions of £4.68 million would be required accordingly.
- 3.17.24. EEAST will apply to NHS England for funding for the new ambulance hub but anticipate that S106/CIL will provide additional funding. Developer contributions will also potentially support establishment of new ambulance response posts, provision of additional ambulances and recruitment / equipment / training of Community First Responders.

3.18. Fire and rescue

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.18.1. Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) has responded to consultation on the IADP by preparing an evidence base paper, which has been drawn upon to formulate this chapter.
- 3.18.2. Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (ECFRS) is responsible for assessing and responding to risks that occur within the Colchester Local Plan area. ECFRS is overseen by the Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner.
- 3.18.3. ECFRS provides prevention, protection and emergency response services from 50 locations across the county, of which five key assets are located within the Colchester Local Plan area. This includes one wholtime station, three on-call stations and an Urban Search and Rescue (USAR) facility, as shown in Table 3-35 Fire and rescue facilities in Colchester and Figure 3.10.

¹¹⁹ East of England Ambulance Service NHS Trust, (2024); What we spend and how we spend it. Available at: <https://www.eastamb.nhs.uk/about-us/freedom-of-information/what-we-spend-and-how-we-spend-it> [Accessed: July 2026].

Table 3-35 Fire and rescue facilities in Colchester Local Plan Area

Facility	Type
Colchester	Wholetime station* ¹
West Mersea	On-call station
Tiptree	On-call station
Wivenhoe	On-call station
Colchester	Urban Search and Rescue (USAR)* ²

Source: Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, (2025); Fire and Rescue Statement and Annual Report 2024-25.

- 3.18.4. As of 2023, ECFRS employed 628 whole time firefighters, 511 on-call firefighters, 42 control firefighters and 353 support staff, as well as specialist officer roles¹²⁰. The service maintains standard pumping appliances and a fleet of specialist vehicles¹²¹.
- 3.18.5. The baseline fire and rescue service resources within the Colchester Local Plan area are operating at capacity, and would be significantly impacted by the planned housing, population and employment growth envisaged.
- 3.18.6. The Crime and Disorder Act 1998 (Section 17) requires local authorities to reduce crime and disorder and consider community safety in the exercise of their duties and activities. The NPPF advises that the purpose of the planning system is to contribute to the achievement of sustainable development, incorporating a social objective to support strong, vibrant, and healthy communities by fostering a well-designed and safe built environment. The NPPF requires planning policies and decisions to enable and support healthy lifestyles, especially where this would address local health and wellbeing needs, and promote public safety, including through the layout and design of developments.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.18.7. ECFRS highlight new housing supply (totalling 8,905 dwellings) from ten 'Growth Areas': North Colchester, East Colchester, South Colchester, Tiptree, Marks Tey, West Mersea, Eight Ash Green, Great Horkesley, Copford and Langham. These 'Growth Areas' are comprised of new site allocations which will deliver 250 dwellings or more, giving rise to significant additional resource needs and service capacity implications for ECFRS.
- 3.18.8. Additional demand for fire & rescue infrastructure/ facilities will arise through an increase in the Prevention, Protection, and Response activities, including the increased number of incidents, increased attendance times and changes in the incident risk profile to be mitigated and managed.
- 3.18.9. To use service capacity effectively, resources are tasked into localities to cover the operational risk in that locality, and to be effective there is a requirement for local hubs or fire stations from which operational crews can be deployed.
- 3.18.10. Community Safety, Wellbeing and Fire Safety Officers are also focused on localities, and an increase in development would require additional capacity in a specific locality, to meet the increased operational and non-operational demands arising.
- 3.18.11. The increased risk arising from development within a locality would be managed in line with the three main strands of the service role in mind, as outlined below;
- Prevention – creating space within fire stations or hubs to prioritise community safety work in conjunction with delivery at home and school visits, including locations to work with partner agencies to reduce fire and road traffic incidents;

¹²⁰ Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, (2023); Strategic Assessment of Risk 2023 – 2024.

¹²¹ Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, (2023); Strategic Assessment of Risk 2023 – 2024.

- Protection – by carrying out fire safety audits and enforcing fire safety legislation with a focus on education, providing advice and seminars;
- Response – by tasking highly trained personnel, including firefighters, into an area to deal with emergency and non-emergency incidents requiring a fire and rescue facility deployment.

3.18.12. Additional or enhanced service capacity may be provided in the form of the following fire and rescue facilities:

- Additional or enhanced fire station floor space and facilities, including fit out, refurbishment and extension;
- Fire service plant and equipment, including hydrants, specialised pump/hose appliances, aerial ladder platform appliances, cutters, spreaders, rams, stretchers, lifting air bags, tools, winches, ventilation fans, operational lighting equipment, thermal imaging camera, ladders, dry suits, uniforms, breathing apparatus, defibrillators, first-aid kit, and personal protective equipment (PPE);
- Fire and rescue vehicles, inflatable boats, rescue sled, rescue paths, drones and electric vehicles (EV) charging points;
- Funding for additional staff resources, incorporating the recruitment, training, equipping and tasking of Community Safety, Wellbeing and Fire Safety Officers, and recruitment, training, and equipping of Firefighters.
- The level of demand for each element of fire and rescue infrastructure / facility set out above would be determined at the master planning and pre-application stages in light of the budgetary costs associated with each growth area in Table 3.36 below. Employment development (>500m² floorspace) would also require developer funded infrastructure / facilities provision, to be determined when m² floor space levels are provided and based on a standard charge guideline of £100/m².

3.18.13. The fire and rescue capital investment priorities within the Colchester Local Plan area are summarised below;

- Colchester Fire Station – there is an urgent requirement for land & funding to either provide new fire station facilities on an alternative site, or if feasible, redevelop the existing site to accommodate increased appliances, operational personnel, equipment & welfare space;
- Fleet Workshop Facilities – existing fleet workshops are at capacity & with the anticipated growth in fleet numbers, a new / or expanded workshop facility is required to maintain appliance availability in the context of increased housing/ population & employment floor space growth;
- Training & Welfare Facilities – the growth in workforce numbers & increased complexity of incidents necessitate investment in enhanced training & operational facilities, comprising modern, integrated spaces for learning simulation & welfare which are vital to maintaining firefighter safety & performance; and
- Urban Search & Rescue (USAR) Capabilities – urban growth & development increases the risk of large scale & complex incidents, including structural collapse, hazardous materials & transportation related emergencies, & USAR capabilities / capacity need to be scaled up accordingly with provision made for new / expanded training areas & equipment investment to support this highly specialised function.

3.18.14. ECFRS will be reviewing its operational needs in 2026/27, to identify the likely land and budgetary requirements for any capital projects required to deliver increased service capacity in specific locations arising from the planned growth in the Colchester Local Plan area.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.18.15. Major new housing developments give rise to significant additional resource needs and capacity implications for ECFRS, requiring appropriate funding by developers to mitigate and manage the community safety, including engagement to promote community wellbeing and resilience, and the increased incidents arising. ECFRS therefore requires additional fire and rescue infrastructure / facilities to be funded and /or provided by developers either through S106 Agreements or CIL, or via both approaches where applicable. Any requests for S106 and/or CIL funding would be supported by evidence to identify the need.
- 3.18.16. The estimated budget for the level of developer funding requirements for the ten 'Growth Areas' across the plan period is £3,066,750. Table 3-36 sets out the developer funding requirements by growth area. The budget is based on a standard charge guideline of £350 per dwelling, and the budget totals are included within the Project Schedule. Developer funding would also be sought to mitigate and manage the impacts arising from eligible employment floorspace >500 m².

Table 3-36 Estimated developer funding requirements for fire and rescue infrastructure arising from proposed Growth Areas

Growth Areas	Budget Estimate
North Colchester	£87,500
East Colchester	£700,000
South Colchester	£306,250
Tiptree	£227,500
Marks Tey	£833,000
West Mersea	£105,000
Eight Ash Green	£175,000
Great Horkesley	£280,000
Langham	£297,500
Copford	£105,000
Total Developer Funding	£3,116,750

Source: Essex County Fire and Rescue Service (2026).

- 3.18.17. In 2023/24, the majority of ECFRS expenditure was related to firefighter and staff pay. Around £11.8 million (13%) was related to premises and equipment¹²².
- 3.18.18. The fire authority is primarily funded through Council Tax collections, reflecting around 60% of funding¹²³. Total income from government grants was budgeted at £8.3 million for 2023/24, comprised of Business Rates Relief grant, Services Grant and Firelink Grant (which will be phased out over a five year period).
- 3.18.1. ECFRS indicated that the successive reductions in government grant and significant increase in planned housing and population growth necessitate developer funding. Developer funding is required to maintain fire & rescue service capacity at operational effectiveness at an appropriate level, and to mitigate and manage community safety, cohesion and engagement requirements, including the increased incidents arising.

Summary

- 3.18.2. ECFRS provides fire and rescue services across the Colchester Local Plan area. Within the local authority area, there are five stations: one wholetime station, three on-call stations, and

¹²² Police Fire and Crime Commissioner for Essex, (2023); Precepts 2023/24.

¹²³ Essex County Fire and Rescue Service, (2023); Annual Report and Statement of Assurance 2022 – 2023.

one Urban Search and Rescue hub. The baseline fire & rescue resources are currently operating at capacity in the Colchester Local Plan area.

- 3.18.3. ECFRS highlight new housing supply (totalling 8,905 dwellings) from ten 'Growth Areas', comprising new site allocations which will deliver 250 dwellings or more, will give rise to significant additional resource needs and service capacity implications for ECFRS. Estimated developer funding requirements associated with these growth sites are £3.1 million.
- 3.18.4. Additional demand for fire & rescue infrastructure / facilities will arise through an increase in the Prevention, Protection, and Response activities, including the increased number of incidents, increased attendance times and changes in the incident risk profile to be mitigated and managed.
- 3.18.5. Additional or enhanced service capacity may be provided in various forms including additional or enhanced fire station floor space and facilities; fire service plant and equipment; fire and rescue vehicles; funding for the recruitment, training, equipping and tasking of community safety, wellbeing and fire safety officers, and recruitment, training and equipping of firefighters.
- 3.18.6. ECFRS estimate that developer funding of £3.1 million is required to meet the requirements of housing and population growth arising from the ten growth areas to 2043. Any requests for S106 and/or CIL funding would be supported by evidence to identify the need.

3.19. Primary care (GPs)

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.19.1. In April 2026, the Suffolk and North-East Essex (SNEE) Integrated Care Board (ICB) ceased as an organisation with the new NHS Essex ICB taking on Colchester and Tendring as a pan-Essex strategic commissioning health board, commissioning health and care services across Essex. This chapter is based on information provided by NHS Essex ICB in June 2026, building on engagement with SNEE ICB in 2025.
- 3.19.2. The new NHS Essex ICB supports the health and wellbeing of a community of nearly two million people residing in the city area, district and city councils of Basildon, Braintree, Brentwood, Castle Point, Chelmsford, Colchester, Epping Forest, Harlow, Maldon, Rochford, Southend, Tendring, Thurrock and Uttlesford.
- 3.19.3. NHS Essex ICB seeks to:
 - Improve outcomes in population health and healthcare;
 - Tackle inequalities in outcomes, access and experience;
 - Enhance productivity and value for money; and
 - Help the NHS support broader social and economic development.
- 3.19.4. The Essex ICB delivers support and services involving multiple partners. The new geography provides a meaningful footprint within which to plan, design and deliver health and care services for and with the local community.
- 3.19.5. The ICB recognises that General Practitioners (GPs or family doctors) providing primary care remain the first point of contact for many people seeking health services. GPs, and their branch surgeries where relevant, are listed below. These are a mixture of purpose-built surgeries and buildings converted from other uses, including dwellings.
- 3.19.6. GPs work collaboratively in five Primary Care Networks (PCN's) supporting the population of Colchester known as Abbey Field PCN, Colchester Medical Practice PCN, Creffield Medical Group PCN, North Colchester PCN and Stour Estuary PCN. A wide range of primary care

services are offered across PCNs through GPs and additional health professionals. A PCN is a group of local GP practices that work together, typically covering a population of 30,000 to 50,000 people within a specific geographical area. They collaborate with other healthcare services, like pharmacists, mental health teams, and community services, to provide better and more coordinated care for patients in their community.

- 3.19.7. Data provided by NHS Essex ICB and shown in Table 3-37 indicates that within existing facilities there is a significant deficit of capacity for primary care services, with most practices and all PCNs having an existing deficit of capacity. Table 3-37 sets out the number of patients (weighted to reflect differing healthcare needs) at each practice, the Net Internal Area (NIA square metres) of the space currently provided and the NIA sqm required (based on a benchmark assumption of sqm need per patient / dwelling). Overall provision is 3,402m² less than the accepted standards. Two of the five PCNs have a deficit of space greater than 1,000m² which is the typical size of a large purpose-built health centre. Opportunities to extend or reconfigure existing surgeries to address capacity issues are few due to building and site limitations and severe budgetary constraints. The NHS has estimated that the cost of addressing this identified deficit in existing provision would be in the region of £16.5 million.

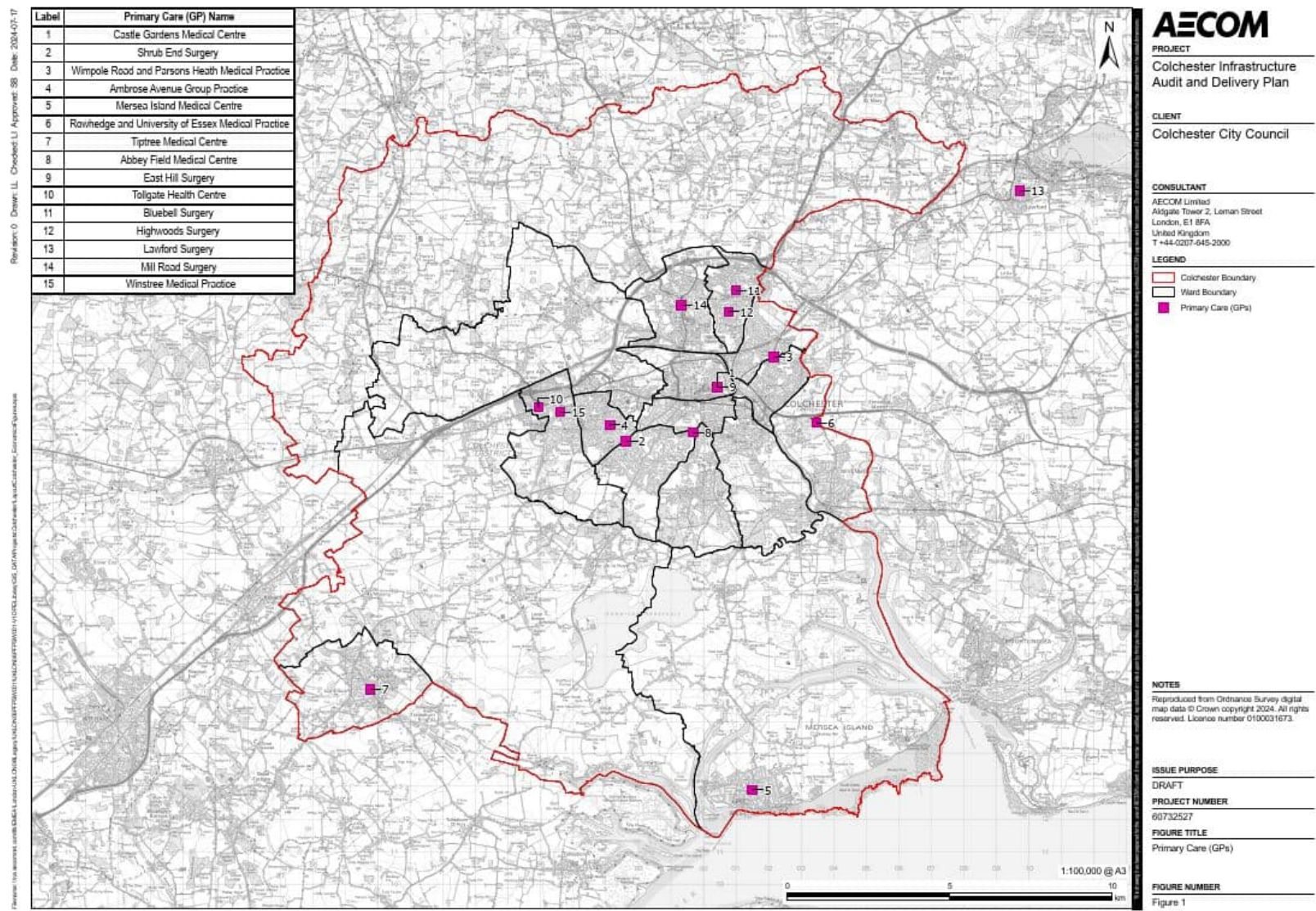
Table 3-37 Colchester Primary Care Networks and GP surgeries: patients and spatial needs

Surgery Name	Weighted Patient List	Net Internal Area (m ²)	NIA Needed (m ²)	Capacity (m ²)
Current position: Abbey Field PCN				
Abbey Field Medical Centre – including: Elmstead Market (Branch) Hawthorn Surgery (Branch)	20,282	1,436	1,391	45
Ambrose Avenue Group Practice – including: Tollgate Health Centre (Branch)	13,737	984	942	42
East Hill Surgery	9,047	394	620	-226
Rowhedge Surgery – including: University Health Centre (Branch)	10,360	459	710	-251
Tollgate Practice	8,744	524	600	-76
Wivenhoe Surgery	8,439	601	579	22
Sub-Total	70,609	4,398	4,842	-444
Current position: Colchester Medical Practice PCN				
Colchester Medical Practice (Castle Gardens) – including: Parsons Heath Medical Centre (Branch) Shrub End Surgery (Branch) Wimpole Road Surgery (Branch)	40,997	1,671	2,811	-1,140
Sub-Total	40,997	1,671	2,811	-1,140
Current position: Creffield Medical Group PCN				
Creffield Medical Group – including: Nayland Surgery (Branch) West Bergholt Surgery (Branch)	27,247	1,615	1,868	-253
Turner Road Surgery	8,176	473	561	-88
Sub-Total	35,423	2,088	2,429	-341
Current position: North Colchester PCN				
Bluebell Surgery	2,858	344	196	148
Highwoods Surgery	6,966	372	478	-106
Mill Road Surgery	15,517	786	1,064	-278

Tiptree Medical Centre	12,998	391	891	-500
West Mersea Surgery (incl. 2 rooms at Barfield Road Clinic)	7,882	163	540	-377
Winstree Medical Practice – including: Malting Green Surgery (Branch)	8,393	423	576	-153
Sub-Total	54,614	2,479	3,745	-1,266
Current position: Stour Estuary PCN				
The Ardleigh Surgery – including: Dedham Health Centre (Branch)	8,195	351	562	-211
Sub-Total	8,195	351	562	-211
Grand Total	209,838	10,987	14,389	-3,402

Source: NHS Essex ICB June 2026.

Figure 3.12 Primary care provision (GPs) across Colchester



- 3.19.8. The Joint Essex Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2026 – 2029 states that there is a decline of healthy life expectancy in Central Colchester compared to the Essex average which is 63.01 years for males and 63.27 years for females.
- 3.19.9. GP satisfaction and wait times continue to be below national averages in Essex. Only 68% of patients report a good experience with their GP, compared to 72% nationally. Emergency re-admissions within 30 days rose by 8% over the past year.
- 3.19.10. There has also been a significant increase in issues relating to children and young people's mental health across Essex. 23.5% of 5-17 year olds have a mental health-related condition, which equates to over 27,000 young people across Essex.
- 3.19.11. The Essex ICB have a board-approved Population Health Improvement Plan¹²⁴ which sets out the ICB's five year strategic ambitions, two year commissioning intentions and delivery plans. This document comprehensively sets out the 'what, why and how' services will be commissioned across Essex to:
- Improve Health Outcomes;
 - Reduce inequalities;
 - Deliver sustainable high-quality services for Essex's population;
 - Combine existing strategies across Essex including Health and Wellbeing Board strategies. The Improvement Plan aligns with the NHS 10-year plan, with shifts from:
 - o Hospital → Community;
 - o Analogue → Digital; and
 - o Treatment → Prevention.
- 3.19.12. A delivery plan is being developed along with an Estates Strategy to improve access to and the quality of services across primary and community care which will identify key infrastructure needs for Primary Care and Neighbourhood Health Centres.
- 3.19.13. Recently completed capital schemes include:
- The Greenstead Community Hub (including a new GP surgery and pharmacy) - £18.2 million of funding was secured through the Government's Towns Fund, to fund the hub and other projects. The community hub was completed in March 2026¹²⁵.
 - Reconfiguration of the Barfield Road Clinic in West Mersea - completed in July 2026, this provided additional clinical capacity and improved building functionality (£330,000 through S106 and NHS funding).
 - Internal remodelling at Highwoods to create additional clinical capacity - completed in March 2026, with funding secured from S106 and the NHS (£50,000).

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.19.14. Planned primary healthcare projects are recorded in the Project Schedule, and include the following. The proposals are based on current knowledge and strategic planning; all schemes brought forward will be subject to NHS business case and governance processes and may be subject to change.
- Potential expansion of Tiptree Medical Practice including remodelling and refurbishment to provide additional administrative space (£350,000). Existing administrative space to be remodelled and reconfigured into clinical space to increase capacity;
 - Potential expansion of the University Health Centre branch of Rowhedge Surgery including remodelling and refurbishment to increase clinical capacity (£220,899);

¹²⁴ NHS Essex (2026) Population Health Improvement Plan for Essex Integrated Care Board (2026-2031). Available at: <https://www.essex.icb.nhs.uk/about/icb/health-improvement-plan/population-health-improvement-plan/> [Accessed: July 2026].

¹²⁵ <https://www.colchester.gov.uk/heartofgreenstead/> Accessed June 2024

- Internal remodelling at Ardleigh to create additional clinical capacity;
- Internal remodelling at Creffield to create additional clinical capacity;
- Potential front extension at CMP Shrub End to increase clinical capacity;
- Internal remodelling at CMP Parsons Heath to create additional clinical capacity; and
- Internal remodelling at Tollgate and/or Ambrose to create additional clinical capacity.

3.19.15. High level comments provided in 2025 by SNEE ICB on the development trajectory are summarised below. The Essex ICB added to these comments in June 2026 and noted that there may be some challenges with ongoing primary care estate provision in line with the increasing demand as the Neighbourhood Health Framework issued by government in March 2026 gathers pace.

- Potential demand arising, based location and scale of growth associated with the new allocations and the existing allocations, was considered in the context of Primary Catchment Areas.
- Options for creating additional clinical capacity and space were identified, in terms of both internal configuration to better use existing space and expansion of existing facilities. S106 would be an important funding source for these projects.
- Opportunities were identified to share more services within a PCN, and to provide flexible, bookable space for various services and providers.
- The Essex ICB will be developing and delivering a coordinated, efficient, and future-focused estate strategy that supports the delivery of Neighbourhood Health Services and sustainable hospital services, in partnership with local providers and other public sector partners, with best use of all public sector assets in the development of services.
- Regarding growth in certain locations: these discussions will need time to take place but will be important to ensure the strategy for these localities is robust and has longevity.
- The Essex ICB note that flexibility is central to the decision-making process, as new healthcare service provision needs to take account of longer-term population trends, financial pressures and staggered receipt of Section 106 contributions.

3.19.16. The Essex ICB responded to the hybrid planning application for the TCBGC in May 2026. The Essex ICB Estates Strategy is still in development in line with the expected outcomes of the NHS 10 Year Plan¹²⁶, however, the Health Strategy set out in the hybrid application is not supported by the ICB in terms of infrastructure requirements. The ICB propose:

- A financial contribution to fund extended services, or the provision of increased physical space, at an existing NHS healthcare facility to provide GP and community mental health service capacity for the development population from commencement of development until a new built facility is available on-site;
- A built facility on-site from Year 8 of the development. Its shell should be large enough to cater for the completed development but be fitted out and made available in a phases to reduce costs and limit the presence of void space. Alternatively, it could be constructed in phases on a site large enough to accommodate the building that will ultimately be required; and
- A financial contribution to expansion of acute healthcare infrastructure capacity.

3.19.17. In June 2026, the Essex ICB considered the proposed draft site allocations and existing commitments within the Local Plan development trajectory, estimating demand for primary healthcare space (NIA square metres) based on housing sites by location. Applying the same demand standards used within Table 3-37, the draft site allocations are estimated to

¹²⁶ Fit for the Future: 10 Year Health Plan for England (2025). Available at: <https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/6888a0b1a11f859994409147/fit-for-the-future-10-year-health-plan-for-england.pdf> [Accessed: July 2026].

generate a requirement for 1,931 sqm NIA floorspace and the existing commitments are estimated to generate a requirement for 1,137 sqm NIA floorspace. The Essex ICB stated that proposed development sites could have a detrimental impact on the services of GP practices which operate within the vicinity of these areas. As previously detailed, all GP surgeries within the Borough are operating over capacity and do not have capacity for any additional growth resulting from proposed developments. Proposed developments will be likely to have an impact on the NHS funding programme for the delivery of primary healthcare provision within the Colchester area and specifically within the health catchment of the developments. The ICB would therefore expect these impacts to be fully assessed and mitigated, and developer contributions secured towards increasing capacity for the benefit of patients of the PCNs operating in the area(s) of the proposed and cumulative developments.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.19.18. Planned projects in the Project Schedule include the potential expansion of Tiptree Medical Practice and the practice at Rowhedge University, alongside internal remodelling at Ardleigh, Creffield, CMP Shrub End, CMP Parsons Heath, and Tollgate and/or Ambrose to improve clinical capacity. The potential expansion of Tiptree Medical Practice would cost £350,000, with £250,000 of the funding secured from S106 and the NHS, leaving a funding gap of £100,000. Costs for the potential expansion of the practice at Rowhedge University are indicated as £220,899, funded by Primary Care Utilisation and Modernisation Fund (UMF)/S106. Further details on the costs and funding status of the planned projects are unknown at present.
- 3.19.19. The Essex ICB commented that demand arising to 2043 will clearly require substantial further investment in primary care facilities and that developer contributions will be an important source of funding. The Essex ICB is in the process of prioritising schemes as part of an overarching Estates Strategy and are not in a position to provide specific details of projects, associated costs and funding arrangements at this stage.
- 3.19.20. In the absence of confirmed costs for all projects from the Essex ICB, AECOM has undertaken a high-level benchmarking activity utilising published data¹²⁷. In 2024, Norfolk and Waveney ICB used the Healthy Urban Development Unit (HUDU) model to estimate demand, costs and appropriate developer contributions for primary care, acute care services, and mental health services. The average contribution required towards healthcare per home was estimated to be £4,333.
- 3.19.21. Applying the benchmark cost of £4,333 per home to new allocations (13,755 dwellings) provides an total indicative contribution of £59,600,415 for primary care, acute care services, and mental health services to 2043.

Summary

- 3.19.22. The Essex ICB is responsible for the commissioning of primary care services in Colchester including GPs, dental services and some specialised hospital services.
- 3.19.23. There are five PCNs operating 15 medical practices in Colchester. Data provided by the Essex ICB indicates a significant deficit of capacity for primary care services, based on benchmark space standards. Most practices and all PCNs have less floorspace than their weighted patient list implies is required, and there is an overall deficit of 3,402m². Opportunities to extend or reconfigure existing surgeries to address capacity issues are few due to building and site limitations and severe budgetary constraints. The NHS has estimated the cost of addressing this existing deficit in the region of £16.5 million.
- 3.19.24. Demand for primary care is set to increase due to population growth, the aging of the population, the increasing prevalence of multimorbidity, and ongoing cost of living

¹²⁷ Norfolk and Waveney ICB, (2024); 'Planning in health engagement protocol - Norfolk and East Suffolk Local Planning Authorities, the Norfolk and Waveney ICB, Health Partners and Public Health Norfolk and Public Health Suffolk, August 2024. See Annex C. Available at: https://www.breckland.gov.uk/media/21633/The-Planning-in-Health-Protocol/pdf/Planning_in_Health_Protocol_2024_ICB_v1.1.pdf?m=1745593007910 [Accessed: July 2026].

challenges. Challenges include the number of primary care vacancies (specifically GP, nursing and pharmacy roles) and the scale and nature of the estate required to meet current and future forecast care needs.

- 3.19.25. Planned primary healthcare projects are recorded in the Project Schedule and include the potential expansion of Tiptree Medical Practice and the practice at Rowhedge University, alongside internal remodelling at Ardleigh, Creffield, CMP Shrub End, CMP Parsons Heath, and Tollgate and/or Ambrose to improve clinical capacity.
- 3.19.26. Beyond these projects, the Essex ICB is not in a position to provide specific details of projects, as an overarching Estates Strategy is in development. However, the Essex ICB considered the proposed draft site allocations and existing commitments within the Local Plan development trajectory in order to estimate demand for primary healthcare space, and indicated an expectation that developer contributions would be secured towards increasing capacity.
- 3.19.27. A high-level benchmarking exercise by AECOM indicates that the cost of providing primary care, acute care services, and mental health services associated with the new allocations would be £59.6 million.

3.20. Acute care services

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.20.1. East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust (ESNEFT) (a merger of the previous Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust and Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust) is responsible for the provision of hospital and community health care services across Colchester, Ipswich, and smaller local areas in their catchment. Services are delivered from two acute hospital campuses, six community hospitals, two community diagnostic centres and a range of smaller outpatient based facilities.
- 3.20.2. The current lead commissioning group is the NHS Essex ICB, responsible for planning and commissioning NHS-funded healthcare for Colchester's residents.
- 3.20.3. ESNEFT are also commissioned to run and manage North East Essex (NEE) Community Services¹²⁸ to provide community care and nursing for housebound patients in Colchester.
- 3.20.4. Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust provide talking therapies and learning disability services in North Essex. Their services and locations are primarily covered in the mental health section below, but also relevant here as some community services are provided out of their site at Lexden Hospital in Colchester.
- 3.20.5. Acute care facilities within the local authority area comprise:
- Colchester Hospital – an NHS hospital with services delivered by ESNEFT, covering a catchment population of approximately 350,000 people with approximately 4,500 staff. The local population (Colchester) are supported also from other sites within North East Essex, including the Colchester Primary Care Centre on Turner Road, Mill Road Therapy Centre, Fryatt Hospital, Clacton Hospital and Clacton Community Diagnostic Centre; and
 - Oaks Hospital – a private hospital specialising in orthopaedics, general surgery, ophthalmology, cosmetic surgery, oncology and urology, which is run by independent healthcare provider Ramsay Health Care UK.
- 3.20.6. Community care provision by ESNEFT and partners in Colchester¹²⁹ is delivered at:

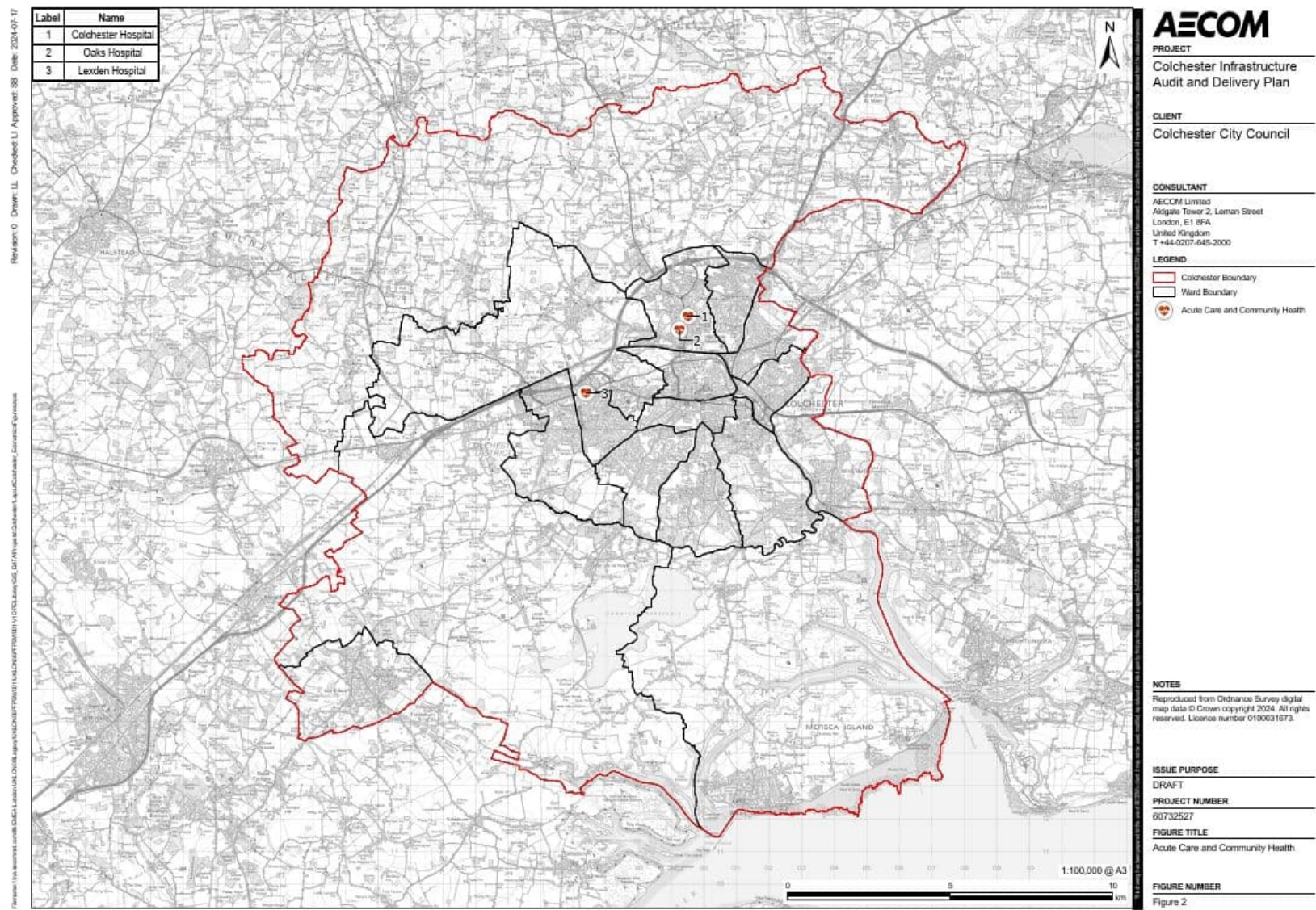
¹²⁸ [Community Nursing - North East Essex Community Services \(neecommunity.org.uk\)](https://www.neecommunity.org.uk) [Accessed: June 2024].

¹²⁹ East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust. Community services in North East Essex. Available at: <https://www.esneft.nhs.uk/service/community-services-in-north-east-essex/> [Accessed: July 2026].

- Lexden Hospital, Colchester - a community services and learning disabilities hospital, providing mental health capacity and rehabilitation, managed by Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust;
- North-East Essex Integrated Community Service. Run by ESNEFT, this is an integrated and comprehensive service which provides care around the person and their carers and is responsive to the needs of the local population in how services are delivered. The service is supported to be efficient and effective through joint working with other interdependent services, particularly adult social care, mental health providers, primary care and third sector organisations. This includes palliative care, post operative wound care, continence, outpatient parenteral antibiotic therapy, community matron service, specialist nursing, respiratory specialist services, intermediate care and integrated rapid assessment service;
- Community care in a variety of locations including at Colchester Hospital, and in smaller therapy and community support centres in Colchester including Mill Road Therapy Centre, Greenstead Community Centre, Portland Road Medical Centre, and the Turner Road Primary Care Centre; and
- Sexual health services delivered by Provide, a partnership of organisations including ESNEFT at the Maria Clinic, and by the Cambridgeshire Community Services NHS Trust in partnership with the Terrence Higgins Trust.

3.20.7. Colchester's three main acute care and community facilities are presented in Figure 3.13, noting that as mentioned above, community care services are also provided within smaller centres, care homes and patients' homes.

Figure 3.13 Acute care and community health facilities across Colchester



3.20.8. In terms of acute and integrated community care services, the Essex ICB Population Health Improvement Plan¹³⁰ refers to:

- An ageing population, with 20% being 65+ which is expected to increase a further 20% by 2034;
- Rising long term health conditions, in particular hypertension, obesity, depression, diabetes and asthma;
- Challenges around deprivation especially in coastal communities. Colchester Hospital serves a significant number of people in the highest areas of deprivation in Clacton, Jaywick and Harwich. This brings higher risks of smoking, obesity and alcohol harm. Healthy life expectancy differs by up to 12.4 years between the most and least deprived areas across the population that Colchester Hospital serves;
- Staff retention issues, significant financial pressures; and
- The need to deliver cost improvements and the added risk with the system-level assessment of revenue and capital performance.

3.20.9. The following capacity-related challenges exist for acute and community care¹³¹:

- Community: demand for home-based care has risen significantly post-pandemic;
- Outpatient capacity: the ICB is delivering up to 110% of pre-pandemic first outpatient appointments. Despite this, the number of patients waiting for treatments continues to rise;
- Further capacity is required in MRI;
- The Colchester Hospital site has a bed deficit of 90 beds, and this deficit is expected to grow as the population increases. Population increase is however not only related to demand for hospital beds, and expected increases in population will impact Urgent & Emergency Care (Emergency Department, Urgent Treatment Centre, Same Day Emergency Care) capacity, Diagnostics, and Elective capacity (outpatient & theatre); and
- Theatres: theatre utilisation is significantly higher than pre-pandemic levels but is not yet consistently at the 85% national goal. Further theatre and post-operative capacity will support a reduction in long waits for treatment. There are also opportunities to increase the proportion of procedures carried out in outpatient clinics and as day cases, pushing activity into the community and local Neighbourhood Health Centres.

Future Baseline including planned schemes

3.20.10. ESNEFT plans to invest £280 million during the period 2026-2031 through its Capital & Healthcare Planning Programme.

3.20.11. During the period 2024-2026, the following capital schemes were delivered:

- Dame Clare Marx Building (Elective Orthopaedic Centre) was delivered at Colchester Hospital. This includes eight theatres, a 16-bed Post Anaesthesia Care Unit (PACU) Stage 1, three 24-bed inpatient wards, a diagnostic imaging suite and associated facilities.
- Endoscopy Unit at Colchester Hospital – a new unit which offers a dedicated, purpose-built space (the service currently shares a space with day surgery in Elmstead Unit), upgraded facilities and a better environment and experience for patients, and more capacity to better manage waiting lists and reduce patient waiting times.
- A new inpatient/ Emergency Endoscopy facility.

¹³⁰ NHS Essex ICB (2026) Population Health Improvement Plan for Essex Integrated Care Board (2026-2031). Available at: <https://www.essex.icb.nhs.uk/about/icb/health-improvement-plan/population-health-improvement-plan/> [Accessed: July 2026].

¹³¹ NHS East Suffolk and North Essex (2024) ESNEFT Clinical Strategy 2024/29. Available at: <https://esneft-1f835.kxcdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2023/12/ESNEFT-Clinical-strategy-2024-accessible-version-2024-2029.pdf> [Accessed: June 2026].

- A new wellbeing garden.
- 3.20.12. The following capital & healthcare schemes are included in the 2026-2031 pipeline, and align with the Trust's refreshed 2025 Clinical Strategy:
- Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC) services expansion. This is estimated to cost £20 million and is funded in part from the Return to Constitutional Standards fund;
 - General & acute beds expansion (90 beds);
 - Diagnostics expansion (MRI);
 - Neonatal Unit expansion;
 - Pharmacy manufacturing expansion; and
 - Day Surgery Unit remodel & expansion.
- 3.20.13. These schemes are included in the Project Schedule. They are not yet fully funded, and would not accommodate demand arising from projected population growth to 2043. The combined capital requirement for these schemes in the 2026-2031 planning period is £175 million.
- 3.20.14. The ESNEFT Clinical Strategy 2026 – 2031¹³² has been written to reflect the government's 10 Year Plan for the NHS, published in 2025. The 10 Year Plan outlines an evolving landscape for commissioning and financial arrangements. There continues to be a focus on moving from treatment of illness to a preventative approach, and on delivering healthcare services through partnerships, to help integrate the complex system of health and care services. Part of this will be shifting care out of acute hospital settings to provide care closer to home, in community environments. The ESNEFT Clinical Strategy outlines how ESNEFT will strengthen prevention, provide more coordinated care in communities and accelerate digital transformation in line with the national NHS 10-Year Plan. The strategy has deliberately been developed in parallel with the Trust's Medium-Term Plan (2025-2030) and is closely aligned to national and ICB strategies.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.20.15. The Development Trajectory was shared with ESNEFT as part of the Stage 4 IADP engagement programme.
- 3.20.16. In response¹³³, ESNEFT confirmed that acute healthcare infrastructure and funding will be required to meet the needs arising from planned growth on sites comprising 250 or more residential dwellings. While ESNEFT has not yet quantified this need in relation to specific site allocations for residential development, it is ESNEFT's intention to provide further details during the ongoing preparation of the Local Plan.
- 3.20.17. ESNEFT emphasised that the principle of securing capital funds for acute healthcare infrastructure via planning obligations is supported by planning policy and case law, where appropriate evidence demonstrates that planned growth will give rise to additional demand and that mitigation is necessary to address the impacts of that growth. The response also reiterated the lack of capacity within existing acute and secondary healthcare infrastructure and services in Colchester, which demonstrates that mitigation will be required to meet the needs of the new population arising from planned growth to 2043.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.20.18. As outlined in Section 3.19, AECOM has conducted a high-level benchmarking exercise which estimates the combined healthcare costs for primacy care, acute care services, and mental health services as totalling £59.6 million. This exercise drew on evidence from

¹³² East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust (2026) ESNEFT Clinical Strategy 2026/2031. Available at: <https://esneftdoclibrary.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2026/02/050326-Item-4.1-FINAL-00062-26-ESNEFT-Clinical-Strategy-2026.pdf> [Accessed: July 2026].

¹³³ Letter correspondence from Lawson Planning Partnership Ltd on behalf of ESNEFT. Colchester Local Plan Infrastructure Needs. 29th June 2026.

Norfolk and Waveney ICB¹³⁴, which used the Healthy Urban Development Unit (HUDU) model to derive an average contribution required towards healthcare per home of £4,333. This cost has been used within the Project Schedule.

- 3.20.19. ESNEFT receives approximately £600 million of capital funding to operate its services, pay staff and maintain its estates each year¹³⁵. The majority of this funding is from the ICB, with the remaining funds sourced from the national NHS.
- 3.20.20. Via consultation, ESNEFT emphasised that S106 payments from developers would be an important funding source for acute healthcare infrastructure to 2043, which was justified by existing planning policy and case law, where appropriate evidence demonstrates that planned growth will give rise to additional demand and that mitigation is necessary to address the impacts of that growth.

Summary

- 3.20.21. East Suffolk and North Essex NHS Foundation Trust (a merger of the previous Colchester Hospital University NHS Foundation Trust and Ipswich Hospital NHS Trust) is responsible for the provision of hospital and community health care services across Colchester. The current lead commissioning group is the Essex ICB.
- 3.20.22. Acute care facilities within the local authority area comprise Colchester Hospital and Oaks Hospital. Community care provision by ESNEFT and partners in Colchester is delivered at Lexden Hospital as well as within smaller centres, care homes and patients' homes.
- 3.20.23. The Essex ICB describe existing capacity challenges across a number of service areas including in-patient beds and diagnostics.
- 3.20.24. There are six acute healthcare schemes in the Project Schedule including Same Day Emergency Care (SDEC) services expansion and the Day Surgery Unit at Colchester hospital.
- 3.20.25. A high-level benchmarking exercise indicates that an appropriate contribution from developers towards the cost of providing primary care, acute care services, and mental health services associated with the new allocations would be £59.6 million. Via consultation, ESNEFT emphasised that S106 payments from developers would be an important funding source for acute healthcare infrastructure to 2043, where appropriate evidence demonstrates that planned growth will give rise to additional demand and that mitigation is necessary to address the impacts of that growth.

3.21. Mental health services

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.21.1. Since the early 2010s, there has been increased emphasis in England on regarding mental health with the same urgency as physical conditions; this policy principle is often referred to as 'parity of esteem'¹³⁶.
- 3.21.2. Across Essex, all local authorities have implemented the Livewell Campaign which works with local partners to improve health and wellbeing outcomes, including mental wellbeing through its 'Feelwell' theme. The 'Embedding the Marmot Principles in Tendring, Essex'¹³⁷

¹³⁴ Norfolk and Waveney ICB, (2024); 'Planning in health engagement protocol - Norfolk and East Suffolk Local Planning Authorities, the Norfolk and Waveney ICB, Health Partners and Public Health Norfolk and Public Health Suffolk, August 2024. See Annex C. Available at: https://www.breckland.gov.uk/media/21633/The-Planning-in-Health-Protocol/pdf/Planning_in_Health_Protocol_2024_ICB_v1.1.pdf?m=1745593007910 [Accessed: July 2026].

¹³⁵ NHS East Suffolk and North Essex (n.d.). ESNEFT Funding. Available at: <https://www.esneft.nhs.uk/about-us/how-we-work/our-funding/#:~:text=ESNEFT%20funding,more%20complicated%20care%20or%20treatment>. [Accessed: June 2026].

¹³⁶ Baker, C and Gheera, M (2020) Mental Health: Achieving Parity of Esteem. Available at <https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/mental-health-achieving-parity-of-esteem/> [Accessed: July 2026].

¹³⁷ Bell, R for North East Essex Clinical Commissioning Group (2021) Embedding the Marmot Principles in Tendring, Essex. Available at: <embedding-the-marmot-principles-in-tendring-essex.pdf> [Accessed: June 2026].

report notes that improving mental health outcomes requires a broad, preventative approach that addresses the social determinants of health, including housing, employment, education, the built environment and social connectedness, alongside access to clinical services. It recommends a whole-system approach, led by the ICB and delivered through partnership with public, private and voluntary sectors, underpinned by community engagement and ongoing monitoring of outcomes.

3.21.3. Mental health services in Colchester are delivered by the Essex Partnership University Trust (EPUT). The NHS also commissions mental health services from the voluntary and private sector.

3.21.4. EPUT delivers services at the following locations in the local authority area:

- Colchester and Tendring Specialist Mental Health Team – 35 East Stockwell Street, Colchester;
- Acute Adult Inpatient Service – Colchester Hospital;
- Children's Learning Disability Service – Holmer Court, Essex Street, Colchester;
- North East and West Essex Adult ADHD Assessment Service - Holmer Court, Essex Street, Colchester (administration only);
- North East Essex Adult Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Service - Holmer Court, Essex Street, Colchester (administration only);
- Op COURAGE: The Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Service – The Lakes Mental Health Unit, Turner Road, Colchester;
- Dementia Intensive Support Team – King's Wood Centre, Turner Road, Colchester;
- Community Adult Eating Disorder Service: North Essex – The Northgate Centre, North Station Road, Colchester;
- Early Intervention Psychosis Support: North Essex – Holmer Court, Essex Street, Colchester;
- North East Essex Dementia and Frailty Services - King's Wood Centre, Turner Road, Colchester;
- Perinatal Mental Health Services, Colchester - Severalls House, 2 Boxted Road, Mile End, Colchester;
- Primary Care Mental Health Support Team – GP practices across Colchester;
- Therapy for You North East Essex, providing online video courses, talking therapies, and typed therapy services;
- Mental Health Joint Response Vehicle - joint service run by EPUT and EEAST providing direct provision via the Emergency Call Centre within EEAST for people in crisis with the view to prevent emergency admission to hospital; and
- The Sanctuary - Colchester High Street (provided by Mid and North Essex Mind Services).

3.21.5. EPUT also delivers the following services within North Essex:

- First Episode in Psychosis: North West Essex – services for North East Essex provided at the Latton Bush Centre, Harlow.

3.21.6. The facilities outlined above are presented in Figure 3.14.

Label	Name
1	Acute Adult Inpatient Service – Colchester Hospital
2	Children's Learning Disability Service
3	Colchester and Tendring Specialist Mental Health Team
4	Community Adult Eating Disorder Service – North Essex
5	Dementia Intensive Support Team
6	Early Intervention Psychosis Support: North Essex
7	First Episode in Psychosis: North West Essex
8	North East and West Essex Adult ADHD Assessment Service
9	North East Essex Adult Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) Service
10	North East Essex Dementia and Frailty Services
11	Op COURAGE: The Veterans Mental Health and Wellbeing Service
12	Perinatal Mental Health Services, Colchester
13	Primary Care Mental Health Team
14	Specialist Mental Health Care Recovery Service

Note: Site 13 is assigned to all GP Practices across Colchester and is not labelled on the map

Scale: 1:100,000 @ A3

AECOM	
PROJECT	Colchester Infrastructure Audit and Delivery Plan
CLIENT	Colchester City Council
CONSULTANT	AECOM Limited Aldgate Tower 2, Leman Street London, E1 8FA United Kingdom T +44-0207-645-2000
LEGEND	 Colchester Boundary  Ward Boundary  Mental Health Service
NOTES	Reproduced from Ordnance Survey digital map data © Crown copyright 2024. All rights reserved. Licence number 0100031673.
ISSUE PURPOSE	
DRAFT	
PROJECT NUMBER	60732527
FIGURE TITLE	Mental Health Services
FIGURE NUMBER	Figure 3

- 3.21.7. The Colchester Specialist Mental Health Team (CSMHT) form part of EPUT and are responsible for providing assessment and treatment of individuals who are registered locally with a GP and are experiencing a Serious Mental Illness (SMI). The CSMHT is a multi-disciplinary team comprising mental health nurses, occupational therapists, social workers, psychiatrists and support workers.
- 3.21.8. In 2023/24, Colchester recorded a hospital admission rate for mental health conditions of 95.1 per 100,000 population, exceeding the Essex (51.1 per 100,000), East of England (80.5 per 100,000), and national averages (80.2 per 100,000). The Essex Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA)¹³⁸ indicates that, in 2017, the estimated prevalence of common mental disorders among adults aged 16 and over in Colchester was 15.1%, marginally higher than the Essex average (14.9%).
- 3.21.9. EPUT's Strategic Plan (2023-28)¹³⁹ states that mental health services are encountering the following key challenges:
- Increased demand for EPUT's services – demand driven by Colchester's ageing population twinned with national trends showing a 39% increase in mental health referrals for children and young people between 2020/21 and 2021/22;
 - Levels of deprivation – accelerated by an increase in the number of those challenged by the cost-of-living crisis and the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic;
 - Long waits for therapy and intervention;
 - Significant workforce pressures including on recruitment and retention across the NHS;
 - Community mental health services and community physical health services are not always integrated; and
 - A statutory public inquiry is investigating the circumstances of mental health inpatient deaths across NHS Trusts in Essex.
- 3.21.10. Consultation with EPUT in July 2026 confirmed that levels of demand for mental health services in Colchester are currently very high, and that services are under substantial pressure. EPUT highlighted the challenges associated with the ageing population and dementia-related mental health issues, as well as the demand arising from residents of supported housing in Colchester.
- 3.21.11. EPUT's Strategic Plan (2023-28) states that the following opportunities exist for mental health services, to:
- Strengthen EPUT's work with people and communities who use its services;
 - Lead the integration of services across Southend, Essex and Thurrock;
 - Embed a culture of learning and safety;
 - Make changes to release more time to care for frontline staff;
 - Redesign EPUT's staffing model;
 - Take advantage of the latest innovation and research;
 - Make better use of digital technology and data; and
 - Expand collaborative arrangements with other organisations.
- 3.21.12. EPUT's Strategic Plan Refresh 2026¹⁴⁰ sets out a focus on strengthening mental health services and delivering inclusive mental health support for all, including integrating physical and mental health services.

¹³⁸ Greater Essex Data & Intelligence Hub (2026) Essex's Joint Strategic Needs Assessment. Available at: <https://data.essex.gov.uk/jsna/> [Accessed: July 2026].

¹³⁹ EPUT (2023) Strategic Plan 2023-2028. Available at: [eput-nhs-strategic-plan-2023-2028.pdf](https://www.eput.nhs.uk/about/trust/strategy/) [Accessed: June 2024].

¹⁴⁰ EPUT (2026) Strategic Plan Refresh 2026. Available at: <https://www.eput.nhs.uk/about/trust/strategy/> [Accessed: May 2026].

- 3.21.13. Over the period 2024-25, EPUT invested £17.1 million on capital expenditure, of which £3.5 million was funded from Department of Health and Social Care Public Dividend Capital directed at the following: ward environment upgrades, estates safety backlog schemes, medical equipment, sustainability schemes, Electronic Patient Record Project (EPR), Electronic Prescribing and Medicines Administration (EPMA), ICT, and other improvements to the Trust estate¹⁴¹.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.21.14. Plans are in place for a Mental Health Urgent Care Unit at Colchester Hospital (also referred to as an Emergency Diversion service), providing rapid assessment and support for adults in mental health crisis and offering an alternative pathway to attendance at the Emergency Department¹⁴². This project is recorded in the Project Schedule.
- 3.21.15. Beyond this, EPUT advised that planned growth to 2043 will increase demand for mental health services, adding to pressures arising from existing capacity constraints and an ageing population. While EPUT has not yet quantified the associated infrastructure need in detail or in relation to specific site allocations for residential development, current prevalence rates of mental health conditions imply that population growth associated with new homes will materially increased demand for early intervention, crisis alternatives and community-based support.
- 3.21.16. The NHS 10 Year Plan signals a shift towards models of mental health care provision which are more community based and holistic, with mental health integrated with primary and community services in neighbourhood health and well-being hubs.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.21.17. As outlined in Section 3.19, a high-level benchmarking exercise has been conducted which estimates the combined healthcare costs for primary care, acute care services, and mental health services totalling £59.6 million.
- 3.21.18. During 2023-24, EPUT invested £16.2 million on capital expenditure, of which £3.3 million was funded from the Department of Health Public Dividend Capital¹⁴³. EPUT confirmed that the current NHS funding landscape is constrained, and the Trust's own funding (raised for example from disposals) typically is used to address backlogs in maintenance works.
- 3.21.19. Via consultation, EPUT emphasised that S106 payments from developers would be an important funding source for mental health services to 2043 where appropriate evidence demonstrates that planned growth will give rise to additional demand and that mitigation is necessary to address the impacts of that growth.

Summary

- 3.21.20. Mental health services in Colchester are delivered by the Essex Partnership University Trust (EPUT). A range of services is delivered including the Specialist Mental Health Team, Acute Adult Inpatient Services at Colchester Hospital, and the Children's Learning Disability Service.
- 3.21.21. At present, mental health services are encountering challenges relating to increased demand for EPUT's services. Drivers for this include Colchester's ageing population, increased mental health referrals for children and young people, an increase in the number of those challenged by the cost-of-living crisis and the aftermath of the Covid-19 pandemic; and significant workforce pressures.
- 3.21.22. Future needs for mental healthcare will increase with population growth to 2043, implying a requirement for a range of associated services and infrastructure. The NHS 10 Year Plan

¹⁴¹ EPUT (2025) Annual Report 2024/2025. Available at: <https://www.eput.nhs.uk/about/reports-and-accounts/> [Accessed: May 2026].

¹⁴² NHS Essex Partnership University (2026) Two new Essex Mental Health Urgent Care Units announced. Available at: <https://www.eput.nhs.uk/news/two-new-essex-mental-health-urgent-care-units-announced/> [Accessed: July 2026].

¹⁴³ EPUT (2023) Annual Report & Accounts 2023-3. Available at: [eput-annual-report-2023-2024-final.pdf](https://www.eput.nhs.uk/about/reports-and-accounts/) [Accessed: July 2026].

emphasises a shift towards more community-based, integrated models of provision. Developer contributions will be an important part of the future funding strategy.

- 3.21.23. A high-level benchmarking exercise indicates that the cost of providing primary care, acute care services, and mental health services associated with new allocations would be £59.6 million.

3.22. Adult social care

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.22.1. Adult Social Care is designed to assist those with care and support needs, and help with disabilities, including providing equipment to support independent living and to provide support to carers¹⁴⁴. Adult Social Care in Colchester is coordinated and commissioned by ECC and is provided by private and third sector service providers.
- 3.22.2. As set out in the Supported and Specialist Housing and Accommodation Needs Assessment¹⁴⁵, Essex has an older population than the England average, with the fastest levels of growth amongst the 70-74 years age group. The population of this group has grown by 44% over the past decade, and nearly twice as fast as the working age population. Approximately 21% of the Essex population (323,138 people) are over the age of 65, about 21,000 have a learning disability, and a further 12,000 have autism. The demand for adult social care has been growing each year.
- 3.22.3. In total, there are 48 care homes within Colchester, of which 35 operate within the built-up city area. The current provision of care homes for both working age and elderly persons within the local authority area is presented in Table 3-38 and Figure 3.15.

Table 3-38 Provision of care homes by settlement across the local authority area

Settlement	Care home / facility
Colchester	481 Ipswich Road CO4 0HQ, Maven Healthcare
	Alderwood Care Home, CO1 1ZP
	ASN Assertive Outreach and Consultancy Limited, CO3 3SR
	At Your Service (AYS) Care Limited, CO4 3BU
	Butterfly's Care Home, Parsons Heath, CO4 3JE
	Carebase Limited, CO1 1ZP
	Colonia Court – support for those in need of nursing, residential or dementia care, CO4 3AN
	Consensus Support Services Limited, CO4 9PE
	Crouched Friars Residential Home, CO3 3HA
	Duncannons = 6 bed care home for adults with a learning disability, autism and complex needs, CO7 7SF
	Essex Care Consortium, Plume Avenue, CO3 4PG
	Ewer Court, CO2 7ED
	Friends of the Elderly, New Copford Place Care Home, CO6 1YR
	Inclusive Support, Dugard Avenue, CO3 9EH
	Loganberry Lodge – residential care home with 141 bed capacity, New Farm Road, CO3 0PG

¹⁴⁴ ECC (2023) What you need to know about your Adult Social Care and Support. Available at: [Guide-to-adult-social-care-2023.pdf](#) [Accessed: June 2026].

¹⁴⁵ Housing LIN for Essex County Council (2025) Supported and Specialist Housing and Accommodation Needs Assessment.

Settlement	Care home / facility
	Maple Cottage, Amber Court, CP2 9GE
	Maple House, Amber Court, CP2 9GE
	Maple Lodge, Amber Court, CP2 9GE
	Maple Manor, Amber Court, CP2 9GE
	Maple View, Amber Court, CP2 9GE
	Milton Lodge Retirement Home, Ipswich Road, CO4 0ES
	Myland House, Mile End Road, CP4 5BU
	Newlands, Ipswich Road, CO4 9HB
	Progressive Mews, Halstead Road, CO6 3QH
	St Fillans Care Home, St Fillans Road, CO4 0PT
	St Helena Hospice – respite services, CO4 9JU
	Stanway Green Lodge – residential care home, Stanway Green, CO3 0RA
	Stanway Villa, Nursery Close, CO3 0RL
	Tall Trees, Mile End Road, CO4 5XR
	The Haven – registered care home, Harwich Road, CO4 3BS
	The Oaks Care Home (Lexden) – care home for 61 older people who require residential or nursing support, Oaks Drive, CO3 3PR
	Tudor House, London Road, CO3 0NR
	Welshwood Manor – independently owned nursing and residential care home, CO4 3HZ
	Woodland View Care Home, Turner Road, CO4 5JR
	Z (Setting Up) Cleaveland Lodge, Rowhedge Road, CO2 8EJ
Abberton	Abberton Manor Nursing Home, CO5 7NL
Birch	Essex Care Consortium, Maldon Road, CO2 0NU
Copford Green	Springfield Limited, Rectory Road, CO6 1DH
Dedham	Blackbrook House, CO7 6HP
Fingringhoe	Aveley Lodge, CO5 7AS
Horkesley Heath	Great Horkesley Manor, Nayland Road, CO6 4ET
	Kacee Lodge, Ivy Lodge Road, CO6 4EN
Marks Tey	Essex Care Consortium, Laurels Station Road, CO6 1EE
Tiptree	43a and 43b Morley Road, CO5 0AA
	Henderson and Harvard, Kelvedon Road, CO5 0LJ
West Mersea	Aldeburgh House, CO5 8BX
Wivenhoe	Nationwide Community Care Limited, Cracknell Close, CO7 9PY
Wormingford	Jameson's RCH, Wormingford Road, CO6 3NS



3.22.4. ECC co-ordinates provision of the following adult social care services:

- Domiciliary care services¹⁴⁶ – includes a range of services that are put in place to support an adult to remain in their home. This service predominantly caters to needs of elderly individuals. Often this involves the support of a carer on a variety of tasks such as personal care, administering medications or supporting with activities provided over a short- or long-term basis. Over the 2024/25 period 6,877 adults were funded by ECC to receive care in a residential setting.
- Working aged residential care – a service that supports an adult with learning disabilities and/or autism and physical and sensory impairments on a long-term basis. This includes both short and long-term residential placements and short term or respite services¹⁴⁷. Over the 2024/25 period 1,068 adults were funded by ECC to receive care in a residential setting.

3.22.5. The average cost of working aged adult social care is £1,549.20 per week per person¹⁴⁸.

3.22.6. ECC notes that current issues for adult social care include¹⁴⁹:

- Market supply of working age residential care is rated 'low' as of March 2024;
- Just 75% of domiciliary care services and 80% of working aged residential care services have Care Quality Commission (CQC) ratings of either 'good' or 'outstanding' in Essex; and
- Whilst market supply of domiciliary care across Colchester is good, there have been some capacity challenges in rural areas such as Manningtree and Mersea.

3.22.7. ECC highlights that strengths and/or opportunities for adult social care include:

- 'Good' market supply of domiciliary care services across Essex as of March 2024
- There is 89% occupancy in working age residential care settings, and 55% occupancy for ECC funded adults in working age residential care settings, indicating some spare capacity.

3.22.8. The ECC Adult Social Care Business Plan 2024-30¹⁵⁰ aims to maximise independence and wellbeing, give residents choice and control over health and care, provide access to a place called home, reduce neglect and abuse, and gain a positive experience of preventative, localised, and community-based social care:

3.22.9. Current areas of focus for domiciliary care services (predominantly elderly care) across ECC include:

- The design of the future Live at Home contractual model and arrangements. This provides an opportunity for existing domiciliary care providers in Essex to share honest feedback on the existing contractual arrangement with ECC and enables those providers to help shape the future service¹⁵¹.
- The Essex Workforce, Training and Retention Strategy – to ensure increased capacity is maintained¹⁵².

¹⁴⁶ Essex County Council (2025) Domiciliary Care Services. Available at: <https://www.essexproviderhub.org/the-essex-market/market-position-statement/community-based-markets/domiciliary-care/> [Accessed: May 2026].

¹⁴⁷ Essex County Council (2025) Working Aged Residential. Available at: <https://www.essexproviderhub.org/the-essex-market/market-position-statement/residential-care-market/working-aged-residential/> [Accessed: May 2026].

¹⁴⁸ Essex County Council (2025) Working Aged Residential. Available at: <https://www.essexproviderhub.org/the-essex-market/market-position-statement/residential-care-market/working-aged-residential/> [Accessed: May 2026].

¹⁴⁹ <https://www.essexproviderhub.org/the-essex-market/market-position-statement/locality-based-commissioning/north-east-essex/> [Accessed: May 2026].

¹⁵⁰ Essex County Council Adult Social Care Business Plan <https://www.essex.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-05/ASC%20Business%20Plan%202024%20to%202030%20%28summary%29.pdf>

¹⁵¹ <https://bidstats.uk/tenders/2023/W45/810156329> [Accessed: May 2026].

¹⁵² Essex County Council (2025) Domiciliary Care Services. Available at: <https://www.essexproviderhub.org/the-essex-market/market-position-statement/community-based-markets/domiciliary-care/> [Accessed: May 2026].

- 3.22.10. Current areas of focus for working age residential care across ECC include to develop the provision of more specialist complex care accommodation to meet the needs of people with complex needs, including Postural Stability Instruction (PSI)¹⁵³.
- 3.22.11. The ECC Housing Strategy (2021-25) sets out ECC's ambition to ensure that:
- New homes are designed for residents to live independent and healthy lives;
 - Homes are adapted and digital technologies adopted to support residents to live independently; and
 - People can access high quality specialist, supported and safe accommodation that meets their needs and maximises their independence.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.22.12. ECC does not own and operate adult social care facilities but rather commissions services from external providers. ECC will implement a market shaping strategy to ensure that facilities and services are adequate and effective.
- 3.22.13. The ECC Adult Social Care Business Plan 2024-2030¹⁵⁴ and Supported and Specialist Housing and Accommodation Needs Assessment states that demand for social care support continues to grow, with particular growth in new demand on mental health and wellbeing services. There is increasing evidence of high complexity of needs and increasing longevity of those with high complexity. Backlogs in elective care and NHS waiting lists are also affecting social care. There has been a significant increase in demand on safeguarding referrals. About 1 in 6 people in Essex has a long-term health problem or disability and those with a learning disability who need social care support is likely to go up by 8% by 2030.
- 3.22.14. Population increase to 2043 can be expected to further increase demand for Adult Social Care, especially given that the proportion of older people in Colchester is growing. The ECC Developer Contributions Guide (2026) notes that all new residential development will generate a need for care and support, over time, from residents. ECC currently has a focus on development of specialist supported living schemes for adults with complex learning disabilities and autism and development of new extra care schemes primarily for older people. Essex Housing LLP, wholly-owned by ECC, has an active development programme and growing pipeline for such schemes.
- 3.22.15. To estimate demand for adult social care associated with the new allocations population increase (32,363 residents), a high-level benchmarking activity has been conducted utilising published standards from The Housing Learning and Improvement Network¹⁵⁵. The following ratios were applied to the projected population for over 75s (3,530) arising from the new allocations:
- 45 Nursing Home places per 1,000 persons over 75;
 - 65 Residential Care places per 1,000 persons over 75; and
 - 25 Extra Care places per 1,000 persons over 75.
- 3.22.16. Based on the standards above, the adult social care demand from residents to 2043 is estimated to require 157 additional nursing homes places, 229 residential care places, and 88 additional extra care places.

¹⁵³ Essex County Council (2025) Working Aged Residential. Available at: <https://www.essexproviderhub.org/the-essex-market/market-position-statement/residential-care-market/working-aged-residential/> [Accessed: May 2026].

¹⁵⁴ Essex County Council (2024) ASC Business Plan 2024-2030. Available at: <https://www.essex.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-05/Adult%20Social%20Care%20Business%20Plan%202024%20to%202030.pdf> [Accessed: January 2026].

¹⁵⁵ The Housing Learning and Improvement Network, (2008); Demand levels based prevalence rates from "More Choice, Greater Voice". Available at: https://www.housinglin.org.uk/assets/resources/housing/support_materials/reports/mcqvdocument.pdf [Accessed 24/07/25].

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.22.17. The total cost for providing an additional place is £170,000 for nursing homes, £135,000 for residential care facilities, and £150,000 for extra care housing¹⁵⁶. Applying these costs to the benchmarking figures above, the indicative costs for adult social care services to 2043 is £71,226,358.
- 3.22.18. As noted above, adult social care homes are typically provided by the private or third sector, though health and social care services can be provided at community facilities provided and operated by the NHS or local authorities.
- 3.22.19. The ECC Developer Contributions Guide indicates that ECC will liaise with Local Planning Authorities to inform planning policy and consider how opportunities for new Supported and Specialised Housing (SSH) can be realised on sites with significant housing development. This includes consideration of private sector SSH under market tenures, and the need to deliver affordable housing tenures under SSH typologies. Where this new accommodation cannot be provided on-site, ECC will liaise with LPAs to secure financial contributions that enable capital funding for new SSH accommodation on alternative sites.
- 3.22.20. In 2024/25, ECC estimate expenditure on Adult Social Care services to be £2.21 million per day. Health, Adult Social Care and ICS Integration account for 32.3% of its total expenditure on services.¹⁵⁷ The ECC Adult Social Care Business Plan 2024-2030¹⁵⁸ notes that the forecast annual net budget requirement is set to grow over the period 2024/25-2027/28; this is not affordable within the Council's estimated funding over that period given that the council is facing significant budget pressures and financial uncertainties. ECC's expenditure is funded through council tax, business rates and government grants.

Summary

- 3.22.21. In total, there are 48 care homes within Colchester, of which 35 operate within the built-up city area.
- 3.22.22. ECC co-ordinates and commissions provision of Adult Social Services, including domiciliary care services (which includes a range of services to support an adult to remain in their home) and working aged residential care (a service that supports an adult with learning disabilities and/or autism and physical and sensory impairments on a long-term basis).
- 3.22.23. Population increase to 2043 can be expected to increase demand for adult social care, especially given that the proportion of older people in Colchester is growing. The projected population for over 75s arising from new allocations is 3,530 and it is anticipated that 159 additional nursing homes places, 229 residential care places, and 88 additional extra care places will be required.
- 3.22.24. Care homes and other facilities are largely provided through private and third sector providers, although health and social care services can be provided at community facilities operated by the NHS or local authorities.
- 3.22.25. A high level benchmarking exercise indicates that the cost of providing adult social care services associated with the new allocations would be £71.2 million.
- 3.22.26. Where there is evidence of need and where feasible within masterplans, ECC's preference is for large-scale development to deliver a proportionate provision of Specialist and Supported Housing (SSH) for predicted care and support needs arising. ECC will liaise with Local Planning Authorities to consider how opportunities for SSH can be realised on sites with significant housing development. Where this new accommodation cannot be provided

¹⁵⁶ Source: AECOM cost consultants 2025. Costs are at current day prices and exclude professional fees, contingency and specialist medical equipment.

¹⁵⁷ Essex County Council (2024) Council tax information 2024/5. Available at: [Council tax information leaflet 2024 to 2025](#) [Accessed: June 2026].

¹⁵⁸ Essex County Council (2024) Adult Social Care Business Plan 2024-2030. Available at: <https://www.essex.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-05/Adult%20Social%20Care%20Business%20Plan%202024%20to%202030.pdf> [Accessed: January 2026].

on-site, ECC will liaise with LPAs to secure financial contributions that enable capital funding for new SSH accommodation on alternative sites.

3.23. Specialist and supported facilities for children

Baseline

Current provision

- 3.23.1. Children's social care¹⁵⁹ provides support to children, young people and families. Essex County Council (ECC) note that these support services are divided into four different levels based on differing levels of need, ranging from Level 1 (universal services / open-access services) to Level 4 (specialist intervention).
- 3.23.2. Children and young people are defined as persons aged 0-18 years, and this definition is extended to the age of 25 where the relevant persons are care experienced or have special educational needs or disabilities (SEND).
- 3.23.3. ECC has a statutory duty under child protection law to meet children and young people's care needs and the needs of looked after children. This includes a duty to be corporate parents for looked after children and care experienced children up to the age of 25. Looked after children include a nationally allocated quota of lone child asylum seekers, for which ECC has to also assume social care duties.
- 3.23.4. As set out in the Supported and Specialist Housing and Accommodation Needs Assessment¹⁶⁰, in relation to children and young people, as of December 2024, there were 1,131 Children in Care in Essex.
- 3.23.5. ECC has commissioned the Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service (ECFWS)¹⁶¹. The ECFWS is comprised of a 'family care hub' service that is delivered by HCRG Care Group¹⁶² in partnership with Barnardo's Children's Charity¹⁶³ across Essex. ECFWS's services for children from pre-birth to 19 years of age (or up to 25 for those with SEND and those who are care experienced) include¹⁶⁴ Healthy Child programmes, SEND support, and Children in Care and Safeguarding Services. The ECFWS operates from the following family care hub and associated delivery sites¹⁶⁵:
- Berechurch Family Hub;
 - Greenstead Community Centre Delivery Site;
 - St Anne's and Castle Family Hub Delivery Site; and
 - Little Hands Family Hub Delivery Site.
- 3.23.6. ECFWS facilities listed above are presented in Figure 3.16.

¹⁵⁹ Essex County Council (n.d.) Children and young people's health and wellbeing services. Available at: <https://www.essex.gov.uk/children-young-people-and-families/children-and-young-peoples-health-and-wellbeing-services> [Accessed: June 2026].

¹⁶⁰ Housing LIN for Essex County Council (2025) Supported and Specialist Housing and Accommodation Needs Assessment.

¹⁶¹ Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service (ECFWS) [Accessed: June 2026].

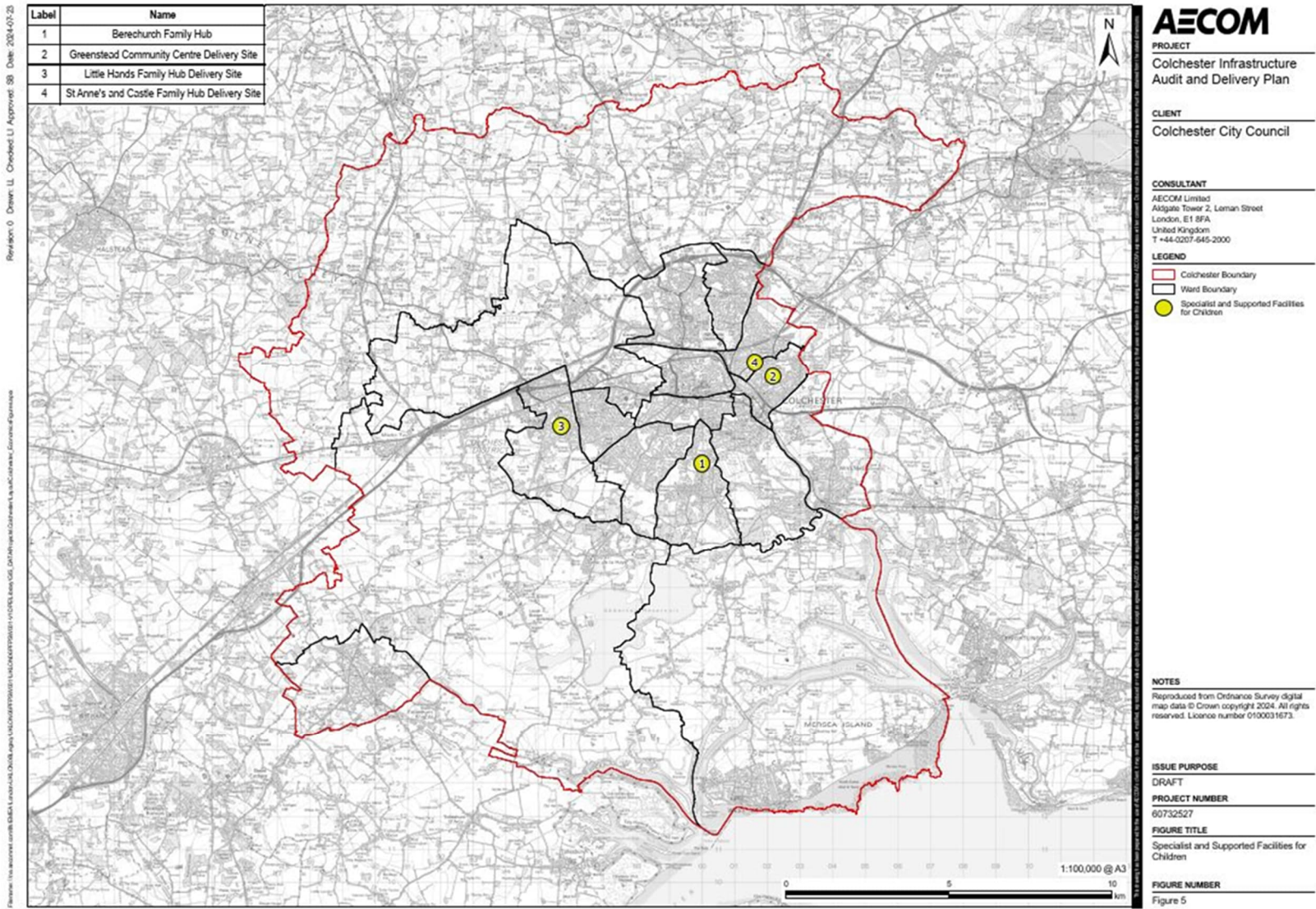
¹⁶² HcrG Care Group (n.d.). Available at: <https://www.hcrgcaregroup.com/> [Accessed: June 2026].

¹⁶³ Barnardo's (n.d.). Available at: <https://www.barnardos.org.uk/> [Accessed: June 2026].

¹⁶⁴ Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service (n.d.). Available at: <https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/about-us/what-we-do/> [Accessed: June 2026].

¹⁶⁵ Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service (n.d.). Berechurch Family Hub The Ormiston Centre School Road. Available at: <https://essexfamilywellbeing.co.uk/hubs/berechurch-family-hub/> [Accessed: June 2026].

Figure 3.16 Current provision of Essex Child and Family Well-being Service facilities



- 3.23.7. ECC also provides the following services and the latest Market Position Statement notes that the following supply/demand balances for each¹⁶⁶:
- Fostering – low supply, high/very high demand, ambition to increase supply;
 - Supported accommodation – low supply, high/very high demand, ambition to increase supply;
 - Registered children's homes – good supply, high demand, ambition to increase supply;
 - Home-based care for children with disabilities – good supply, high demand, ambition to increase supply;
 - Overnight short breaks for families and children – good supply, high demand, ambition to manage supply; and
 - Short break community clubs and activities - good supply, high demand, ambition to manage supply.
- 3.23.8. The Market Position Statement notes that over the last 5 years the Council has seen a growth in demand in care for Children in Care by 10%.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 3.23.9. Population growth will lead to an increase in the number of children aged 0 to 25 living in Colchester and therefore in the demand for children's services and associated facilities. To estimate demand for specialist and supported facilities for children associated with the new allocations population increase (32,363 residents), a high-level benchmarking activity has been conducted utilising published standards from Milton Keynes City Council (2025)¹⁶⁷. A ratio of 7.7 children social care bed setting per 1,000 dwellings has been applied to the projected population resulting in an estimated demand for 106 children social care beds up to 2043.
- 3.23.10. It is likely that Colchester will require new family centres (or expansion of existing ones) as locations for service delivery. Children's services could be delivered from multi-use community hubs which are increasingly a preferred model of provision; here, a range of services can be accessed at once and space can be used flexibly.
- 3.23.11. It is also likely that population growth will lead to an increased requirement for children's accommodation in terms of both supported housing and registered children's homes. The ECC Developers Guide indicates that where there is evidence of need and where feasible within masterplans, ECC's preference is for large-scale development to deliver a proportionate provision of Specialist and Supported Housing (SSH) for predicted care and support needs arising. Where this accommodation cannot be provided on-site, ECC will liaise with LPAs to secure financial contributions that enable capital funding for new SSH accommodation on alternative sites.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 3.23.12. The cost per children's home bed/placement is £206,408¹⁶⁸. Applying this cost to the benchmarking figure above, the indicative cost for specialist and supported facilities for children to 2043 is £21,879,248.
- 3.23.13. While some children's services can be provided at community facilities provided and operated by the NHS or local authorities, supported accommodation for children is typically provided by the private or third sector.

¹⁶⁶ Essex County Council (n.d.) Children's Services Market Position Statement. Available at: <https://www.essexproviderhub.org/children-s-services/children-s-services-market-position-statement/> [Accessed: June 2026].

¹⁶⁷ Source: Milton Keynes Infrastructure Study and Strategy, Initial Assessment Interim Report, May 2024. <https://www.milton-keynes.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2024-07/Milton%20Keynes%20Infrastructure%20Study%20%26%20Strategy%2C%20Infrastructure%20Study%20-%20Initial%20Assessment%20Interim%20Report.pdf>

¹⁶⁸ Source: Milton Keynes City Council (2025)

- 3.23.14. The ECC Developer Contributions Guide indicates that ECC will liaise with Local Planning Authorities to inform planning policy and consider how opportunities for new Supported and Specialised Housing (SSH) can be realised on sites with significant housing development. Where this new accommodation cannot be provided on-site, ECC will liaise with LPAs to secure financial contributions that enable capital funding for new SSH accommodation on alternative sites.
- 3.23.15. Children's Services and Early Years account for 14.6% of ECC's total expenditure on services¹⁶⁹ (£367.1 million, approximately £976,000 per day). ECC's expenditure is funded through council tax, business rates and government grants.
- 3.23.16. SNEE ICB and the Start Well Domain have provided grants to local projects, to help deliver emotional wellbeing and mental health early support in Colchester between 2023-25. These projects include¹⁷⁰:
- Bridgeway Mission (Colchester) – a safe and supportive network for children refugees and their families;
 - Changing Lives (Colchester) – free physical activity and mental health sessions;
 - Kids Inspire (Colchester) – talk together provides tailored support from early intervention to complex and extremely complex needs from 0-18, up to 25 years of age with SEND and their families; and
 - Underdog Crew (Colchester) – free training for young adults with lived experiences of mental health issues, autism and neurodiversity through employability skills and film making.

Summary

- 3.23.17. ECC has a statutory duty under child protection law to meet children and young people's care needs and the needs of looked after children.
- 3.23.18. ECC has commissioned the Essex Child and Family Wellbeing Service (ECFWS), which operates 'family hubs', to deliver services from a number of sites. ECC also provides children's services including supported accommodation, registered children's homes, home-based care for children with disabilities, overnight short breaks for families and children, and short break community clubs and activities. Demand for these services is high. Children's Services and Early Years currently account for 14.6% of ECC's total expenditure on services¹⁷¹ (£367.1 million, approximately £976,000 per day).
- 3.23.19. Population growth will lead to an increase in the number of children aged 0 to 25 living in Colchester and therefore in the demand for children's services and associated facilities. This implies a likely need for additional space within family centres or alternative community hubs. It is also likely that population growth will lead to an increased requirement for children's accommodation in terms of both supported housing and registered children's homes.
- 3.23.20. A high-level benchmarking exercise indicates that there will be a demand for approximately 106 additional children social care beds up to 2043 associated with the new allocations, and that the cost of providing these beds would be £21.9 million.
- 3.23.21. The ECC Developers Guide indicates that where there is evidence of need, ECC's preference is for large-scale development to deliver a proportionate provision of Specialist and Supported Housing (SSH) for predicted care and support needs arising. Where this

¹⁶⁹ Essex County Council (2024) Council tax information 2024/5. Available at: [Council tax information leaflet 2024 to 2025](#) [Accessed: July 2026].

¹⁷⁰ NHS East Suffolk and North Essex (n.d.) Children's Universal Support for Neurodiversity. Available at: <https://www.esneft.nhs.uk/service/childrens-services-community-paediatrics/support-in-colchester-and-tendring/> [Accessed: July 2026].

¹⁷¹ Essex County Council (2024) Council tax information 2024/5. Available at: [Council tax information leaflet 2024 to 2025](#) [Accessed: July 2026].

accommodation cannot be provided on-site, ECC will liaise with LPAs to secure financial contributions that enable capital funding for new SSH accommodation on alternative sites.

- 3.23.22. ECC's expenditure on children's services is funded through council tax, business rates and government grants. SNEE ICB and the Start Well Domain have provided grants to local projects, to help deliver emotional wellbeing and mental health early support in Colchester between 2023-25.

4. Infrastructure assessment: transport

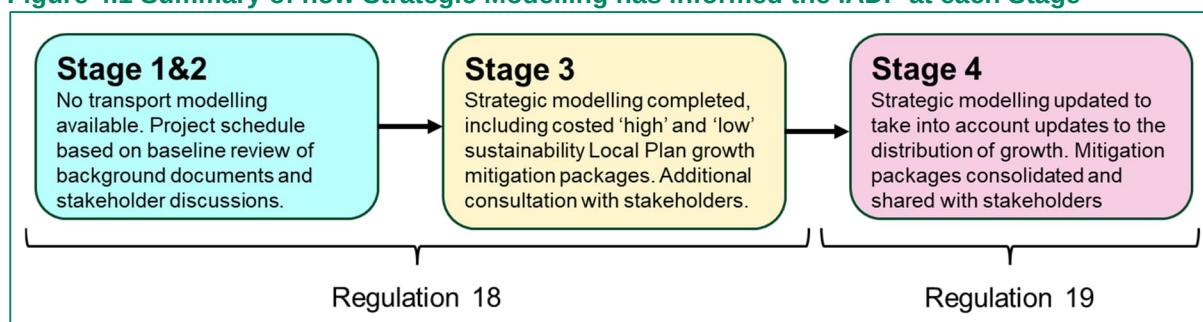
4.1. Introduction

- 4.1.1. This section covers needs arising for active travel, public transport (buses and rail), roads and electric vehicle investment to 2043, building on the baseline analysis and engagement with providers described in the Stage 1 and 2 IADP Report and the initial strategic modelling described in the Stage 3 IADP report.
- 4.1.2. This section has been informed via consultation with the Local Transport Authority (LTA); National Highways (NH); Network Rail; the Sub-Regional Transport Body (SRTB); and public transport operators Greater Anglia (rail), and Arriva, First Bus Essex, and Headingham and Chambers (bus).
- 4.1.3. Strategic modelling was undertaken by Jacobs on behalf of ECC and CCC to inform the Stage 3 (Regulation 18) IADP which provided information on impacts arising from proposed growth. This was used to assess mitigation needs and develop a comprehensive package. Regulation 18 consultation took place November 2025 – January 2026. During formulation of the Stage 4 IADP, to support Regulation 19, the modelling was re-run to take into account updates to the projected scale and and distribution of growth. The Stage 4 IADP's assessment of infrastructure needs, costs and funding has been revisited and updated accordingly, in discussion with consultants Jacobs. Further detail on the strategic modelling process is detailed in Section 4.2 (below).

4.2. Strategic Modelling

- 4.2.1. The differences in the transport infrastructure assessment between the stages of the IADP are highlighted below.

Figure 4.1 Summary of how Strategic Modelling has informed the IADP at each Stage



- 4.2.2. For Stage 1 and 2, no transport modelling was available to inform the inputs of the IADP. In absence of these outputs, the extent to which the planned projects needed to meet forecast demand could not be ascertained, nor could additional infrastructure be set out or the need quantified. This was also a significant limitation to the feedback of stakeholders.
- 4.2.3. To inform Stage 3, strategic modelling was provided by Jacobs. The model was updated to include Local Plan growth. Reference case schemes, committed or funded infrastructure projects likely to be delivered independently of the Local Plan, were added to the model to provide a realistic future baseline. Larger reference case schemes are referred to in the relevant sections of the transport chapter. During Stage 4 to support Regulation 19, the

modelling was re-run to take into account updates to the distribution of growth following the Regulation 18 consultation.

- 4.2.4. The modelling quantified the additional impact of Local Plan growth beyond core and background issues. This analysis helped to isolate the impacts attributable to the Local Plan growth.
- 4.2.5. A proportionate mitigation package was then developed. This is referred to in the IADP as the 'Local Plan growth mitigation package'. This followed a vision-led approach, prioritising the delivery of sustainable transport interventions first, including active travel and public transport improvements. Where these measures alone did not sufficiently mitigate the impacts, targeted highway interventions were added iteratively until residual impacts were brought within acceptable levels.
- 4.2.6. The Local Plan growth mitigation package was updated in Stage 4. All measures identified at this stage remain high level and will require further refinement through additional modelling and design development, however this will most likely occur beyond plan adoption.
- 4.2.7. In Stage 3, sensitivity tests were undertaken to understand the robustness of the mitigation package. These tests assessed how the package performed with the inclusion or exclusion of key reference case schemes, such as the A120–A133 Link Road and the A12 Junctions 19–25 improvement. Based on the modelling outputs and sensitivity testing, two indicative mitigation scenarios were developed: a 'High Sustainability' package and a 'Low Sustainability' package. In the Stage 4 modelling iteration, these packages were consolidated into a single package, most appropriate for addressing the impact of growth. The sustainability considerations from Stage 3 helped to inform the development of the Stage 4 Local Plan growth mitigation package.
- 4.2.8. The preferred mitigation package was costed by Jacobs using benchmarked rates. These cost estimates are high level and do not reflect detailed scheme design. Costs were apportioned between reference case developments, Local Plan sites, and potential external funding sources. As the design and modelling evolve, these estimates will be subject to refinement. The costs were updated between Stage 3 and Stage 4. Future iterations of modelling and design work will inform updated costings.
- 4.2.9. The mitigation measures have informed the 'infrastructure requirements to 2043' for each transport mode in this report. Both the estimated costs and proposed funding splits are reflected in the Project Schedule and have replaced the indicative measures and costs included in previous IADP iterations.
- 4.2.10. Further detail on the modelling approach and the modelled impacts of Local Plan growth can be found in the transport modelling report produced by Jacobs to support the Regulation 19 Local Plan.

4.3. Active travel

Baseline

Current provision

- 4.3.1. Active travel covers walking, cycling and wheeling infrastructure. There is extensive walking network provision in Colchester totalling over 500km of footpaths, bridleways, restricted byways, and byways. These routes are legally protected for public use and include notable trails such as The Colchester Orbital, a 14-mile loop around the city, and the King Charles III England Coastal Path, which currently extends from Tilbury to Salcott-cum-Virley and is set to expand.
- 4.3.2. In addition to formal walking networks, Colchester's pedestrian infrastructure also includes the footways, crossings, and supporting infrastructure that enable walking and wheeling on the main highway network across the area. While some severance issues exist, the network generally meets current demand as infrastructure is geographically widespread and can

accommodate further growth. Improving the quality of walking infrastructure remains a priority to enhance its appeal for short-distance travel and encourage a shift away from car use.

- 4.3.3. The cycle network in Colchester consists of local routes and longer-distance National Cycle Network (NCN) routes. Provision is concentrated in Colchester city centre. Poor provision outside of the City is reflected in a low cycling modal share. Key issues in both urban and rural areas include severance, safety concerns, and poor interchange facilities. Significant investment to address these challenges and expand the network, could help to increase the cycling modal share.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 4.3.4. The active travel infrastructure requirements to 2043 are set out in the Local Plan mitigation package that was developed along with a review of the strategic forecast modelling outputs. Further details regarding this modelling process are set out in Section 4.2.
- 4.3.5. Colchester has a significant number of active travel schemes under development. These include the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan (LCWIP) and LCWIP refresh proposals. The Local Plan mitigation package sets out sixteen projects involving LCWIP walking routes and cycling routes which are needed to support growth to 2043.
- 4.3.6. In addition to the LCWIP schemes, several further active travel schemes are put forward in the mitigation package, including a cycle route along the B1023 to Tiptree. The repair and widening of the existing footbridge across the A12 in Marks Tey is proposed in the mitigation package. Widening the bridge would enable cyclists to better access the station.
- 4.3.7. To support the proposed route network, the mitigation package also includes supporting measures such as secure cycle parking hubs at Marks Tey and Chappel and Wakes Colne stations.
- 4.3.8. Mobility hubs have been proposed at locations across Colchester, including Colchester North Station, Hythe Station, Tiptree, and West Bergholt. Mobility hubs are integrated transport interchange points that facilitate connections between modes such as walking, cycling, public transport and shared mobility. They typically include active travel infrastructure such as cycle parking, but also seating, real-time travel information and electric vehicle charging.
- 4.3.9. Active travel infrastructure is also expected to be prioritised in the masterplanning of proposed future development sites to support modal shift away from private car and support public transport usage. This includes ensuring high-quality internal provision that integrates with a cohesive network of routes, offering connectivity to key trip attractors. Infrastructure should also provide needed links to transport interchange points, particularly to nearby rail stations.
- 4.3.10. Travel planning initiatives will also play a key role in encouraging sustainable travel behaviour. This will be focused on residential and employment related developments and could include personalised travel planning initiatives as well as incentives and travel packs including information and subsidised tickets or vouchers for bus travel and bike equipment.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 4.3.11. Available information on scheme costs, funding and delivery is set out in the Project Schedule for the 40 active travel schemes which have been identified in the Local Plan mitigation package. The costs and funding arrangements are summarised below:
- The costs for the development of the active travel, mobility hub and travel planning schemes in the Local Plan mitigation package are approximately £172.1 million.
 - This incorporates an estimated cost of £430,000 per mobility hub (the total estimated cost of the proposed mobility hubs is £6.2 million).
 - This also incorporates £32 million for travel planning initiatives.

- Jacobs do not report any secured funding for these schemes, but it is assumed that some measures will require developer funding through S106/S278. Potential grants may also be available from the Department for Transport and Active Travel England.

Summary

4.3.12. The key summary points relating to active travel are as follows:

- There is some existing cycling infrastructure in Colchester city centre, but limited provision in more rural areas. Given this higher level of provision and the fact that it is a major employment centre, the most significant cycling levels are seen in Colchester urban area.
- Rural provision of active travel infrastructure largely consists of NCN and leisure walking routes.
- Although improving, there is limited provision of cycling infrastructure at transport interchanges.
- There is planned strategic investment in the city's active travel infrastructure put forward in the recently published LCWIP. These LCWIP routes are key to the Local Plan growth mitigation package.
- The repair and widening of the footbridge across the A12 in Marks Tey have been proposed to improve access to Marks Tey Station for cyclists and pedestrians.
- A network of mobility hubs across Colchester are another key component of the mitigation package. These will enable people to interchange between sustainable travel modes.
- The Project Schedule currently records overall estimated cost of £172.1 million for the 40 active travel and mobility hub schemes, with funding anticipated from S106/S278 and from external grants.

4.4. Public transport: bus

Baseline

Current provision

- 4.4.1. Census 2011 indicated that bus usage as a proportion of total commuting was lower in Colchester (5.7%) in comparison to national levels (7.5%). This proportion dropped significantly in Census 2021 (2.9% in Colchester) as COVID-19 had a major impact on bus usage and provision. Bus service provision is more frequent and comprehensive in Colchester city centre compared to more rural areas. Routes are generally arterial, originating or terminating in the city centre. Park and Ride (PandR) services into Colchester city centre have strong levels of existing demand. PandR is a model that is being built upon to expand provision and enable greater modal choice for users.
- 4.4.2. The current bus provision in Colchester is affected by the various issues outlined below:
- The road network, particularly in rural areas, has evolved from historic networks and travel patterns. Roads in Colchester are often narrow and indirect making bus trips longer, slower, and more expensive for operators.
 - Congestion on major inter-urban routes limits the efficient operation of services at peak times.
 - Demographic and land use factors make it difficult to run frequent and commercially viable services at all times, especially out of peak hours.

- While mobile apps provide increasingly accurate real-time information (RTI), the lack of accessibility at bus-stops is a barrier to uptake and modal shift. In more rural areas, bus stops can be unappealing environments without RTI, seating, shelter or lighting.
- There are poor frequencies on some routes, especially in rural areas. This is compounded by a perceived lack of reliability.
- The number of operators leads to confusion among users and concerns relating to the viability of using buses interchange and multi-stage journeys. Ticketing cooperation and service information are major barriers in this regard.
- There is a lack of integration between bus and train networks, and to a lesser extent, other modes of travel, such as walking, cycling, and taxis. All main interchanges have cycling and walking access, including cycle racks, and many have significant car parking.
- Colchester bus station would benefit from improvement. It lacks provision of multi-modal interchange and is increasingly attracting anti-social behaviour.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 4.4.3. The bus infrastructure requirements to 2043 were set out in the Local Plan mitigation package that was developed along with a review of the strategic forecast modelling outputs.
- 4.4.4. A large scheme currently in development is the Rapid Transit System (RTS) - a public transport corridor with priority over other traffic, operating on a dedicated lane or all together separated from other traffic. The RTS has been a long-term ambition in Colchester, conceptualised to support new large garden communities. When initially conceived, the RTS consisted of four legs between Colchester and Stansted Airport, including links to four proposed garden communities.
- 4.4.5. The North Essex Rapid Transit Study¹⁷² presents a case for taking forward the planning of a rapid transit system across North Essex, as a keystone of integrated and sustainable transport. This remains at a conceptual stage.
- 4.4.6. The status of the proposed developments has changed over time. The proposed mitigation package assessed as part of the strategic modelling, undertaken by Jacobs, includes schemes which are specified as being part of or related to the proposed RTS, including RTS extension from the City Centre to Marks Tey; Middleborough Roundabout signalisation; Sheepen Road/Cymbeline Way bus gate and junction alterations; Spring Lane roundabout signalisation; and dedicated westbound RTS lane in the central reservation from Wivenhoe Park Corner to Knowledge Gateway.
- 4.4.7. A 'Park and Choose' facility has been proposed in Colchester West to support growth. This facility is designed to function as a transport hub, however unlike a traditional PandR site, it would offer a broader range of modal options and amenities, including cycle storage, lockers, e-bikes, car parking, and extensive bus connections.
- 4.4.8. The provision of a bus and active travel bridge has been proposed across the A12, connecting Old London Road to Hall Chase in Marks Tey to support local bus movements through new developments, reduce severance caused by the A12 and alleviate pressure on Junction 25. In Colchester City Centre, a Bus Interchange scheme is in development. Consultation on the location and options is taking place in Summer/Autumn 2026.
- 4.4.9. In addition to physical infrastructure improvements, new routes are identified to Great Tey, Wakes Colne and East Colchester, and bus subsidy for employment sites and residential sites to support new and improved bus services.

¹⁷² Essex County Council (2017). North Essex Rapid Transit Study

Costs, funding and delivery

- 4.4.10. Information on scheme costs, funding secured, and delivery for the 18 bus schemes which have been identified to date are set out in the Project Schedule. Some of the key costs and funding arrangements are set out below:
- RTS extension from the City Centre to Marks Tey has an estimated cost of approximately £63 million.
 - A12 Bus and Active Travel Bridge - Old London Road to Hall Chase has an estimated cost of approximately £40 million.
 - Colchester City Centre Bus Interchange has an estimated cost of approximately £22 million.
 - Westbound RTS lane from Wivenhoe Corner to Knowledge Gateway has an estimated cost of approximately £12 million.
 - ECC is likely to lead on schemes on the local road network, including bus schemes, although service improvements would be made in collaboration with bus operators. Funding sources for bus improvements will likely include developer funding through S106/S278 and, if available, central government funding such as Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) funding.
 - No funding has been secured at this stage for the aforementioned bus-related schemes.
- 4.4.11. The Project Schedule thus records overall estimated costs of £171 million for bus related schemes, with no funding secured based on information provided by Jacobs.

Summary

- 4.4.12. The key summary points are as follows:
- Bus services in Colchester are limited outside peak hours, and supporting infrastructure is often poorly maintained. These challenges are common in small cities surrounded by rural settlements, as is the case in Colchester. Service provision is notably poorer in the more rural areas of the borough.
 - Park and Ride services have strong levels of demand in Colchester and are being expanded to increase capacity and offer greater modal choice for users.
 - The Rapid Transit System (RTS) is a new public transport service that will provide priority services connecting the city centre to the south-east and will support the TCBGC development.
 - To support growth to 2043, an extension of the RTS is proposed from the City Centre to Marks Tey.
 - In Colchester City Centre, a Bus Interchange scheme is in development. Consultation on the location and options is taking place in Summer/Autumn 2026.
 - Further proposed measures include a bus and active travel bridge across the A12, as well as new and extended bus routes.
- 4.4.13. The Project Schedule thus records overall estimated costs of £171.0 million for bus related schemes.

4.5. Public transport: rail

Baseline

Current provision

- 4.5.1. Colchester is located at a strategically important location on the East Anglian rail network, with three lines serving the area. The Sunshine Coast Line and Gainsborough Line are key

branch lines that connect to the Great Eastern Main Line (GEML) at Colchester and Marks Tey, respectively. These lines play a vital role in regional passenger and freight transport, given Colchester's proximity to London, other East Anglian urban centres, and the ports of Harwich and Felixstowe.

4.5.2. The current rail provision in Colchester is affected by the quality and capacity issues outlined below^{173,174}:

- Access to rail stations – access to Colchester's rail stations is generally good but improved active travel infrastructure is needed for better connectivity and multi-modal interchange.
- Quality and accessibility of stations – some stations require modernisation for better accessibility, including step-free access and enhanced facilities. Overcrowding during evening peak hours has been observed at Colchester Station, relating to the arrival of services from London.
- Network safety – there remain a number of level crossings on the network which are potential safety concerns. Replacing level crossings with pedestrian bridges and other safer infrastructure is a priority.
- Service reliability – despite recent upgrades to rolling stock, there remain reliability concerns on the network. Pinch-points elsewhere on the network, especially the GEML, impact on the services in Colchester, for example limited capacity at Stratford and London Liverpool Street Stations are longstanding issues. Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the GEML was operating at full capacity in the peak hours between London and Colchester. As patronage has begun to stabilise post-COVID pandemic, potential capacity issues are being reassessed by Network Rail.
- Freight constraints – ensuring a sustainable balance between freight movements on the GEML and the cross-country rail corridor to Felixstowe is key to managing rail freight capacity constraints.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 4.5.3. Accessibility upgrades at Marks Tey Station have been proposed as part of the Local Plan mitigation package, with a focus on step free access and lift provision.
- 4.5.4. There is an increasing emphasis on improving access to rail stations through multi-modal interchange including enhanced bus services and active travel provision, as outlined in the preceding sections. Some multi-modal mitigation measures at rail stations were included in the mitigation package and Project Schedule.
- 4.5.5. The development of mobility hubs has been proposed for Colchester North Station, Hythe Station and Marks Tey Station, with potential opportunities also identified at Chappel & Wakes Colne Station on the branch line. Further detail about mobility hubs and cycling infrastructure is detailed in Section 4.3.
- 4.5.6. In terms of future demand, analysis in the Network Rail Great Eastern Main Line Study (Network Rail, 2019) stated that in the period between 2018 and 2033, passenger growth at Colchester Station is expected to be 3.2% with an additional 1.8% growth on the entire GEML between 2033 and 2042, although it is noted that there was greater uncertainty surrounding this figure. Given changes to the travel patterns, trip rates, and growth proposals as a result of the pandemic and the prevalence of hybrid working, there is now less certainty in these figures.

¹⁷³ Essex Highways (2022) Colchester Future Transport Strategy. Available at: <https://www.essexhighways.org/uploads/downloads/colchester%20future%20transport%20strategy%20-%20march%202022.pdf> [Accessed: July 2026].

¹⁷⁴ Network Rail. (2016). Anglia Route Study. Available at: <https://www.networkrail.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/11/Anglia-Route-Study-UPDATED-1.pdf> [Accessed: July 2026].

Costs, funding and delivery

4.5.7. Information on the scheme costs, funding secured, and delivery for the rail scheme which has been identified to date is set out in the Project Schedule. The key costs and funding arrangements are set out below:

- Proposed accessibility upgrades at Marks Tey Station have an estimated cost of approximately £5.0 million. The funding source and delivery responsibility is to be decided.
- Any future major projects which emerge would likely be funded by Network Rail and central government. If development sites are located near to rail lines, then developer funding would likely be required to support minor accessibility upgrades. Issues of stock and similar supporting infrastructure are managed by the Train Operating Company (TOC).

Summary

4.5.8. The key summary points relating to rail are as follows:

- Colchester is a strategically important location in the East Anglian rail network. Colchester Station is located on the Great Eastern Main Line, with frequent services to London and other key regional destinations.
- Significant rail freight flows through and nearby to Colchester. Freight is central to rail policy and planning in the region.
- Accessibility upgrades at Marks Tey Station have been included in the 2043 Local Plan growth mitigation package, costing at approximately £5.0 million.

4.6. Roads

Baseline

Current provision

- 4.6.1. The road network in Colchester is made up of the Strategic Road Network (SRN), managed by National Highways, and the Local Road Network (LRN), managed by ECC. Colchester is a strategically important location in the SRN. The SRN in Colchester consists of two key routes, the A12 and A120, which serve regional and national connectivity, linking London, Chelmsford, Ipswich, and Harwich Port. Significant links on the LRN include the A133, A134, and A1232.
- 4.6.2. The SRN in Colchester faces a number of challenges: the A12 experiences significant congestion at multiple junctions (J25-J29) which causes delays; similarly, the A120, particularly the single carriageway between Braintree and Marks Tey, suffers from severe congestion as well as safety issues and poor reliability.
- 4.6.3. Within Colchester, arterial routes into the city centre are characterised by frequent delays during peak periods, affecting roads such as Ipswich Road, Cowdray Avenue, and St Andrew's Avenue. These delays exacerbate safety and air quality concerns. In rural areas, while congestion is less pronounced, safety remains a critical issue.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 4.6.4. The road infrastructure requirements to 2043 were set out in the Local Plan mitigation package that was developed along with a review of the strategic forecast modelling outputs.
- 4.6.5. National Highways responded to the request for further engagement as part of Stage 3, providing valuable commentary on the implications of the spatial distribution of growth for the SRN and its response to future planning applications. National Highways has been

engaged through Jacobs' strategic modelling process, with discussions held regarding the impact on the SRN and implications for the Local Plan mitigation package.

- 4.6.6. As noted above, the A12 is running close to capacity over most of its length in the local authority area. There are specific pinch points where congestion worsens, mainly at junctions. A12 J26 is a particularly problematic junction, which is very close to capacity and has very little room for improvement and is already under signal control.
- 4.6.7. In the west of the local authority area, the proposed scheme to upgrade the A12 between J19 and J25 including the junctions was cancelled by the Government in 2025. This scheme was designed to deal with existing issues and growth proposed in the adopted Local Plan. Sensitivity testing that was completed as part of the Stage 3 modelling work indicated that A12 Junction 19 to Junction 25 widening would be desirable to address issues in the reference case which would be compounded by the addition of Local Plan growth. The Road Investment Strategy 3 (RIS3) noted that National Highways are exploring a more proportionate and targeted plan of any potential small-scale interventions for the A12 corridor in Essex. Any potential small-scale interventions would be subject to demonstrating that they would achieve wider government objectives for possible delivery in future road periods.
- 4.6.8. The A120 between Braintree and the A12 is running at and above capacity during most of the day and has a poor safety record and National Highways have stated that it cannot accommodate further growth without significant improvement. A new link from Galleys Corner (Braintree) to a new junction with the A12 south of Kelvedon has previously been proposed. Any such intervention would be costly. A scheme has not been committed and there remains significant uncertainty in the delivery of a scheme. The Stage 3 strategic modelling confirmed that such a scheme would be disproportionate to the impact of Local Plan growth.
- 4.6.9. The junction of the A120 westbound slip road with the A12 and the circulatory road at Junction 29 is operating at or near full capacity. The proposed improvements at A12 Junction 29 comprise the extension of signalisation at the junction, widening the A120 Ipswich Road off-slip to three lanes, and widening the slip road approach to Newcomen Way to two lanes. The A120 eastbound on-slip would also be widened to provide two lanes.
- 4.6.10. Proposed junction improvements at the A12/A120 (W) junction comprise the conversion of the Marks Tey roundabout to a signalised crossroads junction to reduce delays, alongside the signalisation of the Prince of Wales roundabout. Bus priority measures would also be introduced between the Marks Tey and Prince of Wales junctions in both directions, utilising existing highway space and therefore requiring no road widening.
- 4.6.11. At A12 Junction 26 and Stanway junction a package of measures is proposed to manage queuing on Essex Yeomanry Way, which is expected to increase as a result of the Tollgate development. The package would include signalisation of Tollgate Roundabout and the provision of bus priority lanes, conversion of the London Road/Western Approach junction from a roundabout to a signalised crossroads with bus priority lanes, and signalisation of the Essex Yeomanry Way J27/Western Approach roundabout to better manage traffic movements.
- 4.6.12. On the LRN, the A120 - A133 Link Road scheme will provide a link between the A120 and the A133, reducing the need to travel directly into Colchester city centre, helping to manage congestion on local roads, making it easier to access the SRN, and supporting the delivery of the TCBGC. Phase 1 of the project, completed in 2026, included a new roundabout created on the A133 east of the University of Essex, 1.8km of dual carriageway road and three junctions, between the A133 and a new 'Allen's Farm Roundabout'. Phase 2 of the project will connect up with the A120.
- 4.6.13. Significant improvements are proposed at Greenstead Roundabout, likely comprising the peninsularisation of the south-western side of the roundabout to prioritise key movements and reduce congestion, alongside full signalisation. Bus priority measures, including RTS and priority measures for local bus services, would also be introduced. Complementary

signalisation improvements are proposed at the Colne Causeway/Elmstead Road Roundabout to support the wider package of measures.

- 4.6.14. Signalisation measures are proposed in the Local Plan growth mitigation package at locations across Colchester. These include signalisation of Essex Hall roundabout, A134 Colne Causeway / Hawkins Road roundabout, A134 Colne Causeway / Elmstead Road, and Coggeshall Road/Ashbury Drive junction to reduce delays and improve traffic flow.
- 4.6.15. During consultation, National Highways emphasised the importance of understanding how growth impacts on the SRN. Impacts need to be considered early in the planning / assessment process and appropriate developer-funded interventions identified to mitigate adverse effects arising from growth. These measures or interventions can include a range of forms: infrastructure upgrades, capacity enhancements, or demand management strategies, helping to maintain the functionality and safety of the SRN.
- 4.6.16. National Highways have stated that they will consider future planning application proposals on a case-by-case basis and if, as a result of traffic generated by the development there would be an unacceptable impact on highway safety, or the residual cumulative impacts on the SRN would be severe, National Highways will either recommend that permission should be refused or recommend appropriate Planning Conditions to make the development acceptable.
- 4.6.17. National Highways are supportive in principle of a Monitor and Manage (MandM) approach that reflects the principles of current policies. Government guidance is clear that 'MandM' and 'Vision and Validate' (VandV) approaches require a robust demonstration of how proactive, not reactive, measures will be delivered in practice. Such an approach may be acceptable on the basis that if the scale of the local plan is modest, traffic impacts will build up over time and are unlikely to be unacceptable within a reasonable timeframe necessary to identify a new package of transport interventions to satisfactorily mitigate the impacts of the local plan on the SRN.
- 4.6.18. Alternatively or additionally, the Development Management policy should set out that Grampian Conditions¹⁷⁵ could be attached where such conditions satisfy the relevant tests, which would prevent or restrict development until such time as necessary mitigation was in place.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 4.6.19. Information on scheme costs, funding secured and delivery for the 18 highways schemes are set out in the Project Schedule, and summarised below:
- The strategic link road between the A120 and A133 has a cost of £86 million; funding has recently been confirmed from Homes England (£65 million) and the TCBGC developer (£21 million).
 - A12/A120(W) junction alterations, including the conversion of Marks Tey roundabout to a signalised cross-road junction, have a cumulative cost of £35 million.
 - Improvements to A12 J29 total £15 million, while alterations at A12 junction 26 and Stanway junction total £12 million.
 - A number of junction improvements are proposed including on Essex Hall roundabout, A134 Colne Causeway / Hawkins Road roundabout, A134 Colne Causeway / Elmstead Road, and Coggeshall Road/Ashbury Drive.
 - Altogether, the Project Schedule currently identifies estimated costs of £195.7 million for highway schemes; no secured funding has been reported by Jacobs, though Phase 2 of the A120 - A133 Link Road scheme is funded.

¹⁷⁵ Grampian conditions are planning conditions used to control the timing of certain development activities. They are typically used to ensure that essential infrastructure, such as roads, is in place before a development can proceed.

- For SRN schemes, National Highways is the highway authority so will lead on the assessment, design and delivery of such schemes, working with partners.
- ECC will do the same for LRN, with a range of potential funding sources including developer funding.

Summary

4.6.20. The key summary points for roads are as follows:

- Colchester is a strategically important location in the SRN. The A12 and A120 transect the local authority area.
- The SRN has significant issues on both the A12 and the A120, driven by existing demand. Issues on the A120 are severe and unsustainable. Capacity issues at junctions are interconnected and require holistic solutions. The most significant issues on the SRN are not driven by Local Plan growth.
- There are significant delays on multiple local roads in the city centre and safety concerns at junctions across Colchester.
- The proposed measures in the Local Plan growth mitigation package are proportional to the impact of that growth. Measures include signalisation at a number of A12 junctions as well as at other locations, and area-wide investment in dynamic movement management.
- Altogether, the Project Schedule currently identifies estimated costs of £195.7 million for 18 highway schemes. £86 million funding is secured for Phase 2 of the A120 - A133 Link Road scheme.
- National Highways will assess planning proposals on a case-by-case basis. They support the principle of a Monitor and Manage approach to development, emphasising the need to monitor the impacts of growth and implement appropriate mitigation within a suitable timeframe to address issues effectively.

4.7. Electric vehicle (EV) infrastructure

Baseline

Current provision

- 4.7.1. Essex has over 300 public EV charge points, including 50 ultra-rapid and 50 rapid chargers, with most located in urban areas such as Colchester¹⁷⁶. Provision remains below the UK average, with 39 charge points per 100,000 people compared to 60 across the UK. Limited off-street parking in high-density areas exacerbates accessibility challenges, particularly in urban and suburban locations.
- 4.7.2. Current EV infrastructure in Essex does not meet existing demand, falling short in both quantity and access. Significant investment and expansion are needed to address these gaps and support the growing transition to electric vehicles, aligning with the UK government target of delivering 300,000 charge points by 2030¹⁷⁷.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 4.7.3. In terms of the infrastructure requirements for the growth proposed to 2043, there is still considerable uncertainty around potential future technology and policy affecting the rate of

¹⁷⁶ Essex Highways (2023). Essex electric vehicle charge point strategy. Essex County Council. Available at: <https://www.essexhighways.org/uploads/downloads/safer-greener-healthier/essex-electric-vehicle-charge-point-strategy.pdf> [Accessed: July 2026].

¹⁷⁷ Department for Transport; Office for Zero Emission Vehicles; The Rt Hon Boris Johnson; and The Rt Hon Grant Shapps. (2022) Tenfold expansion in chargepoints by 2030 as government drives EV revolution. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/tenfold-expansion-in-chargepoints-by-2030-as-government-drives-ev-revolution> [Accessed: July 2026].

transition to EVs. The Government anticipates up to 10 million zero-emission battery electric vehicles (BEVs) will be needed on the road by 2030 to help meet net zero targets.

- 4.7.4. Based on the Government's projections, ECC notes that BEV uptake in Essex could potentially increase to 50,000 by 2025, 220,000 by 2030, and 800,000 by 2040, representing around 88% of eventual car and van ownership. These estimates align with wider forecasting work by Transport East for the region and reflect their 2040 'High EV' uptake scenario.
- 4.7.5. The Government plans to phase out plug-in hybrid electric vehicles (PHEVs) by 2035, with ownership in Essex expected to peak at around 135,000 before the ban on new sales. Afterward, PHEV ownership is expected to decline rapidly in favour of BEVs.
- 4.7.6. Regarding the need for supporting infrastructure, particularly charge points, it is noted in the Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy that uncertainty around future EV uptake rates should not hinder efforts to deliver more charge points. These charge points should offer flexible charging solutions in various locations to meet different user needs. The Government expects most people with access to private off-street parking to install their own infrastructure and charge at home.
- 4.7.7. The Government also identifies a minimum need for around 300,000 publicly accessible charge points to meet the anticipated demand of 10 million BEVs by 2030. The majority would serve residential on-street users and, to a lesser degree, on-route and public destinations such as shops, leisure facilities, and transport hubs. Industry estimates vary, but as a guideline, this equates to approximately one publicly accessible charge point for every 35 BEVs on the road.
- 4.7.8. In terms of future supply, the following points are all longer-term aspirations for EV infrastructure in the county. The detail and extent of roll out required has not been put forward at this stage but is expected in further iterations of the Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy.
- On-street charge points for residential users where car travel is necessary.
 - Use public property, such as libraries, country parks, community halls, parks, schools, or council operated car parks for public charge points (liaison required with public sector partners).
 - Promote 'peer-to-peer' charging platforms, and any regulatory obligations, to residents (where those with EV chargers can make them available for others to use).
 - Expand shared mobility schemes, like EV car clubs, as an alternative to private car ownership.
 - Install charge points at park and ride sites or railway stations for commuters looking to make use of public transport for at least some of their journey.
- 4.7.9. The Project Schedule has no specific entries relating to EV infrastructure. The delivery of EV chargepoints is incorporated with plans for mobility hubs. There is also an expectation for on-site EV charging infrastructure. This is expected to be delivered by the developer and not through the Local Authority.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 4.7.10. Information on scheme costs, funding secured and delivery for mobility hubs are set out in the Project Schedule.
- 4.7.11. In terms of delivering EV infrastructure, the Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy emphasises the importance of ongoing dialogue with local authority partners, Transport East, local transport providers, energy suppliers, National Highways, and the DfT. This collaboration needs to understand and coordinate cross-boundary opportunities and maximise available funding. Establishing an EV infrastructure user group has been proposed by Essex Highways to share data, monitor progress, explore opportunities, and assist local authorities in developing their infrastructure plans.

- 4.7.12. Furthermore, the Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy highlights the importance of engagement with charge point operators and providers. ECC will continue these collaborations to explore investment opportunities from local and central government funding, including schemes like the On-Street Residential Chargepoint Scheme (ORCS) and Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) grants, as well as commercial sources. Developer funding is expected from S106 and/or S278.
- 4.7.13. Finally, ECC intends to engage with industry partners to develop design and best practice guidance for installing infrastructure on public property. This engagement aims to establish clear expectations for infrastructure deployment across the county.

Summary

4.7.14. Key summary points relating to EVs are as follows:

- The EV charging infrastructure in Colchester is currently expanding from a low baseline. Provision of public charging devices in the East of England is significantly lower than the national number per head of population.
- Future demand is likely to increase very significantly as the government has implemented ambitious targets on the roll out of EV infrastructure and phasing out of petrol and diesel cars.
- The expansion of EV infrastructure is heavily dependent on both government and private sector funding, including developers (S106 and/or S278).
- The delivery of new charge points and ensuring these charge points are at strategically located multi-modal interchanges is a key priority for investment. The delivery of EV chargepoints is incorporated with plans for mobility hubs described in Section 4.3.

5. Infrastructure assessment: utilities, waste and water

5.1. Electricity

Baseline

Current provision

- 5.1.1. Colchester is currently served by fifteen primary substations that are operated by UK Power Networks (UKPN). Colchester's primary substations and the geographical area served by each are shown in Figure 5.1 below.

The capacity of each primary substation is presented in Table 5-1. Only Tiptree Primary 11kV substation has less than 5% space demand headroom. Existing capacity within Colchester's primary substations is mapped below in

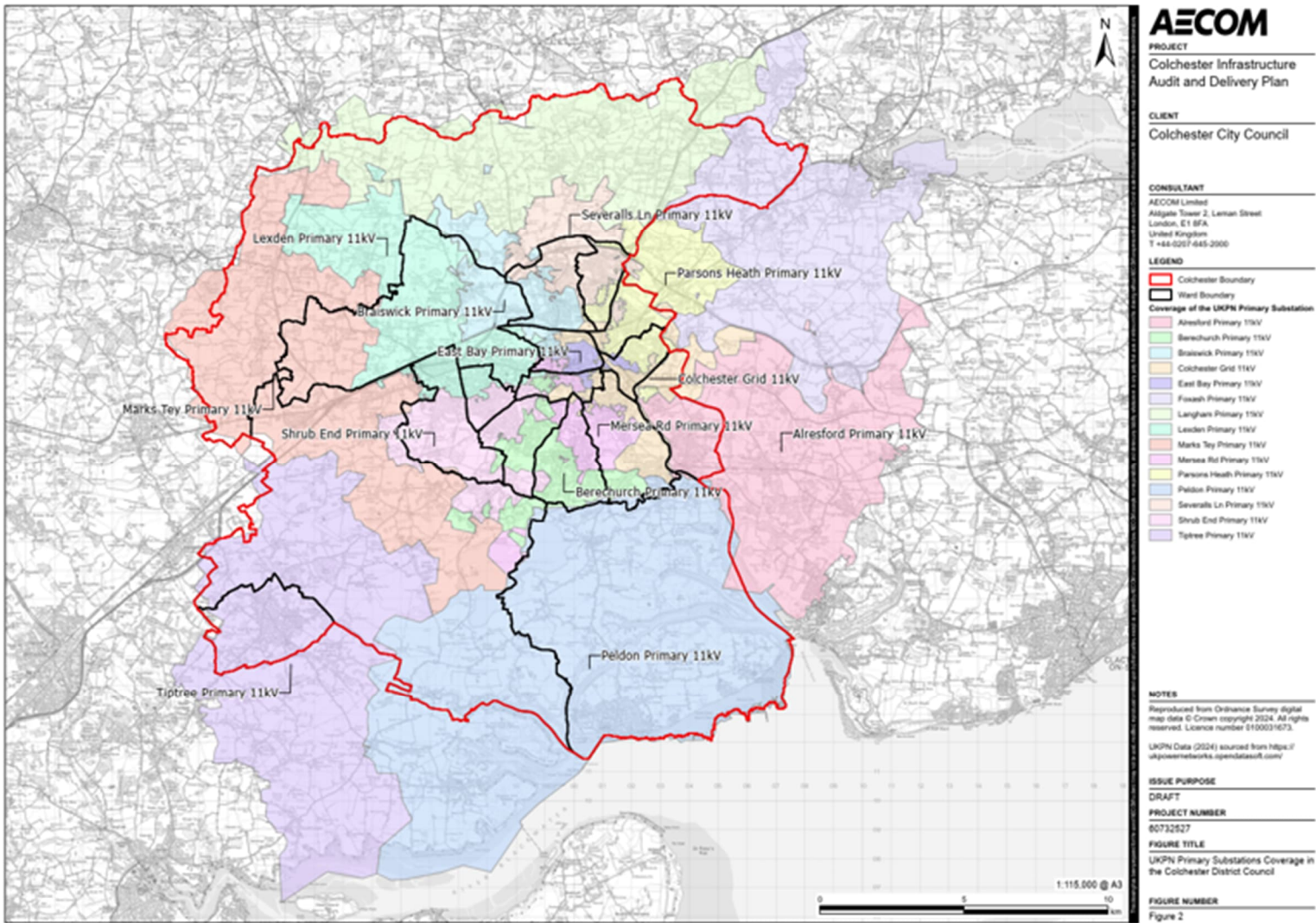
- 5.1.2. Figure 5.2 below.

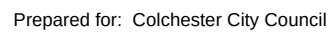
Table 5-1 Primary Substation Capacity and Demand Headroom Availability

Primary Substation	Current Max Demand (MW)	Demand Headroom Availability	Max Capacity (MW)	Spare Capacity (MW)	Demand Headroom Availability
Braintree Primary 11kV	21.9	37.9%	35.3	13.4	Green (Over 5% headroom)
Colchester Grid 11kV	37.4	55.6%	84.2	46.8	Green (Over 5% headroom)

Primary Substation	Current Max Demand (MW)	Demand Headroom Availability	Max Capacity (MW)	Spare Capacity (MW)	Demand Headroom Availability
East Bay Primary 11kV	19.0	48.4%	36.8	17.8	Green (Over 5% headroom)
Lexden Primary 11kV	23.0	39.8%	37.9	14.9	Green (Over 5% headroom)
Shrub End Primary 11kV	22.1	60.8%	56.4	34.3	Green (Over 5% headroom)
Mersea Rd Primary 11kV	22.0	46.8%	41.0	19.2	Green (Over 5% headroom)
Parsons Heath Primary 11kV	22.1	54.8%	48.9	26.8	Green (Over 5% headroom)
Alresford Primary 11kV	14.4	7.6%	15.6	1.2	Green (Over 5% headroom)
Berechurch Primary 11kV	19.3	63.2%	52.4	33.1	Green (Over 5% headroom)
Severalls Ln Primary 11kV	23.1	42.0%	39.8	16.7	Green (Over 5% headroom)
Marks Tey Primary 11kV	14.4	34.7%	22.1	7.7	Green (Over 5% headroom)
Tiptree Primary 11kV	12.5	4.0%	13.0	0.5	Yellow (Between 5% overloaded and 5% headroom)
Langham Primary 11kV	14.4	60.4%	36.4	22.0	Green (Over 5% headroom)
Foxash Primary 11kV	11.5	29.6%	16.3	4.8	Green (Over 5% headroom)
Peldon Primary 11kV	15	34.0%	21.8	7.4	Green (Over 5% headroom)

Figure 5.1 UKPN Primary Substation Coverage Areas





Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 5.1.3. Based on the development trajectory provided by CCC, the increase in electricity usage by 2043 has been estimated. The housing projections include emerging allocations associated with the new Local Plan (approximately 11,100 homes), existing allocations within the adopted Local Plan (approximately 1,100 homes) and existing commitments which already have planning permission (approximately 7,200 new homes). The anticipated electricity usage for a single housing unit has been assumed to be 7.5kW/day based on the annual consumption value stated in the BSRIA (BG 86/2024) Electrical Criteria¹⁷⁸. This value is based on electrically heated homes.
- 5.1.4. The Future Homes and Building Standards (FHS) is a major regulatory shift in UK housebuilding that aims to reduce carbon emissions from new homes by 75-80% and ensure homes are “zero-carbon ready” to support the UK’s Net Zero by 2050 goal. As part of the Future Homes and Building Standards (FHS), new residential dwellings will only be able to install energy efficient heating systems, which does not include gas boilers. The FHS was published in March 2026 and comes into force in March 2027. Following a 12-month transition period, full compliance is expected by March 2028. Future standards for commercial development are still unclear and these may still require gas connection.. Given the introduction of the FHS, the electrical demand for new housing delivered within the development trajectory considers that they will be electrically heated.
- 5.1.5. The electrical demand for new employment developments has been based on the projections of:
- The Regulation 19 Local Plan allocations;
 - Committed employment sites safeguarded by the Local Plan; and
 - Employment areas within the TCBGC.
- 5.1.6. Each allocated area under Local Plan policy has been broken down into the estimated square meterage for office and industrial space that it will provide. These areas were then used to calculate electrical demand.
- 5.1.7. Using BSRIA Electrical Criteria (BG 86/2024), the following typical electrical loads were applied:
- Office space: 0.092 kW/m²; and
 - Industrial space: 0.111 kW/m².
- 5.1.8. It is important to note that industrial electrical demand can vary widely from 0.017 kW/m² for warehouse to 0.223 kW/m² for laboratories, and up to 1.5 kW/m² for data centres. Since BSRIA Electrical Criteria (BG 86/2024) does not provide a single overarching value for industrial use, a conservative estimate of 0.111 kW/m² (based on high-end office space) was used to reflect the potential diversity in industrial demand.
- 5.1.9. Each residential and employment development area has been assigned the Primary Substation catchment in which it is located. The total estimated increase in electrical demand for each substation is the sum of demands from all developments within its catchment. Whilst this gives an indication of whether a substation can support the proposed development, it should be noted that UKPN may choose to supply electricity from a different substation with greater available capacity.
- 5.1.10. The estimated electricity demand for 2043 required for future growth is shown in Table 5-2. The 2043 demand value includes current demand plus the additional demand from the proposed housing and employment sites.

¹⁷⁸ Building Services Research and Information Association (BSRIA) Electrical Criteria by Chin Hang “Kay” Lam (BG 86/2024) February 2024

Table 5-2 Estimated 2043 Peak Electricity Demand

Primary Substation	Total Capacity (MW)	Current Demand (MW)	Estimated increase for development trajectory (MW)	Estimate 2043 Peak Demand (MW)
Braiswick Primary 11kV	51.5	21.9	22.5	44.4
Colchester Grid 11kV	84.2	37.4	13.8	51.2
East Bay Primary 11kV	39.2	19.0	3.7	22.7
Lexden Primary 11kV	39.5	23.0	6.0	29.0
Shrub End Primary 11kV	53.9	22.1	2.7	24.8
Mersea Rd Primary 11kV	45.1	21.8	2.1	23.9
Parsons Heath Primary 11kV	36.0	22.1	25.6	47.7
Alresford Primary 11kV	16.2	14.4	3.3	17.7
Berechurch Primary 11kV	50.4	19.3	7.5	26.8
Severalls Ln Primary 11kV	41.6	23.1	11.5	34.6
Marks Tey Primary 11kV	24.7	14.4	51.0	65.4
Tiptree Primary 11kV	13.1	12.5	13.6	26.1
Langham Primary 11kV	30.4	14.4	8.8	23.2
Foxash Primary 11kV	14.3	11.5	0.1	11.6
Peldon Primary 11kV	23.7	15.0	4.3	18.7
Total	563.9	291.3	176.7	488.3

- 5.1.11. It is important to note that the results presented in Table 5-2 are high level estimates based on publicly available data. The total capacity for each primary substation has been interpolated based on the current peak demand and demand headroom availability percentage presented in Table 5-1. Furthermore, as stated in the Stage 1 and 2 report, demand headroom availability is not a definitive guide to whether a primary substation has capacity to support further expansion. A primary substation's ability to support further development is also dependent on the condition of its equipment and the available capacity at the upstream transmission level i.e. the Grid Supply Points (GSP) and Bulk Supply Points (BSP).
- 5.1.12. Noting the caveats regarding the accuracy of the data presented in Table 5-2, the high level estimates show that 11 of the 15 primary substations have capacity to accommodate the estimated demand increase resultant from the emerging housing and employment trajectory. Four primary substations are estimated to have insufficient capacity to accommodate the anticipated demand increase in their coverage area.
- 5.1.13. The four primary substations forecasted to have insufficient capacity to accommodate the predicted demand are all located on the eastern and western extents of the local authority boundary with the exception of Parsons Heath which is located to east of the City Centre. This indicates there is less capacity in rural areas of Colchester which would be expected. District Network Operators (DNO) reinforce their electrical infrastructure in response to demand in accordance with their licencing conditions. Since rural areas have lower electrical demands, the capacity of the network in these areas is smaller as they require a lower supply.
- 5.1.14. Marks Tey and Parsons Heath are forecasted to have the greatest increase in electrical demand by 2043, whilst Tiptree is anticipated to the fourth highest demand increase. This increase would put all three primary substations into a demand deficit. Alresford Primary substation is predicted to go into a capacity deficit, but does not experience a significant increase in demand, which highlights the limited capacity in this area.

- 5.1.15. The Colchester Grid primary substation is forecasted to have the fifth highest demand increase by 2043. Despite this increase, the primary substation will still have approximately 40% spare capacity (based on demand vs capacity).
- 5.1.16. It is important to note that the forecasts presented in Table 5-2 present a more optimistic scenario than the forecast modelling that was performed by UKPN and was presented in the Stage 1 and 2 report. The forecasts presented in this report reflect only the increase in electrical demand from residential homes and employment sites which CCC identified in the development trajectory. The modelling undertaken by UKPN was detailed and accounted for a number of factors including core demand, low-carbon transport, battery storage, decarbonised heating, distribution generation and network flexibility.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 5.1.1. No planned UKPN projects have been identified to increase capacity of the electrical infrastructure in Colchester.
- 5.1.2. When developers approach a DNO for a new connection, the DNO assesses whether sufficient network capacity exists or whether reinforcement is required. The detail provided by the developer (e.g. demand profile, phasing) influences the accuracy and structure of the connection offer. Under current UK charging rules (post-April 2023), developers typically pay for sole-use connection assets (such as cables and local substations). Reinforcement of the wider network is generally funded by the DNO and recovered through network charges, rather than being charged upfront to the developer. However, there are exceptions: developers may still pay reinforcement costs where projects are deemed speculative, where costs exceed the high-cost cap, or where reinforcement occurs on the transmission network.
- 5.1.3. As set out in the Stage 1 and 2 report, the DNOs are severely constrained in providing any investment ahead of need, and as such it will be important to ensure that the provision of electrical infrastructure does not become a constraint on the development of an area. Mechanisms are available to overcome this constraint, but they will require forward planning and liaison between the local authority and the DNO.
- 5.1.4. To estimate the cost of meeting electricity demand associated with growth to 2043, a high-level benchmarking activity has been conducted¹⁷⁹. Allowances have been made for both primary and secondary costs for all increased loads on substations within the local authority area. Table 5.3 below sets out the estimated electricity costs to 2043.
- 5.1.5. The following costs have been applied for primary substations: below 10MW is circa £1.2 million, 10-15 MW is circa £10.0 million, 15-30MW is circa £25.0 million, and above 30MW is circa £35.0 million. In addition, any increase over 15MW will require a new primary substation which will trigger a Modification Application (Mod App), an application to National Grid to make alternations to the network to accommodate the additional capacity on the DNO network. The benchmark cost for a Mod App is approximately £15.0 million.
- 5.1.6. Secondary costs are for the 11kV network and distribution. An allowance of £250,000 per 1MW has been allowed which would be for distributing to the site and around it. Furthermore, an allowance as a percentage has also been included for professional fees and risk / contingency.
- 5.1.7. It should be noted that estimated costs set out in this IADP could increase due to proportionate factors such as load against capacity installed at a grid supply point.

¹⁷⁹ AECOM, Cost Consultants July 2025.

Table 5-3 Estimated electricity costs to 2043

Primary Substation	Estimate increase for emerging development trajectory (MW)	Primary and Secondary Costs (£)	Professional Fees and Surveys 3% (£)	Risk / Contingency 10% (£)	Total (£)
Braiswick Primary 11kV	22.5	45,632,632	1,368,979	4,700,161	51,701,772
Colchester Grid 11kV	13.8	13,454,158	403,625	1,385,778	15,243,561
East Bay Primary 11kV	3.7	2,123,684	63,711	218,739	2,406,134
Lexden Primary 11kV	6.0	2,707,395	81,222	278,862	3,067,478
Shrub End Primary 11kV	2.7	1,886,895	56,607	194,350	2,137,852
Mersea Rd Primary 11kV	2.1	1,730,921	51,928	178,285	1,961,134
Parsons Heath Primary 11kV	25.6	46,410,658	1,392,320	4,780,298	52,583,275
Alresford Primary 11kV	3.3	2,030,921	60,928	209,185	2,301,034
Berechurch Primary 11kV	7.5	3,075,000	92,250	316,725	3,483,975
Severalls Ln Primary 11kV	11.5	12,883,526	386,506	1,327,003	14,597,035
Marks Tey Primary 11kV	51.0	62,739,553	1,882,187	6,462,174	71,083,913
Tiptree Primary 11kV	13.6	13,410,237	402,307	1,381,254	15,193,798
Langham Primary 11kV	8.8	3,390,789	101,724	349,251	3,841,764
Foxash Primary 11kV	0.1	1,231,579	36,947	126,853	1,395,379
Peldon Primary 11kV	4.3	2,271,711	68,151	233,986	2,573,848
Total	176.7	214,979,658	6,449,390	22,142,905	243,571,952

Source: AECOM 2026, based on assumptions made by AECOM Cost Consultants July 2025

5.1.8. The indicative cost for providing the estimated increase in electricity arising from the development trajectory to 2043 is £243,571,952.

5.1.9. This indicative cost would likely be shared between the DNO and the developer based on the share-use/sole-use funding agreement.

Summary

5.1.10. The assessment of Colchester's electricity infrastructure can be summarised as follows:

- UK Power Networks (UKPN) operate fifteen primary substations in Colchester. Currently, all but one primary substation has more than 5% demand headroom availability.
- The forecasted electricity demand for 2043, based on the housing and employment projections, indicate that all but four primary substations will have capacity to accommodate the anticipated increase in electricity demand. However, this assessment is less conservative (i.e. more optimistic) than the Long Term Scenario Forecasts that were performed by UKPN and presented in the Stage 1 and 2 report.

- The primary substation areas predicted to have insufficient capacity to accommodate the anticipated increase in electricity demand are located at the eastern and western extents of Colchester, in rural areas.
- No planned UKPN projects have been identified to increase capacity of the electrical infrastructure in Colchester.
- In accordance with DNO licence conditions, UKPN do not proactively invest in their network ahead of need. Instead, they reinforce their networks as required to suit committed developments, typically using funds provided by developers in paying connection fees.
- The DNO typically covers the costs for shared asset reinforcements whilst developers typically cover the costs for sole use connection assets.
- A high-level benchmarking exercise indicates that the cost of delivering electricity demands associated with the development trajectory would be approximately £243.6 million. It is assumed that these costs will be met by the utility company and developers through connection charges, as noted above.

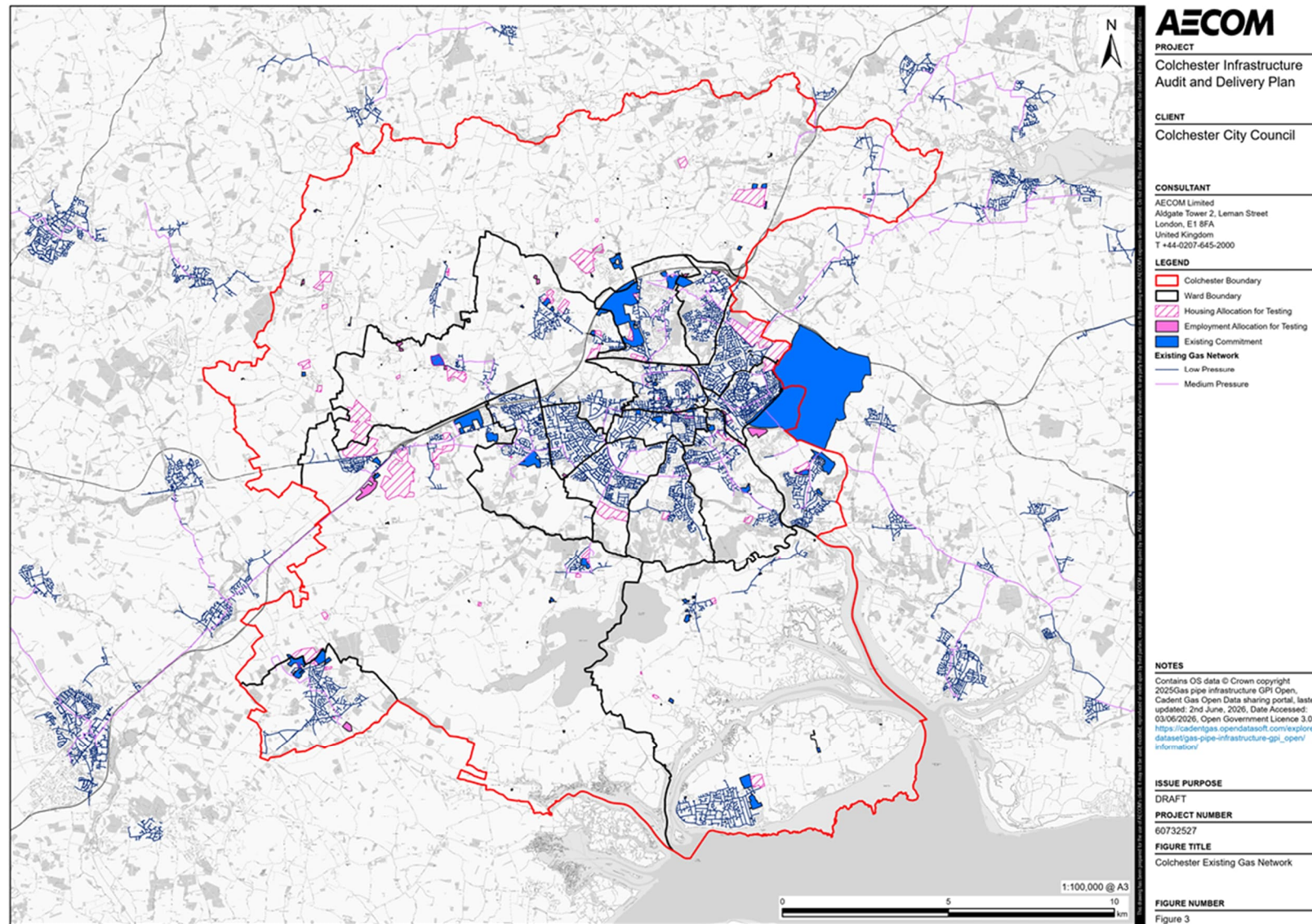
5.2. Gas

Baseline

Current provision

- 5.2.1. Cadent Gas operate high pressure gas mains through Colchester. For national security reasons, Cadent Gas have not granted permission to disclose the locations of these mains within this report. However, during a call with Cadent Gas on the 19th July 2024, Cadent stated that there are no potential bottlenecks to future development in their network within Colchester.
- 5.2.2. The existing low and medium pressure gas networks operated by Cadent Gas in Colchester is shown in Figure 5.33

bioRxiv preprint doi: <https://doi.org/10.1101/2020.07.20.186481>; this version posted July 20, 2020. The copyright holder for this preprint (which was not certified by peer review) is the author/funder, who has granted bioRxiv a license to display the preprint in perpetuity. It is made available under aCC-BY-NC-ND 4.0 International license.



Infrastructure requirements to 2043

5.2.3. As stated in Section 5.1.3, as part of the Future Homes and Building Standards (FHS), new residential dwellings will only be able to install energy efficient heating systems, which does not include gas boilers. The FHS was published in March 2026 and comes into force in March 2027. Following a 12-month transition period, full compliance is expected by March 2028. Future standards for commercial development are still unclear and these may still require gas connection. As such, the demand increase for gas by 2043 has been estimated based solely on the employment sites information provided by CCC. Based on BSRI Rules of Thumb 5th Edition¹⁸⁰, the daily consumption for employment areas is therefore assumed to be 0.5 kW/m²/year (120 kW/m² divided by 245 days). The size of the employment area in sqm has been estimated based on size of the site and application of plot ratios. The estimated demand increase is presented in Table 5-4.

Table 5-4 Estimated Increase in Demand for Gas associated with Existing Employment Allocations

Allocations	Employment Area (m ²)*	Settlement	Local Plan Policy	Gas demand increase by 2043 (MWhr/day)
Submission Local Plan Allocations				
Colchester Business Park (Severalls SEA)	20,400	Colchester	PEP1	10.0
Land at Patterns Yard	14,700	West Bergholt	PEP11	6.9
Wakes Hall Business Centre	7,650	Wakes Colne	PEP12	3.7
Knowledge Gateway (University Research Park)	89,250	Colchester	PEP2	43.7
Maldon Road	3,850	Colchester	PEP4	1.9
Land South of A12 and north of proposed new route of A12, Marks Tey	112,000	Marks Tey	PEP5	54.9
Highland Nursery	9,350	Tiptree	PEP7	4.6
Land south of Factory Hill	32,900	Tiptree	PEP8	16.1
Bullbanks Farm	5,600	Eight Ash Green	PEP9	2.7
Coal Yard Site	6,300	Hythe Station Road	PEP13	3.1
Land South Flakt Wood	7,700	Axial Way Colchester	PEP14	3.8
Land South of Tower Business Park	3,500	Tiptree	PEP16	1.7
Site with Planning Permission Safeguarded for employment use in Submission Local Plan				
Mill Race Nurseries	25,000	Aldham	PEP15	12.2
Northern Gateway	19,550	Colchester	OA4	9.6
Lodge Park (app 192151)	10,000	Langham	PEP10	4.9
Andersons Site	22,400	Marks Tey	PEP6	11.0
TCBGC				
TCBGC	24,500	Colchester	ST9	12.0
Total				202.8

5.2.4. The values presented in Table 5-4 assume all commercial development in Colchester delivered up to 2043 will be heated by gas. This could be considered as a conservative assumption as gas connections to commercial properties may be banned before 2043. If

¹⁸⁰ Building Services Research and Information Association (BSRIA) Rules of Thumb Guidelines for building services (5th Edition) by Glenn Hawkins (BG 9/2011) March 2011

commercial development is required to be heated electrically before 2043, the demand for gas could be lower than the values presented in Table 5-4.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 5.2.5. As described in the Stage 1, 2, and 3 Reports, in general UK demand for natural gas is anticipated to decline to 2043 in spite of housing and employment growth. This is due to government policy promoting the decarbonisation of heat. Despite this, Cadent Gas continues to invest in major projects to ensure a safe and high quality supply to existing developments and facilitate new connections where appropriate. This includes programmes to upgrade and replace ageing infrastructure. Furthermore, Cadent Gas are progressing low carbon alternatives such as hydrogen or biomethane, which have the potential – subject to further development and regulatory approval – to be transported using elements of the existing gas network infrastructure.
- 5.2.6. Cadent Gas assesses connections on a reactive basis, therefore assessed available capacity is constantly changing. With regards to funding sources, if a new connection to the system triggers a requirement for Cadent Gas to reinforce their network, an economic test is performed to calculate the level of customer contribution, if required at all.

Summary

- 5.2.7. The assessment of Colchester's gas infrastructure can be summarised as follows:
- Cadent Gas did not share the exact capacity or location of their infrastructure but provided assurance that there are no potential bottlenecks in their networks for future expansion in Colchester.
 - The gas demand associated with the proposed employment allocations is presented in Table 5-4. This estimate (202.8 MWhr/day) is considered to be conservative as it does not account for the electrification of heating in commercial development.
 - In general, UK demand for gas is anticipated to decline to 2043 due to government legislation.
 - If a new connection to the system triggers a requirement for Cadent Gas to reinforce their network, an economic test is performed to calculate the level of customer contribution, if required at all.

5.3. Renewable and low carbon

Baseline

Current provision

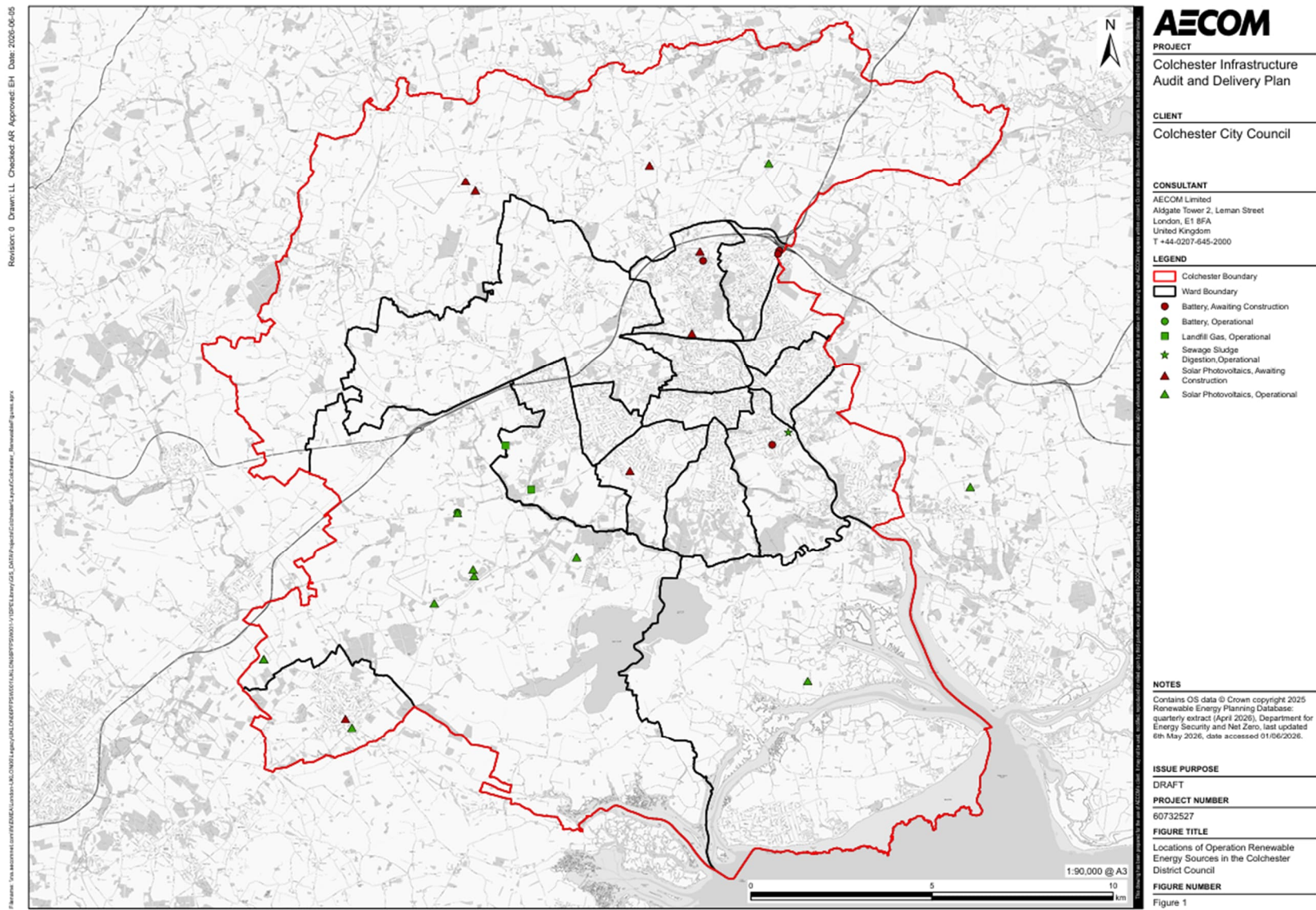
- 5.3.1. Colchester currently has several renewable energy installations, including eleven solar PV installations that are over 150kW generation capacity, two landfill gas to energy sites, one sewerage sludge digestion plant, and one battery energy storage system (BESS). Combined, these installations have a capacity of 181.5 MW, as shown in Figure 5.4 below. In addition to these large renewable energy sites, approximately half the homes within the Council's housing stock have solar PV panels installed. Other council estate assets that have solar PV installed include the Crematorium, Leisure World and Shrub End Depot.

Table 5-5 Renewable Energy Sources (over 150kW generation) in Colchester

Technology	Number of installations	Capacity
Solar PV	11	173.7 MW
Landfill Gas	2	6.6 MW
Sewerage Sludge Digestion	1	1.2 MW
Battery Energy Storage System	1	n/a

Source: Renewable Energy Planning Database (Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, April 2026)

Figure 5.4 Location of Operational Renewable Energy Sources within Colchester



Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 5.3.2. CCC is supportive of renewable energy projects provided that they include appropriate assessment to mitigate their impact on the existing surrounding environment. According to the Renewable Energy Planning Database (Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, April 2024), five solar PV schemes additional to those noted above have been granted planning permission. As shown in Table 5-6, these schemes would increase Colchester's solar PV installations to 13, increasing solar energy capacity to 176.2MW.
- 5.3.3. Planning permission has been granted for four battery storage schemes. Battery storage operates by withdrawing energy from the grid during periods of low demand and then feeding the stored energy back to the grid during periods of high demand to provide greater resilience to the network. As shown in Table 5-6, the five planned schemes would provide a capacity of 6.6MW.
- 5.3.4. As shown in below, the development trajectory will increase the electrical demand in Colchester. Renewable energy projects have the potential to help meet this demand. However, it is worth noting that renewable energy project in Colchester feed back into the national grid. The energy they generate is not necessarily used solely to supply the Colchester demand.

Table 5-6 Known Renewable Energy Sources (over 150kW generation) in Colchester including scheme granted planning approval

Technology	Number of installations	Capacity
Solar PV	26	176.2 MW
Landfill Gas	2	6.6 MW
Battery	5	6.6 MW
Sewerage Sludge Digestion	1	1.2 MW

Source: Renewable Energy Planning Database (Department for Energy Security and Net Zero, April 2026).

- 5.3.5. The Renewable Energy Planning Database only identifies renewable energy projects that have been submitted for planning. Furthermore, the projects included in Table 5-6 have passed the Connections Reform two gate application process (Connections Reform process is explained in paragraph 1.1.56). Further renewable energy projects have the potential to come forward before 2043. As such, the renewable energy generation values presented in Table 5-6 have the potential to increase before 2043.
- 5.3.1. Colchester forms part of the East of England energy region, which is strategically important to delivering the UK's Clean Power 2030 objectives. While the national policy framework identifies a continued need for substantial new renewable generation capacity across Great Britain, including solar, onshore wind, and energy storage, the requirement for additional projects in specific locations is now determined at a regional and system level rather than by local demand.
- 5.3.1. In this context, there is a clear ongoing need for further renewable energy deployment within the wider Essex and East of England region. However, under the reformed grid connection regime, individual projects in Colchester will only proceed where they are demonstrated to be both sufficiently advanced and strategically aligned with regional capacity requirements and national energy system needs.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 5.3.1. Renewable energy projects in the UK are typically developed, financed, and operated by private sector companies on a commercial basis. The electricity generated is usually exported into the national grid, where it is distributed according to overall system demand rather than being tied to a specific local area (e.g. Colchester).

- 5.3.2. However, some projects may involve public sector participation or alternative arrangements such as power purchase agreements or local/private wire connections, meaning ownership and usage can vary in specific cases.
- 5.3.3. In addition to the planning application process and environmental assessments, renewable energy projects are now subject to the UK's Connections Reform. Led by the National Energy System Operator (NESO) and approved by Ofgem in 2025, the reform shifts the grid connection process from a 'first come, first served' model to a 'first ready and needed, first connected' approach.
- 5.3.4. The reform was required because the electricity network (both transmission and distribution) faced a significant backlog of connection applications, with many speculative or unviable projects occupying queue positions despite lacking planning consent or funding. This resulted in delays to viable projects and constrained the delivery of the Government's Clean Power 2030 Action Plan.
- 5.3.5. Connections Reform has introduced a gated application process that developers must pass through to secure a confirmed grid connection. Projects must demonstrate sufficient readiness (for example, evidence of land rights, planning progress, and overall project maturity) as well as strategic alignment with the UK's energy system needs.
- 5.3.6. In addition, projects are assessed against system requirements informed by the Clean Power 2030 Action Plan, including technology-specific capacity ranges and strategic priorities, to ensure that only viable and necessary projects progress through the connection queue.

Summary

- 5.3.7. The assessment of Colchester's renewable infrastructure can be summarised as follows:
- Renewable energy projects in Colchester currently generate 173.7 MW through Solar PV and 6.6 MW through landfill gas to energy sites.
 - By 2043, known renewable energy projects that have been granted planning permission in Colchester could increase renewable energy generation to 176.2 MW through solar PV, 6.6 MW through landfill gas to energy and 6.6 MW through battery energy storage.
 - Renewable energy projects are typically funded and delivered by private developers.
 - The introduction of Connections Reform has refined the process for connecting renewable energy projects, prioritising those that are suitable, well-advanced and aligned with the government's strategic energy goals.

5.4. Telecommunications and digital

Baseline

Current provision

- 5.4.1. There are a number of service providers offering fibre broadband across Colchester, including Colchester Fibre (part of Colchester Amphora Trading, one of Colchester City Council's commercial companies focused on infrastructure), Sky, BT OpenReach, EE, Virgin Media, Open Info, Lightspeed, Gigaclear, NOW Broadband, Plusnet, Onestream, and Vodafone.
- 5.4.2. Broadband coverage and speeds are very good in Colchester, with 98.56% of residential and business premises having access to superfast broadband of 30Mbps and above and

- 41.17% of residential and commercial premises having access to Full Fibre to the Premises (FTTP) or Fibre to the Home (FTTH)¹⁸¹.
- 5.4.3. CCC adopted its Digital Strategy 2025-2028¹⁸² in 2025, which sets out the modernisation of Colchester's technology infrastructure to ensure all residents can benefit from accessible, secure and high-quality digital services. The Strategy focuses on upgrading IT infrastructure, investing in automation and digital skills, and embedding cyber security and governance.
- 5.4.4. CCC adopted their Economic Strategy¹⁸³ in 2022, covering the period 2022-2025, which includes a number of initiatives and priorities to advance Colchester's digital connectivity offering, namely:
- The rollout of city centre ultrafast broadband delivered in 2017-18 as part of the Council's "Colchester Ultra-ready" campaign.
 - Gigabit in urban areas – CCC secured £3.35 million in funding from the DCMS-led Local Full Fibre Networks Programme, to expand its core networks across urban Colchester in 2020-22.
 - Superfast Essex broadband programme – in partnership with BDUK and CCC, this provided a new fibre-based network to areas within Colchester. The Superfast Essex Broadband Programme is a £24.6 million county-wide programme. It is important to note that the deployments carried out under the Superfast Essex programme were overwhelmingly fibre-to-the-cabinet (FTTC, VDSL) and not full-fibre.
 - Private sector investors have also invested heavily in Colchester subsequently to the Local Full Fibre Network (LFFN) programme, with networks across Wivenhoe, Shrub End, Berechurch and Lexden now reaching more than 18,500 premises.
 - Virgin Media's network, which is capable of supporting gigabit speeds (on the download channel only), reaches almost 40,000 premises across the local authority area, and is a hybrid mix of copper, coaxial and fibre technologies¹⁸⁴.
- 5.4.5. Existing issues and barriers to delivering fibre optic broadband infrastructure in Colchester include:
- Over-build of fibre networks, leading to high upfront costs for fibre optic broadband providers and system inefficiencies, as dormant networks cause both disruption to the landscape (large-scale street works) and waste, as networks that have fewer customers become commercially unviable and therefore lose revenue. This is the key driving factor in the current MandA processes seen across the industry.
 - Approximately two-thirds of Colchester is rural. Rural areas typically bring more logistical and financial challenges when deploying fibre optic infrastructure. These areas have been less attractive to commercial fibre programmes and have therefore been the focus of Government interventions through BDUK (Building Digital UK). The BDUK funding schemes have provided a significant funding stream, sometimes tailored to specific postcodes, to enable full-fibre networks to be built in hard-to-reach places. There is a significant element of public sector planning in these deployments, which are conducted primarily by BT Openreach, with some contracts also awarded locally to County Broadband and Gigaclear.
 - An unstable market that is highly volatile and subject to mergers and bankruptcies¹⁸⁵.

¹⁸¹ ThinkBroadband (n.d.) Colchester Gigabit Broadband Coverage. Available at: <https://labs.thinkbroadband.com/local/E07000071> [Accessed: June 2026].

¹⁸² Colchester City Council (2025) Colchester City Council: Digital Strategy 2025-2028. Available at: <https://cbccrmdata.blob.core.windows.net/noteattachment/CBC-null-Digital-strategy-2025-Digital%20Strategy%202025%20-%202028.pdf> [Accessed: June 2026].

¹⁸³ Colchester City Council and Colchester Ultra Ready for Business (2022) Colchester's Economic Strategy. Available at: <https://cbccrmdata.blob.core.windows.net/noteattachment/CBC-Strategies-Colchester-Economic-Development-Strategy-2022-2025-Economic%20Strategy%20Winter22%20FINAL%20Jan%202023.pdf> [Accessed: July 2026].

¹⁸⁴ Colchester Fibre service provider engagement, July 2024

¹⁸⁵ Colchester Fibre service provider engagement, July 2024

5.4.6. Existing opportunities for fibre optic broadband delivery in Colchester include:

- Strong reputation – Colchester has a good Ultrafast broadband network and operators that can encourage and promote future public and private investment. Colchester is held up as an exemplar by the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport (DCMS) for how government intervention in instances of market failure can ultimately deliver significant private sector onward investment.
- Opportunities for the deployment of open-access models that are more streamlined and cost-efficient. In these models, multiple operators can access shared network infrastructure, rather than having to build multiple, near identical, overlaid networks of their own.
- Shifting consumer trends – opportunities for educating the public on the benefits of fibre-optic broadband as a means of increasing local authority-wide uptake¹⁸⁶.

5.4.7. Swedish fibre installation specialists VX Fiber and Colchester Amphora Trading Ltd (operating as Colchester Fibre) are rolling out a full-fibre network across Colchester, supported by £3.24 million from the Government's Local Full Fibre Networks programme and private investment from VX Fiber.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

Future demand and supply

5.4.8. The development trajectory was shared with Colchester Fibre; no feedback on demand to 2043 or infrastructure requirements associated with specific sites was received. In general, it is likely that the developer commitments required by the Local Plan, together with investment by digital infrastructure providers driven by commercial interests, will support new development without a requirement for any additional infrastructure projects.

5.4.9. Future demand and supply of fibre broadband is largely dependent upon the following:

- Market factors and processes;
- Funding streams – securing funding through both Central Government programmes and private partnerships; and
- Planning policy changes within the Local Plan and other associated planning policies – currently Policy SP6 (Infrastructure and Connectivity) of the adopted Local Plan¹⁸⁷ states that new properties will allow for the provision for ultrafast broadband in order to allow connection to that network as and when it is made available. This does not fully implement the principle of open access infrastructure, as some house builders have entered into exclusive partnerships with network build partners. In the worst cases, this leads to distortion of pricing and other providers being prohibited from installing to these new build areas.

Costs, funding and delivery

5.4.10. Funding is typically secured through both public and private investment. Fibre programmes are delivered by special delivery vehicles (Colchester Fibre) and other utility providers such as Sky, EE, Virgin Media and BT Openreach, OpenInfra, Lightspeed, Onestream, and Gigaclear.

5.4.11. The cost of deploying full-fibre networks remains high, with uncertainty over the continuation of the debt- and equity-led financing levels seen in 2020-24. The cost of deployment

¹⁸⁶ Colchester Fibre service provider engagement, July 2024.

¹⁸⁷ Tendring District Council; Colchester Borough Council; Braintree District Council (2021) Colchester Borough Local Plan 2013-2033: North Essex Authorities' Shared Strategic Section 1 Plan. Available at: <https://cbccrmdata.blob.core.windows.net/noteattachment/CBC-Local-Plan-North-Essex-Authorities-Shared-Strategic-Section-1-Post%20Committee%20Colchester%2028th%20Jan%202021.pdf> [Accessed: June 2026].

underscores the importance of correct early design and the encouragement of open-access network principles.

- 5.4.12. On average, full fibre to the premises (FTTP) costs £650 per dwelling, however this value can be significantly higher in more challenging locations.
- 5.4.13. Other construction costs associated with the deployment of fibre include:
- £650 per metre to lay fibre in carriageway, where dig and backfill is required;
 - £5-6,000 to erect a new telecoms pole, which should not be a default option, given the impact on the urban environment; and
 - £150 per metre to lay duct and fibre in a pavement, notwithstanding the issues arising from multiple operators repeatedly digging and backfilling the same areas.

Summary

- 5.4.14. The timescales envisaged for the updated Local Plan to 2043 are likely to see full-fibre connectivity emerge as a ubiquitous utility infrastructure, with densification of existing fibre networks and the retirement of the legacy copper networks originally designed and deployed for telephony.
- 5.4.15. There remains ample scope for public-private partnerships in helping to deliver full-fibre connectivity, and Colchester is well-placed to make best use of the network assets already delivered since 2020 in this way.
- 5.4.16. While the process of full-fibre network build will remain commercially driven, CCC has the opportunity to shape the process to the benefit of residents and businesses alike. This may include an explicit requirement that all new builds should be able to offer full fibre from multiple providers, ideally using open-access infrastructure.
- 5.4.17. At the same time, it is highly desirable that a “dig once” approach is taken to utility infrastructure. Implementing this goes beyond the remit of the Local Plan however, and would require changes to the wider legislative framework, notably the New Roads and Street Works Act (NWRSA 1991).

5.5. Potable water

Baseline

Current provision

- 5.5.1. Water companies manage available water resources within Water Resource Zones (WRZ). Anglian Water (AW) is the main supplier of potable water for the Colchester area, located in the Essex South WRZ with Affinity Water providing potable water to the areas of Dedham and Wivenhoe, located in the Brett WRZ. Both Essex South WRZ and Brett WRZ are classed as under serious water stress by the Environment Agency.
- 5.5.2. Water supplies to Colchester are made up of a combination of groundwater, abstractions in the Essex Chalk Aquifer, and surface water sources via Ardleigh Reservoir, where Affinity Water operate a shared reservoir with AW as part of a mutual statutory arrangement. Affinity Water are entitled to take 50% of the output from the reservoir, with an agreed 50/50 share from 2025.
- 5.5.3. The existing supply of water must be managed, and future demands met. AW predict that the average daily demand for potable water will increase across their supply region to 1,304 Ml/day by 2050, with no intervention, due to an increase in population of 918,000. In addition, climate change will mean there is 10 Ml/day less water available to use by 2050. As such, there are likely to be shortfalls across the AW region. Affinity Water provides an average of 32 Ml/d of drinking water to customers in the Brett Water Resource Zone, which includes Dedham and Wivenhoe.

- 5.5.4. The Anglian Water Resource Management Plan (Essex South) (WRMP)¹⁸⁸ suggests Essex South WRZ is predicted to go into supply deficit by 2025 under the preferred baseline scenario. This is predominantly due to a growth in demand coupled with a fall in Water Available for Use (WAFU). The fall in WAFU is due to a mixture of: climate change; the requirement to reduce water usage due to the need to restore sustainable abstractions; and reductions in output to achieve environmental destinations (reductions in amounts of water taken from sensitive environments). Table 5-7 summarises these output reductions.

Table 5-7 Reductions in Water Available for Use in Essex South WRZ

Reason for WAFU	Reduction in WAFU (Ml/d)
Restoring sustainable abstraction (recent actual average)	-3.9
Environmental destinations (by 2040)	-27
Climate Change by 2050	-1.2

Source: Anglian Water – WRMP 2024

- 5.5.5. The Affinity Water Resources Management Plan (WRMP)¹⁸⁹ notes that without additional measures, the Brett WRZ would run surplus in the supply and demand balance until 2040 i.e. there would be more WAFU than demand until this time. After 2040, it would switch to a deficit in the supply and demand balance; this deficit also only occurs if a high environmental destination scenario on abstraction reductions is realised.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 5.5.6. AW produced a WRMP in 2024, with an update made in April 2025¹⁹⁰ that covers the period from 2025 to 2050. This document gives an outline of AW's proposed strategy to meet customer demand overcome the predicted deficit for the next 25 years.
- 5.5.7. AW plans to mainly manage the supply and demand balance through a demand management strategy as well as side supply strategies including imports from outside WRZs, water re-use and potentially desalination.
- 5.5.8. Table 5-8 outlines the proposed AW customer-side demand management measures across their supply area, which also apply to the WRZ which CCC is located in. The preferred demand management strategy includes a smart metering programme, leakage reductions and water efficiency measures. These three projects are listed within the Project Schedule.

Table 5-8 Anglian Water: Preferred Options around Demand Management - Customer Side

Measure	Action
Smart Metering	Continue smart metering roll out to theoretical maximum of 95% Engagement with customers to further educate on smart meter use Reduce customer supply pipe and plumbing losses
Leakage Reduction	Replacement and repair of leaking assets, both customer supply and network leaks
Water Efficiency	Campaigns and targeted communications Retrofit fit smart devices (e.g. smart showers) that can send data to the customer portal Mandatory labelling of water usage on appliances

Source: Anglian Water WRMP 2024

¹⁸⁸ Anglian Water – Essex South (2024) Water Resources Management Plan. Available at: [wrmp24-wrz-summary-exs-supporting-document.pdf](#) [Accessed: June 2026].

¹⁸⁹ Affinity Water (2024) Water Resources Management Plan. Available at: <https://affinitywater.uk/engagementhq.com/wrmp>. [Accessed: June 2026].

¹⁹⁰ Anglian Water (2025). *Water Resources Management Plan 2024*. Available at: [Main Document – WRMP24](#) [Accessed: June 2026].

- 5.5.9. However, demand management alone will not be enough to balance the future supply and demand and hence supply-side measures will also be required. Anglian Water have identified preferred supply-side measures for Essex South WRZ as shown in Table 5-9.

Table 5-9 Preferred Supply-Side Options for Essex South WRZ

Option I.D	Supply Side Options
DA01	Adjustment to 1:200 drought
EE01	Adjustment to existing potable water export
E102	Adjustment to existing potable water import
EXS10	Holland on Sea desalination (sea water) (26MI / day)
EXS19	Colchester WRC direct to Ardleigh Reservoir (no additional treatment)
EXS7	Essex South WTW Backwash water recovery
LC01	Adjustment for Licence cap scenario 8
OP12	AMP8 OPI Adjustment

Source: Water Resource Zone Summaries: Essex South¹⁹¹

- 5.5.10. In relation to adjusting potable water imports, the WRMP does not outline the specific sources of raw water that will supply the proposed transfers. However, due to the flexibility of Anglian Water's strategic grid and the potable transfer network, this is likely to come from a range of existing sources within other WRZs which have the potential for input from new strategic resources such as the proposed Fens and Lincolnshire Reservoirs (two new reservoirs that are proposed outside Colchester to supply water across the Anglian Water area) as demand increases and existing abstractions are reduced or changed.

- 5.5.11. However, planning, construction and filling timeframes mean, even with the significant early work already undertaken, the Lincolnshire Reservoir will not come online until 2039, and this date is considered ambitious. Anglian Water will have a short-term regional deficit (i.e. wider than just the Essex South WRZ) until the reservoirs are in supply. In order to address the shortfall of water left by climate change and licence capping for the Essex South WRZ, a new supply-side option is required before the reservoirs are available. Anglian Water have little opportunity to utilise any surplus ground or surface water, therefore Anglian Water are progressing with plans for indirect water reuse at the Colchester Water Recycling Centre (WRC). Rather than discharge all the treated effluent from the WRC to the estuary, Anglian Water will treat some of the already treated effluent again using membrane technology before discharging and storing it in a raw water storage reservoir (Ardleigh) where it will mix with river water.

Anglian Water have been granted planning permission by West Suffolk Council, Babergh and Mid Suffolk District Council and Colchester City Council for a 69km section of pipeline between Bury St Edmunds and Colchester which will be capable of transferring up to 25 MI/d. The scheme includes infrastructure connecting the Wherstead area to Great Horkesley Reservoir as part of Anglian Water's wider strategic water grid, which is designed to transfer water across the region to improve resilience of supply.

- 5.5.12. The combined impact of the proposed demand management measures and supply side options in the Essex South WRZ results in a forecast balance of supply and demand by 2050.

- 5.5.13. Affinity Water also propose a range of continued demand management option implementation across all of their WRZs including the Brett WRZ. These options include:

- Leakage reduction;
- Adopting and installing different metering technologies;

¹⁹¹ Anglian Water WRMP – WRZ [Summary for Essex South \(April 2025\)](#) , Accessed June 2026

- Helping customers to reduce their water consumption;
- Working with business customers and retailers to reduce their water consumption; and
- Considering temporary options to reduce water usage in times of significant drought.

5.5.14. In the longer term, if high environmental destination (abstraction reduction) scenarios are required, then in conjunction with Water Resources East¹⁹² (WRE) regional planning¹⁹³ and Anglian Water, imports would be considered drawing on the Colchester effluent re-use scheme or the Holland-on-Sea desalination scheme.

Costs, funding and delivery

5.5.15. There are high costs associated with both the customer-side (demand management) schemes and the supply-side schemes proposed by AW and Affinity for the WRZ supplying Colchester. The projects are to be funded by AW through the Ofwat-regulated Price Review process which sets the price that AW can charge its customers for the next five year investment period or Asset Management Period (AMP). This review happens every five years and the recently determined Price Review PR24 has agreed prices rises for AMP8 (which runs from 2025-2030). It should be noted that although the customer side schemes are funded by AW, proposed price increases require agreement from Ofwat which may not be approved to the level of funding needed.

5.5.16. Costs for demand management schemes are not broken down by WRZ and are instead presented AW-wide as an indication. Total costs¹⁹⁴ to 2050 are £4.7 billion, as can be seen below in Table 5-10.

Table 5-10 Customer-side Demand Management Scheme Costs for the Anglian Water Region

Demand Management Strategy Action	Cost (£m)
Smart Metering	243
Water Efficiency (household + non-household) (operational costs only)	73
Leakage Reduction (mains and household)	4,370
Total	4,710

Source: Anglian Water (2024), Demand Management Preferred Plan

- 5.5.17. Supply-side costs are published for each Anglian Water WRZ¹⁹⁵. However, not every preferred option listed within Table 5.3 is identified. Affinity Water do not propose significant supply-side cost intervention within the Local Plan period.
- 5.5.18. CAPEX costs, where available for Anglian water's proposals, are outlined in Table 5-11. For those side-supply schemes that are listed, total costs across the Essex South WRZ to 2050 is £533.9 million. However, the total cost is likely to be higher as not all options have cost estimates available at the time of writing. It is also noted that these costs cover the wider supply zones which provide water to other Local Authority areas (particularly Braintree District Council) and not just to the Colchester local authority area.
- 5.5.19. The WRMP24 option-development assessment identified indicative capital costs of approximately £534 million for the Essex South WRZ supply-side options considered at that time. These were planning-stage estimates produced for option appraisal purposes and should not be regarded as current project budgets.

¹⁹² WRE is the independent, not-for-profit membership organisation pioneering a collaborative, cross-sector approach to water resources and integrated water management planning in Eastern England.

¹⁹³ WRE (2023) Regional Water Resources Plan for Eastern England. Available at: [WRE-Regional-Water-Resources-Plan-for-Eastern-England.pdf](https://wre.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2023/07/WRE-Regional-Water-Resources-Plan-for-Eastern-England.pdf) [Accessed: July 2026].

¹⁹⁴ Anglian Water (2024). Water Resources Management Plan 2024. Available at: <https://affinitywater.uk/engagement/hq.com/wrmp> [Accessed: June 2026].

Table 5-11 CAPEX costs

Essex South	CAPEX (£k)
Holland on Sea desalination (sea water) (26Ml / day)	394,661.52
Colchester WRC direct to Ardleigh Reservoir (no additional treatment)	138,995.01
Essex South WTW Backwash water recovery	277.67
Total	533,934.20

Source: Anglian Water (2023). Supply-side Option development.

- 5.5.20. The costs set out above are for schemes which cover the entire AW region, and so it is not appropriate to attribute all costs to growth arising in Colchester. To quantify at least some portion of potable water costs to 2043, connection costs of new development sites to the water supply network have been estimated.
- 5.5.21. A high-level benchmarking activity has therefore been conducted utilising published standards from AW¹⁹⁶. For 2026/27, the water infrastructure charge per property is £502. Table 5-12 applies this benchmark to the development trajectory and thus indicates that the estimated cost of potable water infrastructure to 2043 is £11,113,276. It should be noted that the charge is likely to rise with inflation.

Table 5-12 Estimated potable water connection costs to 2043

	2026/27 to 2030/31	2031/32 to 2033/34	2037/36 to 2042/43	Total
Water Infrastructure Charge	£2,004,486	£4,924,620	£4,184,170	£11,113,276

Source: AECOM.

- 5.5.22. In terms of connection of new development sites to the water supply network, the Water Industry Act (1991) allows for water companies to reclaim the cost of water and sewerage network upgrades from developers as part of the normal requisition process. Therefore, the Project Schedule assumes that costs of connections are funded and would be paid by the developer.
- 5.5.23. Owing to the connectivity of WRZs, the spatial location of growth within Colchester does not materially influence investment required in water resource management. All growth within Colchester is in an area classified by the Environment Agency to be under severe stress, and significant investment is required by AW in particular to meet the dual challenge of population growth alongside supply-side reductions in WAFU due to climate change and environmental improvement need.
- 5.5.24. Therefore, new development will need to invest in water efficiency measures to support the demand reduction actions required for both water companies to be able to continue to ensure adequate supply of water and to be in-keeping with the government strategy to reduce water demand by 2050. Setting planning policy which requires per capita consumption (PCC) to be limited will assist in water companies balancing future supply and demand.
- 5.5.25. The 2026 Water Cycle Study (WCS) produced to support the Local Plan has set out evidence for justifying a PCC policy of 85 l/p/d for new dwellings, including evidence of how this can be achieved without the need for development (or community) level water reuse technology. This means the target, if set in new policy, can reasonably be achieved through the provision of high efficiency fixtures and fittings.
- 5.5.26. Although AW will provide residential development with potable water where development areas are allocated under the Local Plan, AW and Affinity Water may no longer routinely meet potable water demand for non-residential growth where there is no legislative requirement to do so. Non-residential growth should consider investment in water

¹⁹⁶ Anglian Water, (2026); Infrastructure Charges for Residential - 2026/2027.

management to move towards a water neutral position such that demand for mains water is minimised; this would take the form of ensuring water efficiency is maximised, considering the use of rainwater harvesting or recycling and considering whether some uses of water can be sourced directly from the environment rather than mains supply.

- 5.5.27. In addition to water efficiency, the requirement for investment in water distribution infrastructure is influenced by the locality and scale of employment growth, as both water company and developer investment in new water supply mains and pumping stations may need to be higher where growth is concentrated.

Summary

- 5.5.28. Key findings relating to potable water are as follows:

- AW is the main potable water supplier to Colchester with small areas of Dedham and Wivenhoe provided by Affinity Water.
- Colchester is located within the AW Essex South WRZ and Affinity Water's Brett WRZ which are classed as under serious water stress by the Environment Agency.
- The main issues affecting the WRZs' supply-demand balance are population growth, restoring sustainable abstraction and reductions to achieve environmental destinations. The AW Essex South WRZ is expected to go into supply deficit by 2025 if no measures are put in place. The Brett WRZ would still operate a surplus in its supply and demand balance until 2040 even without additional measures.
- AW plans to overcome the predicted deficit mainly through a demand management strategy as well as side supply strategies including imports from outside WRZs, water re-use and, depending on the scale of future environmental needs, through desalination. The preferred demand management strategy includes a smart metering programme, leakage reductions and water efficiency measures.
- AW are funding overall improvements to their networks and making efforts to reduce water consumption.
- There are three demand side potable water projects in the Project Schedule. These relate to:
 - o smart metering (total capital expenditure of £243 million);
 - o leakage reduction (total capital expenditure of £4,370 million);
 - o water efficiency measures (operational cost of £97 million); and
 - o The Project Schedule also contains four supply side projects relating to AW's strategy to reduce net transfers to 2050 (total identified capital expenditure of £533.9 million for the entire Essex South WRZ).
- Total capital costs of the listed projects are £5,146.9 million, however it is noted that these projects will cater for demand not just from Colchester but for a wider geographical area, and for this reason the costs have not been included in the grand total presented in chapter 5.9.33. The projects will be funded by AW through their Price Review (PR24) and so there are no funding gaps.
- Owing to the connectivity of WRZs, the spatial location of growth within Colchester does not materially influence investment required in water resource management.
- Developers are to fund the cost of development connections. A high-level benchmarking exercise indicates that the cost of connection charges to provide potable water infrastructure with the potential emerging allocations would be £11.1 million. This sum has been included in the Project Schedule.

5.6. Wastewater

Baseline

Current provision

- 5.6.1. Settlements within the Colchester local authority area are served by 18 AW owned Water WRCs that treat wastewater from both residential and employment sources and discharge the water back to the environment. The locations of the WRCs across Colchester, and the drainage catchment areas they serve are presented in Figure 5.5. AW operate their WRCs subject to permits set by the Environment Agency which have conditions which must be met with regards to the flow and quality of discharges of the final treated effluent.
- 5.6.2. Analysis of the revised development trajectory and site allocations has identified that 13 of the 18 WRCs in the CCC would be likely to receive wastewater associated with allocations.
- 5.6.3. It is expected that the amount of surface water that enters the AW sewer network in these WRC catchments will increase due to increased rainfall, as a result of climate change, and increased wastewater generated from expected growth. AW has identified this in their Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) and recognise that new or improved foul and surface water infrastructure may be required accordingly.
- 5.6.4. As part of the DWMP process, water recycling catchments across the AW network have been risk-assessed by AW to understand the impact of future growth and climate change to 2050. AW's current assessment of likely population growth in each of the catchments is likely to differ from Colchester Local Plan numbers as the spatial strategy develops, but represented a best estimate at the time of DWMP completion in 2023 (using information gathered between 2020 and 2022).
- 5.6.5. AW have provided a Red, Amber and Green (RAG) rating for the headroom available for future growth at each of the 18 WRCs that serve Colchester; this is presented in Table 5-13 alongside estimates of population growth within each WRC catchment (as determined by AW for the DWMP). The rating gives a qualitative summary of whether growth in each WRC may be initially restricted by available treatment capacity and where future investment is likely to be required.
- 5.6.6. Headroom is available for the scale of population growth anticipated in the DWMP at eight of the 17 WRCs identified. This availability is dependent on existing commitments and the preferred spatial strategy taken forward. A further six have some available headroom for future development but are likely to require phasing of development to enable the planned investment to come forward whilst capacity improvements are made.

Figure 5.5 Location of Water Recycling Centres within Colchester District

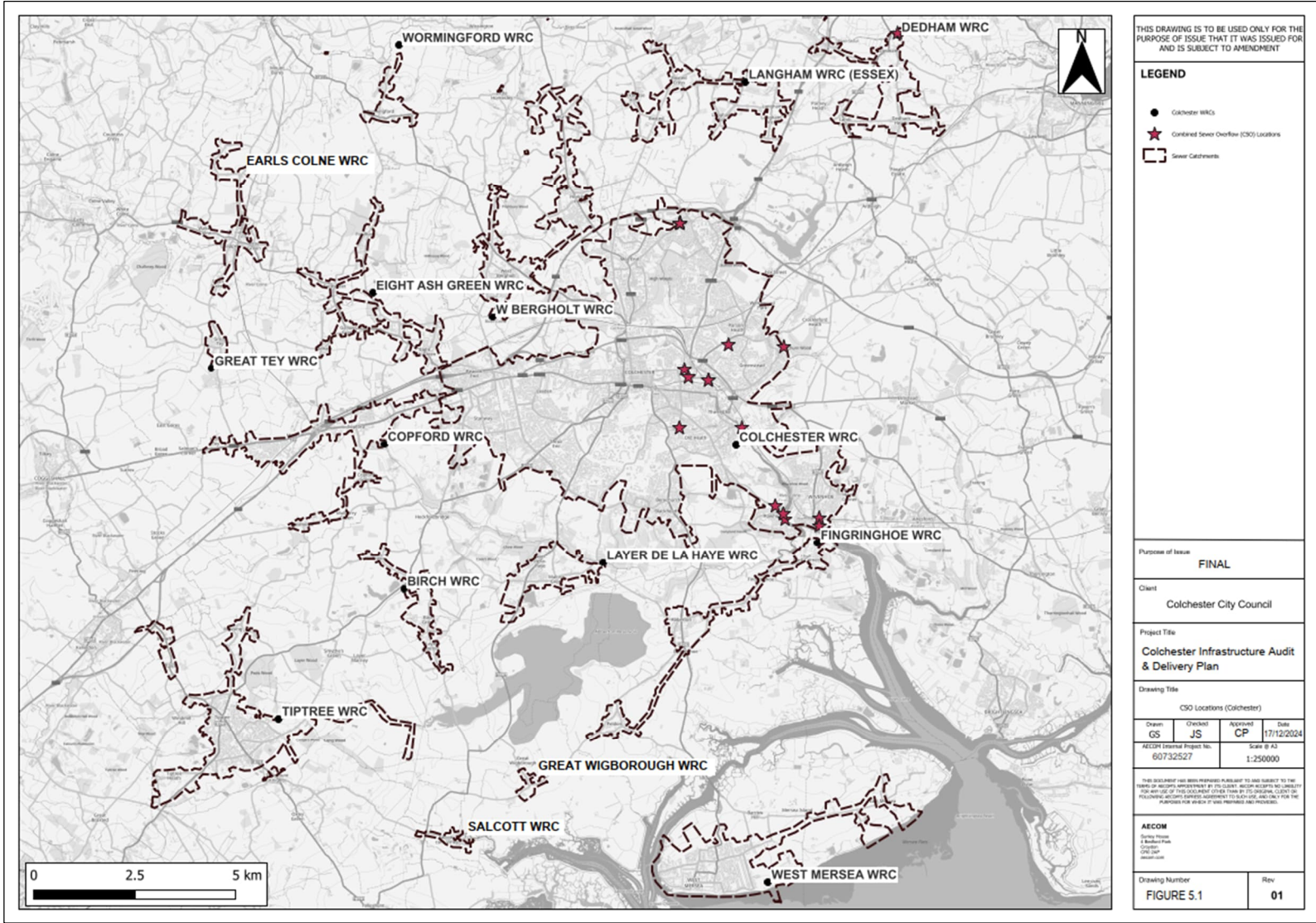


Table 5-13 RAG Rating for future growth at WRCs serving Colchester

Settlements in Colchester	WRC Catchment serving settlement	Population 2021	Population 2030	Population 2050	WRC Headroom
Rowhedge	Colchester	140,797	164,214	174,887	
Wivenhoe					
Birch	Birch	1,008	1,084	1,165	
Layer Breton					
Chappel	Earls Colne	4,477	4,770	4,979	
Wakes Colne					
Copford, Copford Green and Easthorpe	Copford	4,884	6,110	6,469	
Marks Tey					
Dedham	Dedham	2,265	2,427	2,608	
Eight Ash Green	Eight Ash Green	3,148	3,807	4,044	
Aldham					
Fordham					
Fingringhoe	Fingringhoe	2,034	2,314	2,474	
Abberton and Langenhoe					
Peldon					
Great Tey	Great Tey	771	955	1,014	
Great and Little Wigborough	Great Wigborough	141	155	166	
Langham	Langham (Essex)	1,848	2,190	2,332	
Boxted					
Layer de la Haye	Layer de la Haye	1,719	1,964	2,099	
Little Horkesley	LT Horkesley Gardenfield	35	38	40	
Mount Bures ¹⁹⁷					
Salcott	Salcott	373	398	421	
Tiptree	Tiptree	10,819	12,143	12,999	
Messing					
West Bergholt	West Bergholt	5,659	6,388	6,832	
Great Horkesley					
West Mersea	West Mersea	9,434	10,604	11,234	
East Mersea					
Wormingford	Wormingford	359	385	413	

	Headroom available for proposed future growth
	Some headroom available for proposed future growth – may require phasing to allow for future planned investment to come forward
	No headroom for the proposed level of future growth, and no immediate plans for future investment

Source: Anglian Water 2024 (via email provided for the IDP)

5.6.7. The AW risk assessment highlights available headroom in the Dedham, Langham (Essex) and West Bergholt WRC catchments to be the most critical, based on the DWMP estimates of growth.

¹⁹⁷ No public sewer system.

- 5.6.8. It should be noted that part of the Dedham and Earls Colne WRCs catchments are located in adjacent local authority areas or catchments (Babergh District Council and the Braintree catchment respectively), and therefore available headroom may have cross boundary implications for future development. The WCS requested details for growth within these WRC catchments beyond CCC's area, but neither Babergh nor Braintree Council's were able to identify growth in these catchments at this stage of their Local Plan process.
- 5.6.9. Further to the 2023 DWMP, the WCS completed for CCC has considered the impact of the latest development trajectory on capacity at each WRC. This identified that 13 of the 18 WRCs in the CCC area have growth within their drainage catchments (either due to existing commitments or because of proposed new allocations). These WRCs are: Birch, Colchester, Copford, Dedham, Earls Colne, Eight Ash Green, Fingringhoe, Great Tey, Langham, Layer de-la-Haye, Tiptree, West Bergholt and West Mersea.
- 5.6.10. The WCS quantified the baseline capacity at each of these 13 WRCs as summarised in Table 5-14.

Table 5-14 Baseline (pre-growth) capacity at WRCs likely to receive growth

Site Name	Permitted Capacity ¹⁹⁸ Remaining
Birch WRC	48%
Colchester WRC	undetermined
Copford WRC	41%
Dedham WRC	No capacity
Earls Colne WRC	5%
Eight Ash green WRC	25 %
Fingringhoe WRC	3%
Great Tey WRC	33%
Langham WRC (Essex)	No capacity
Layer de-la-haye WRC	26%
Tiptree WRC	17%
West Bergholt WRC	No capacity
West Mersea WRC	30%

Source: CCC Water Cycle Study, 2026

- 5.6.11. The WCS then calculated capacity once all planned housing growth has occurred in each WRC catchment. This included a 10% allowance for employment growth and made allowances for a potential increase in water ingress into the sewer system. The results are shown in Table 5-15 and summarised as:
- Four of the 13 WRCs receiving growth would have sufficient flow capacity within their existing permit to accommodate the level of proposed growth – these are: Birch, Layer de-la-Haye, Tiptree and West Mersea WRCs. Growth at these WRCs does not represent a significant infrastructure barrier.
 - Three WRCs are already at capacity and need either a new discharge permit and/or infrastructure upgrades – these are: Dedham, , Langham and West Bergholt.
 - The remaining five WRCs would exceed their capacity once all growth is considered and hence treatment capacity is a potential barrier to growth in these locations.

¹⁹⁸ Based on permitted Dry Weather Flows (DWF) compared to measured DWFs

Table 5-15 WRC Headroom capacity after growth - summary

Water Recycling Centres	Total dwelling numbers assessed	DWF Permitted flow (m3/d)	Current measured DWF (Q80) (m3/d)	Headroom Capacity pre-growth (m3/d)	Post growth DWF estimate (m3/d)	Headroom Capacity post-growth (m3/d)	Percentage capacity after growth
Birch	18	300	157	143	162	138	46%
Colchester	12,046	29,284	26,495	2,789	29,854	-570	-2%
Copford	3,797	1,650	976	674	2,035	-385	-23%
Dedham	16	610	676	-66	680	-70	-12%
Earls Colne	244	934	890	44	958	-24	-3%
Eight Ash Green	558	650	487	163	643	7	1%
Fingringhoe	158	367	357	10	401	-34	-9%
Great Tey	231	142	95	47	160	-18	-12%
Langham	1,096	420	486	-66	792	-372	-88%
Layer de-la-Haye	170	380	283	97	330	50	13%
Tiptree	1,249	2,400	1,997	403	2,345	55	2%
West Bergholt	1,379	1,430	1,554	-124	1,938	-508	-36%
West Mersea	384	2,000	1,406	594	1,513	487	24%

Source: CCC Water Cycle Study, 2026

- 5.6.12. For the ten WRCs where capacity is exceeded, either now or by the end of the plan period, the WCS has assessed the environmental capacity of the receiving watercourses in relation to potential increased discharge permits. This assessment used water quality modelling to ascertain whether Water Framework Directive (WFD) Regulations standards could be met in the future subject to improvements in discharge quality at each WRC which are within Technically Achievable Limits (TAL). This assessment was undertaken to determine whether there is potential for new or improved treatment processes to be implemented at each WRC as a result of growth and still meet statutory water quality targets. This assessment also considered requirements of connected water dependent habitats, designated bathing waters and designated shellfish areas.
- 5.6.13. The water quality modelling exercise identified that there are treatment infrastructure solutions available within TAL at each of the 10 modelled WRCs which would be implementable to ensure no deterioration in current water quality. It also showed that growth would not be a factor in future WFD targets being achieved. However, it identified that there is likely to be a varying degree in scale of water treatment infrastructure solutions required at each WRC and that the plans for future investment are also at different stages of planning. In some cases, growth-based schemes have been funded in AMP8 i.e. the current 5 year investment period from 2025 to 2030, whilst for some WRCs there is a short-term capacity issue with no identified solution in the current AMP8 Business Plan or the longer term DWMP.

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 5.6.14. A summary of the infrastructure provision need for each WRC (as determined by the WCS) is set out in Table 5-16. This provides an overall commentary of where funding is secured and where it is not.

Table 5-16 Summary of WRC infrastructure investment needs (where the WRC would serve growth)

WRC	Is there capacity for all growth to 2043?	When would capacity be exceeded?			Process upgrade required (water quality)	Is early investment planned in AMP8 (to 2030)?	DWMP solution proposals		Commentary
		2026-2031 (AMP8)	2031-2036 (AMP9)	2036-2043 (AMP10 +)			Medium Term Plan (to 2035)	Long Term Plan (2025 - 2050)	
Birch	Yes	N/A			N/A	N/A	Networks – mixed strategy with main solution of SuDS	50% surface water removal	No infrastructure change requirements
Colchester	No	Capacity*		Exceeded from 2040 onwards – no growth plan yet identified	Minor (within TAL)	Yes – for immediate short term capacity issue (flow meter)	Wait and see**	Wait and see	Insufficient capacity for all growth – a solution to protect water quality is possible, but exact solution is not yet identified or planned funding not yet secured.
Copford	No	Capacity	Exceeded from 2037 onwards – but upgrade identified before 2030		Significant but within TAL	Yes – investment planned	WRC - Infiltration reduction / new Dry Weather Flow permit (allowing more treated discharge). Network - Mixed strategy with main solution of SuDS	50% surface water removal Possible transfer of flows to Eight Ash Green WRC	Insufficient capacity for all growth – a solution to protect water quality is possible, and investment is planned before 2030 with long term strategy set out. Short term funding confirmed, but longer-term funding to be agreed.
Dedham	No (from baseline)	No baseline capacity			Minor (within TAL)	No – investment not planned, but only 16 dwellings planned so upgrade may not be required	Network - Mixed strategy with main solution of SuDS	50% surface water removal	No current capacity – a solution to protect water quality is possible but is not planned until 2035. However, growth numbers are small and potentially acceptable with a minor change in discharge permit. There may be early phasing implications. Funding needs not confirmed.
Earls Colne	No	Capacity		Exceeded from 2037 but minor works identified before 2030	Minor (within TAL)	Yes – investment planned	New Dry Weather Flow Permit (allowing more treated discharge)	25% surface water removal	Insufficient capacity for all growth – a solution to protect water quality is possible, and investment is planned before 2030 with long term strategy set out. Short term funding

WRC	Is there capacity for all growth to 2043?	When would capacity be exceeded?			Process upgrade required (water quality)	Is early investment planned in AMP8 (to 2030)?	DWMP solution proposals		Commentary
		2026-2031 (AMP8)	2031-2036 (AMP9)	2036-2043 (AMP10 +)			Medium Term Plan (to 2035)	Long Term Plan (2025 - 2050)	
									confirmed, but longer-term funding to be agreed.
Eight Ash Green	Yes	Capacity – remaining capacity likely to be low (1%)			Within TAL – but some ammonia changes may be required	No – but capacity available in this period	Network - Mixed strategy with main solution of SuDS	50% surface water removal	Capacity for all growth, but remaining capacity likely to be low – a solution to protect water quality is possible, and investment is planned in the medium term and long term within the DWMP but funding to be agreed for medium to longer term strategy.
Fingringhoe	No	Capacity likely to be exceeded by 2030			Minor (within TAL)	Yes – investment planned	DWMP identifies the need for WRC capacity increase. 50% surface water removal in the 2050 Strategy.		A solution to protect water quality is possible and investment works are planned before 2030 (current AMP) – there may be early phasing implications. Early funding required is secured.
Great Tey	No	Capacity		Exceeded by 2039 – no longer term strategy identified	Minor (within TAL)	No – but capacity available in this period	No solutions identified		Insufficient capacity for all growth – a solution to protect water quality is possible, but exact solution is not yet identified or planned. No funding identified.
Langham	No (from baseline)	No baseline capacity			Significant but within TAL	No investment planned and there is no baseline capacity	No solutions identified		No current capacity – a solution to protect water quality is possible but there are no plans to improve the WRC in the current AMP or longer term DWMP strategy. There will be phasing implications. Options are being explored.
Layer de-la-Haye	Yes	N/A			N/A	N/A	None		No infrastructure change requirements

WRC	Is there capacity for all growth to 2043?	When would capacity be exceeded?			Process upgrade required (water quality)	Is early investment planned in AMP8 (to 2030)?	DWMP solution proposals		Commentary
		2026-2031 (AMP8)	2031-2036 (AMP9)	2036-2043 (AMP10 +)			Medium Term Plan (to 2035)	Long Term Plan (2025 - 2050)	
Tiptree	Yes	N/A – remaining capacity is likely to be low (2%)			Significant but within TAL	No – but capacity available in this period	Investigate	Potential wetland	Sufficient capacity for all growth – a solution to protect water quality is possible, and investment is planned (but funding not yet secured) in the long term within the DWMP.
West Bergholt	No (from baseline)	No baseline capacity			Minor (within TAL)	No investment planned and there is no baseline capacity	Network - Mixed strategy with main solution of SuDS	50% surface water removal	No current capacity – a solution to protect water quality is possible but is not planned until 2035. There may be early phasing implications. Funding needs to be confirmed.
West Mersea	Yes	N/A			N/A	N/A	Network - mixed strategies with main solution of SuDs	25% surface - water removal	No infrastructure change requirements

Source: Anglian Water DWMP (2023), and CCC WCS (2026)

* Colchester WRC has an interim capacity issue until 2028 associated with flow monitoring limitations – see WCS for more details

** AW have not identified a specific infrastructure solution at Colchester in their current Business Plan (to 2030) nor their DWMP, but have requested land around the WRC is safeguarded and allocated in the Local Plan for future expansion, acknowledging that a growth scheme will be required in the longer term

Costs, funding and delivery

- 5.6.15. As set out in Table 5-16, AW's DWMP includes strategies to increase both treatment and drainage capacity in schemes to 2050, largely through surface water management and upsizing, and in emerging schemes in catchments susceptible to emerging growth.
- 5.6.16. At a company level, the DWMP has highlighted that between 2025-2050, £5 billion will be invested by AW in their wastewater infrastructure to mitigate future risks to the wastewater network and recycling centres, including for the impacts of expected growth and climate change. In that period, up to £836 million will be spent across the Essex Rivers Catchment Partnership area (which CCC is located within) by AW to manage future risks, including new permits and increases in WRC capacity, removing surface water from the network and investment in Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS).
- 5.6.17. A number of settlements have been forecast as areas with high growth between 2025-2050. As such, AW have identified expected investment required to meet the long-term growth at the catchment scale. Although these funds have not been specifically allocated to projects (or secured through the current AMP), each water recycling catchment in each area has been examined and a strategy produced.
- 5.6.18. AW's DWMP provides further details for asset investment in the medium term (to 2035) and the longer term (to 2050) specifically for the WRCs (and their catchments) in the Colchester local authority area as presented in Table 5-16.
- 5.6.19. Analysis of AW's Business Plan shows the following total costs identified for WRCs which do have secured funding in AMP8 to 2030:
- Earl's Colne WRC - £90,000;
 - Fingringhoe WRC - £900,000; and
 - Copford WRC - £11,000,000.
- 5.6.20. These three WRCs are listed in the Project Schedule as funded schemes (see Appendix A).
- 5.6.21. There are nine WRC catchments for which the DWMP identifies medium term to longer investment in capacity solutions (albeit with funding identified at a strategic level but not yet secured). These are listed within the Project Schedule (see Appendix A).
- 5.6.22. There may be potential for alternative treatment solutions to be explored by developers where growth is proposed in areas where there is an immediate baseline capacity issue that will not be resolved under the next AMP period.
- 5.6.23. Wastewater infrastructure in the Essex Rivers Catchment Partnership area is expected to see up to £836 million in investment to 2050. Whilst the Colchester local authority area only represents part of the area likely to receive this investment, the values give an indication of the scale of investment in wastewater infrastructure planned by Anglian Water in the CCC area (and neighbouring authorities) over the Local Plan period and beyond.
- 5.6.24. Regular maintenance across the network will be required to ensure that the rest of the network that is not expecting population growth is fit to function and has headroom and network capacity for predicted rainfall increases.
- 5.6.25. Connection costs of new development sites to the sewerage network have been estimated utilising published standards from AW¹⁹⁹. For 2026/27, the sewerage infrastructure charge per property is £600. Table 5-17 applies this benchmark and indicates that the estimated cost of wastewater infrastructure to 2043 is £13,282,800. It should be noted that the charge is likely to rise with inflation. These costs are included in the Project Schedule.

¹⁹⁹ Anglian Water, (2026); Infrastructure Charges for Residential - 2026/2027.

Table 5-17 Estimated sewerage infrastructure charge costs to 2043

	2026/27 to 2030/31	2031/32 to 2034/35	2035/36 to 2042/43	Total
Sewerage Infrastructure Charge	£2,395,800	£5,886,000	£5,001,000	£13,282,800

Source: AECOM.

- 5.6.26. Costs to connect new developments to the network are charged to the developer. Connection costs are subject to the size of the development and service requirements.

Summary

- 5.6.27. Key findings relating to wastewater are as follows:

- There are 18 WRC's across the Colchester local authority area with three of these WRC catchments located partly in adjacent local authority areas or catchments. 13 of these WRC would have allocated sites within their drainage catchments.
- The demand for wastewater services within these 13 WRCs will increase due to population growth as well as climate change leading to more foul and surface water entering the network.
- The CCC WCS has assessed the impact of the preferred site allocations against WRC capacity including a comparison against the assumptions of AW's DWMP. This identified nine WRCs where capacity would be exceeded (if no improvement plan is implemented) when also considering committed growth which has not yet been connected to WRCs.
- Three of the affected WRCs have sufficient capacity for all planned growth and do not need significant infrastructure investment (Birch, Layer de-la-Haye and West Mersea).
- The other 10 WRCs need some form of infrastructure intervention ranging from upgrades to changes in discharge permits, but the WCS has determined these changes are feasible within TAL and hence can be delivered at some point in the future to protect water quality and connected habitats/designated sites.
- The degree of infrastructure intervention required varies for these 10 WRCs, and the extent of funding secured as well as when the intervention will take place is variable:
 - o Three WRCs have solutions identified in the current AW AMP8 investment period and have funding secured (Copford WRC, Fingringhoe WRC and Earls Colne WRC).
 - o Two WRCs have capacity in the short term and have longer term solutions identified but not yet fully funded (Eight Ash Green WRC and Tiptree WRC).
 - o Two WRCs have capacity in the short term but capacity will be exceeded and without long term investment plans identified or funding secured (Colchester WRC and Great Tey WRC);
 - o Two WRCs have no immediate capacity and no immediate investment plans in AMP8 (to 2030) but do have medium to longer term solutions identified which are yet to be funded (Dedham WRC and West Bergholt WRC)
- Early phasing of growth in Dedham, West Bergholt, and Langham may be restricted until improvement plans are developed and funded for 2030 onwards (AMP9 or AMP10). Fingringhoe WRC also has no baseline capacity, but improvement plans are included in AW's AMP8 Business Plan and hence early phasing impacts may only be a consideration for the first 2 or 3 years of the Plan Period.
- As part of the DWMP the best value plan proposes medium- and long-term solutions for the various WRCs as:

- o Remove surface water from the sewerage system using SuDS and traditional strategies.
 - o Remove unrequired network flows.
 - o Increase capacity, particularly at WRCs, and
 - o Introduce targeted education schemes in tandem with partners to reduce demand.
- Across their company area, AW are investing £5 billion between 2025-2050 to mitigate future risks to the wastewater network from expected growth and climate change. Of this, £836 million is estimated to be invested in wastewater infrastructure solutions within the Essex Rivers Catchment Partnership in which CCC is located. This gives an indication of the scale of investment that will be required in Colchester and surrounding local authority areas.
- For improvements at the identified WRCs in the PR24 Business Plan (Earls Colne, Copford and Fingringhoe), AW are investing approximately £11.97 million between 2024 to 2030. This AMP8 funding will come before 2030. This is reflected in the Project Schedule.
- A high-level benchmarking exercised indicates that the cost of providing wastewater infrastructure with the new allocations would be £13.3 million. These costs are also included in the Project Schedule. Costs associated with connecting new developments to the network are charged to the developer.

5.7. Flood defences

Baseline

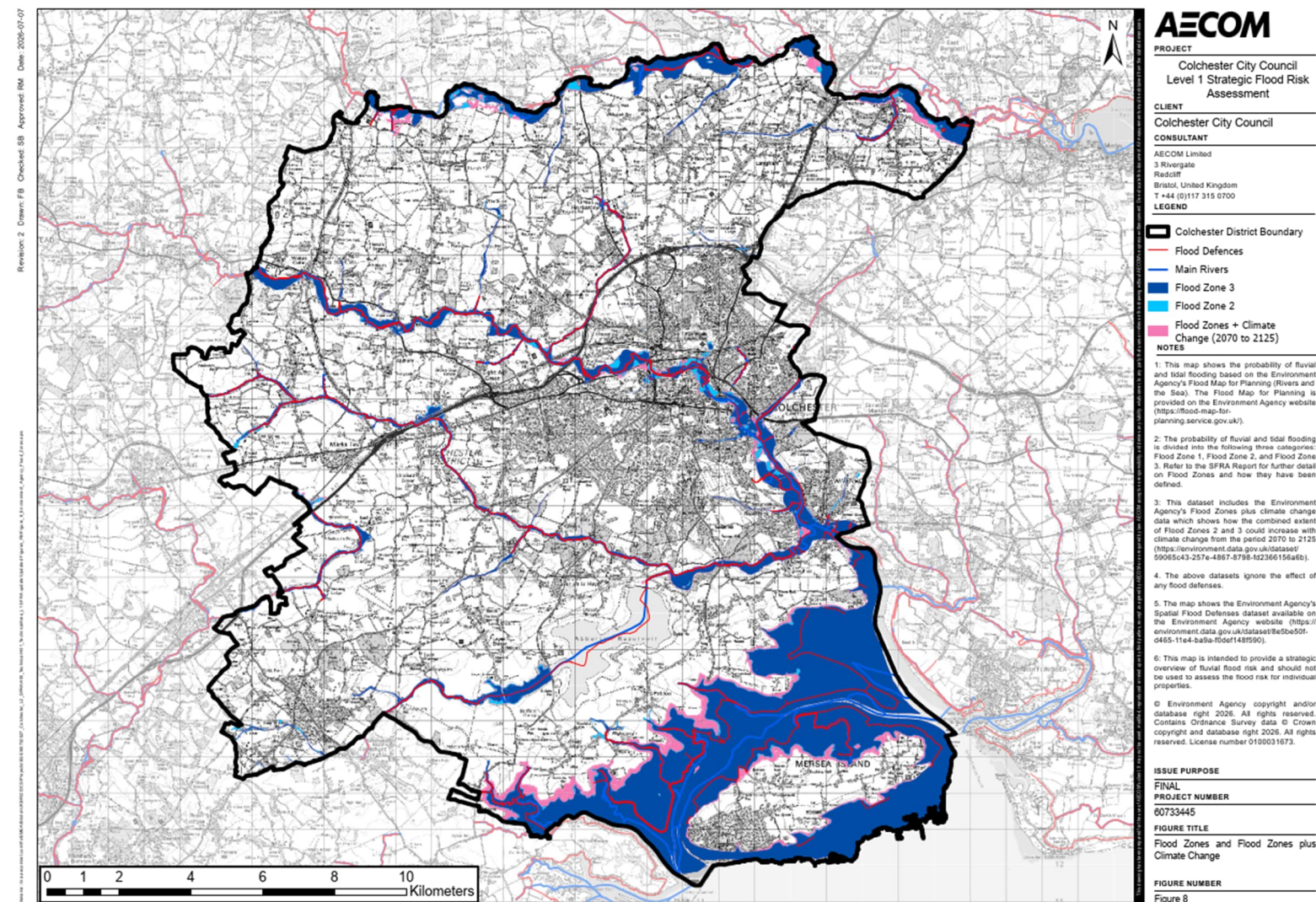
Current provision

- 5.7.1. The Colchester City Council area is predominantly at risk from tidal, fluvial and surface water sources.
- 5.7.2. Figure 5.6 shows that Colchester is predominantly located in Flood Zone 1 (low risk of fluvial and/or tidal flooding). Areas located in Flood Zone 2 (moderate risk of fluvial and/or tidal flooding) and Flood Zone 3 (high risk of fluvial and/or tidal flooding) are primarily confined to the channels and immediate floodplain surrounding the main rivers and ordinary watercourses throughout the catchment. An extensive area of Flood Zone 3 is concentrated in the estuarine locations around Mersea Island.
- 5.7.3. This presents a fluvial/tidal flood risk to the urbanised areas of Colchester, Wivenhoe, West Mersea, and Dedham, and to the rural areas of the local authority area, including the low-lying areas to the south. Several ordinary watercourses, land drains, ponds and lakes within the local authority area also present a risk of fluvial flood risk, however mapped outputs are unavailable for these.
- 5.7.4. Figure 5.7 shows that the risk of surface water flooding is concentrated around watercourses in the local authority area, most notably the River Colne, Roman River, Layer Brook and the network of watercourses leading to the estuarine channels in the south. The risk of surface water flooding also increases markedly in urbanised areas, with this being most pronounced in the Colchester urban area. Figure 5.7 also displays Critical Drainage Areas (CDAs) ²⁰⁰ and shows that there are 11 CDAs in the CCC area, most of which are concentrated in the Colchester urban area and surrounding areas, and one in Wivenhoe.
- 5.7.5. There are several flood defences present within the CCC area which are mapped in Figure 5.6. These comprise:

²⁰⁰ A Critical Drainage Area (CDA) is a discrete geographic area (usually a hydrological catchment), within the SWMP Study Area where multiple or interlinked sources of flood risk cause flooding during a severe rainfall event thereby affecting people, property, or local infrastructure.

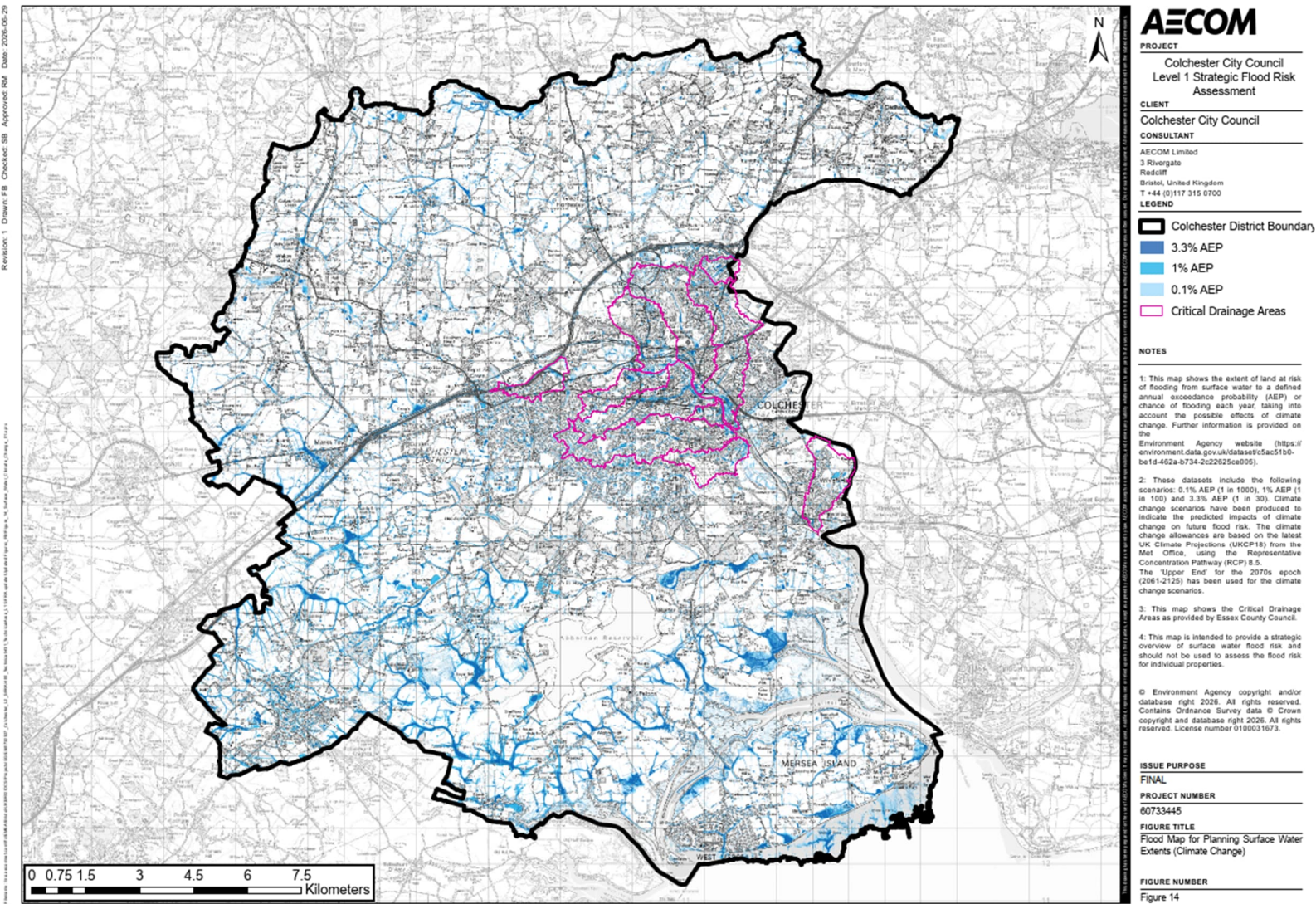
- Embankments around Mersea Island, along the River Colne in some locations and along the Roman River on both banks from Mersea Road until the confluence with the River Colne. These provide a Standard of Protection (SoP) of between 100% Annual Exceedance Probability (AEP) (1 in 1 year) and 20% AEP (1 in 50 year) events.
- There is an engineered high ground defence located near to St James' Primary School in the city of Colchester to provide protection from an unnamed ditch running adjacent to the school playing field.
- Natural high ground is located along the majority the watercourses, including the key watercourses of the River Colne, River Blackwater and Roman River.
- There is a section of flood wall located along the River Colne near Hythe and North Station Road.
- The Colne Barrier at Wivenhoe protects areas upstream, in particular the Colchester urban area, from flooding caused by tidal surges. This provides a Standard of Protection up to the 0.1% AEP (1 in 1000 year) event.
- The Castle Park South Embankment lies on the south side of the River Colne through Castle Park, protecting Riverside Estate and properties east of Castle Park. This provides a 0.1% AEP SoP. The Castle Park North Embankment lies on the north side of the River Colne at the western end of Castle Park, protecting Causton Road to North Station Road with a 1% AEP SoP.

Figure 5.6 Fluvial Flood Risk Zones, Flood Defences within the Colchester District



Source: AECOM (2026) Colchester District Council Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Figure 5.7 Risk of Flooding from Surface Water and Critical Drainage Areas within the Colchester District



Source: AECOM (2026) Colchester District Council Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 5.7.6. Climate change is expected to increase the frequency, extent, and impact of flooding, as reflected in higher peak river flows. Wetter winters and more intense rainfall may increase fluvial and surface water flooding. Rising sea levels at the Colne and Blackwater Estuaries may also increase flood risk. Fluvial flood risk may also be increased due to rising tidal levels which can cause tide locking.
- 5.7.7. The future risk of flooding within Colchester is influenced by several factors. These include:
- More intense rainfall periods due to climate change.
 - Population increases leading to increased hard standing development, increased surface ponding and surface water runoff rates.
 - Pressure for new development in areas at high risk of flooding.
 - Inadequate maintenance of existing structures and assets.
 - Deterioration of structures and features that currently provide protection; and
 - Heightening river levels preventing surface water draining from developments.
- 5.7.8. As part of the emerging CCC Level 1 SFRA (prepared in 2024 and updated in 2026) ECC have confirmed the following planned schemes that relate to ordinary watercourses have either been completed, or are in the pipeline; however, the costs associated with delivering the infrastructure schemes are not currently available:
- Delivery of a capital scheme to increase storage in Distillery Pond and line the outfall from the pond, working in partnership with CCC on delivering a new WaStop valve on the Haven Road outfall;
 - As part of the same Haven Road scheme, proposals to deliver automated flood warning signs;
 - Working to deliver Natural Flood Management (NFM) at Blythe Pond; and
 - Fiddlers Hill Wetland Project, Fordham completed 2025, which led to the creation of approximately 5ha of wetland habitat.
- 5.7.9. The Local Plan Review outlines proposed housing and employment development sites within the district to 2043. There is a forecasted growth of 22,138 dwellings to 2043, with development concentrated within the areas of Marks Tey and Eight Ash Green (to the west of Colchester), Langham and Great Horksley (to the north of Colchester) and within the City of Colchester. This is shown in Figure 2.1, with employment development sites shown in Figure 2.2.
- 5.7.10. Where employment development sites are proposed some sites intersect slightly with Flood Zones 2 and 3, particularly within the City of Colchester. This is also true of housing sites: there is encroachment of Flood Zones 2 and 3 in some sites located in the City of Colchester.
- 5.7.11. The Standard of Protection (SoP) offered by the current flood defences will decrease over the Local Plan period to 2043, and beyond, as the impact of climate change increases peak river flows and fluvial and tidal water levels.
- 5.7.12. Areas to the south-east of Colchester, currently protected by defences, may require improvements to defences in the future to maintain the SoP and account for climate change impacts.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 5.7.13. To maintain the current level of protection or increase the SoP to 1 in 100 year (the limit of Flood Zone 3) across Colchester, flood defences would require improvements. This would require significant investment which would need to be provided based on a partnership

approach. However, in practice, increasing the level of protection by flood defences is likely to be undertaken only where either existing property or development of land requires it and where it does not move flood risk further downstream in the catchment.

- 5.7.14. The need for additional/improved flood defences will be met through a combination of measures by the relevant risk management authorities, in addition to measures taken by private landowners, depending on the type and ownership of the individual flood defence.
- 5.7.15. The CCC Local Plan 2017-2033 requires all development to be directed to areas at lowest risk of flooding by applying the Sequential and Exception Tests, in line with national guidance, and also requires all development to incorporate appropriate surface water drainage. The Draft Local Plan follows the same policy approach. This should ensure that all sites are located outside the floodplain, by preference, or that flood defences are improved by developers if required and arrangements are made for their long-term management and maintenance.
- 5.7.16. The Environment Agency budget for maintenance of flood defences is provided by central government, while the Internal Drainage Boards (IDBs) are mainly funded through charging fees to landowners protected by their assets (Drainage Rates). Flood and Coastal Risk Management (FCRM) Allocation Principles were agreed by the Environment Agency Board on the 7th of October 2020. These include an investment of £5.4 billion to better protect properties and infrastructure nationally by 2026 / 27. This will be done through a broad range of resilience actions, alongside protection measures which will provide better protection to over 336,000 properties and reduce flood and coastal erosion risk by 11% nationally.
- 5.7.17. The Anglian Eastern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) funding²⁰¹ includes an indicative programme for capital allocations within the 6-year programme from 2022 / 2023 – 2026 / 2027 for the Anglian Eastern region, which includes Colchester. Online mapping²⁰² indicates no schemes are located within the Colchester Local Authority area. The last scheme undertaken in Colchester was The Hythe Flood Alleviation Scheme (FAS), completed before 2021.
- 5.7.18. Under the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, ECC are the LLFA covering Colchester and under the Act, ECC have been given lead responsibility for reducing the risk of flooding from surface water, groundwater and ordinary watercourses and to work closely with other Risk Management Authorities (i.e. Environment Agency, Water Companies, Local Planning Authorities and Essex Highways). Additional responsibilities under the Act include preparing and maintaining a Local Flood Risk Management Strategy, maintaining a register of and managing assets that have an impact on flooding, investigating flooding incidents, commissioning flood risk management works, and regulating changes to ordinary watercourses under the Land Drainage Act 1991. LLFAs are also responsible for enforcing watercourse maintenance, ensuring developments manage runoff without increasing flood risks, and responding to major planning applications regarding sustainable drainage systems.
- 5.7.19. Many organisations, such as the Environment Agency, LLFAs etc, will have contingency funds to respond to flooding, but this may not cover the cost of extensive mitigation measures. Alternative sources of funding may be required, such as an application to Defra for Flood and Coastal Erosion Risk Management Grant in Aid (FCERM GiA) funding, or a Local Levy.

Summary

- 5.7.20. Key findings relating to flood defence are as follows:

- The primary sources of flood risk in the Colchester local authority area are tidal, fluvial and surface water, associated with the River Colne, River Stour and their tributaries.

- Flood defences are primarily located along the River Colne, as well as the coastal frontage and Mersea Island. These mainly comprise natural high ground, embankments and the Colne Barrier. The condition and level of protection provided by the flood defences is variable and climate change is likely to reduce the effectiveness of the defences in the long term in the absence of works to maintain the level of protection.
- Areas most likely to be affected by fluvial impacts of climate change are:
 - o Southern areas of the local authority area due to the areas' low-lying topography; and
 - o Areas close to the Colne and Stour Rivers.
- There are currently no flood risk management schemes proposed within Colchester.
- Where housing and employment development sites are proposed within the City of Colchester, some sites intersect slightly with Flood Zones 2 and 3.
- The Colchester Local Plan 2017-2033 requires all development to be directed to areas at lowest risk of flooding by applying the Sequential Test, in line with national guidance. Where future developments within Flood Zone 2 and 3 are proposed, they may require improvements to flood defences to provide or maintain a 1 in 100-year SoP and to pass the NPPF Exception Test. However, this would need to be considered on a case-by-case basis, and it would need to be demonstrated on a catchment level that flood risk is not increased downstream, through the loss of floodplain storage or floodplain connectivity.
- Proposed development located in areas to the south on lower lying land and settlements in proximity to the Rivers Colne and Stour, together with their tributaries in particular may require improvements to defences to ensure adequate protection for the proposed developments. This may add significant additional expense for developers. Liaison with the Environment Agency will be required to determine any site-specific requirements with regards to Flood Defences.

5.8. Surface water management

Baseline

Current provision

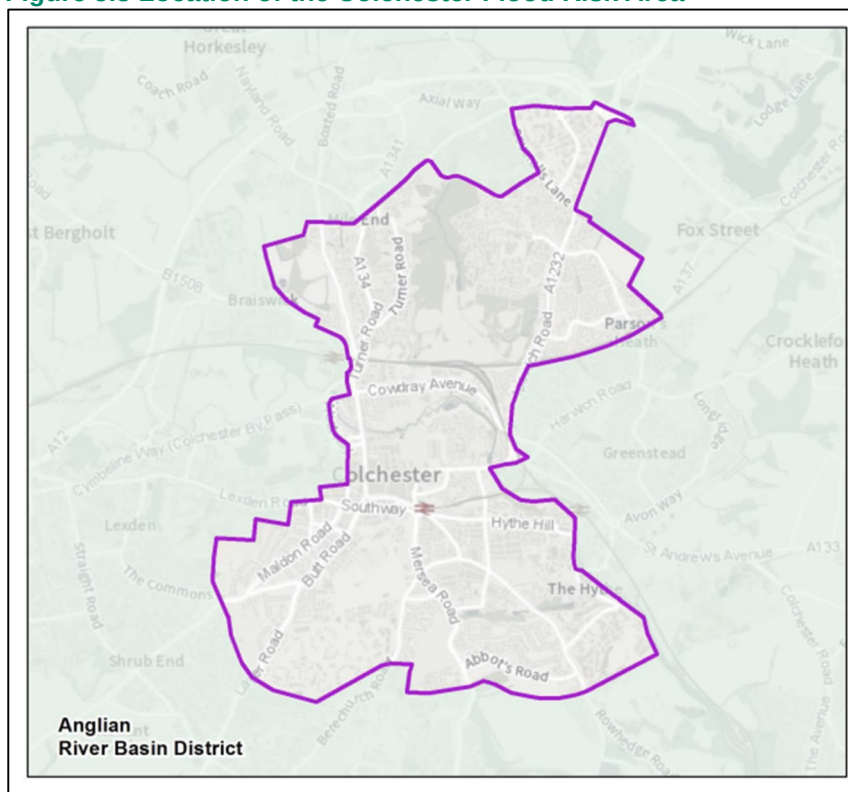
- 5.8.1. Surface water is one of the main sources of flooding across Colchester and predominantly follows topographical flow paths of existing watercourses and dry valleys and can also pond in low lying areas. In most cases, the risk is confined to valleys, but there are notable prominent runoff routes around properties and roads in urban areas, including within the Colchester urban area, Tiptree and West Mersea. The Environment Agency Flood Map for Planning Surface Water Extents mapping (Figure 5.7) shows that several communities in Colchester are at risk of flooding from this source. The Colchester Level 1 SFRA summarises the outputs of Flood Investigation Reports for Marks Tey²⁰³ and Haven Road and Distillery Pond²⁰⁴ relating to surface water flood events from April 2013 and May 2016 respectively. Areas such as Marks Tey and Colchester City are shown to have a higher number of historical flooding records associated from surface water.
- 5.8.2. Colchester City is ranked fifth within ECC in terms of properties at risk of surface water flooding. Colchester is also recognised nationally as a Flood Risk Area by the Environment Agency²⁰⁵. As shown in Figure 5.8, the Flood Risk Area includes the main city centre and parts of north, south and east of the Colchester urban area.

²⁰³ ECC (2013) Flood Investigation Report Marks Tey – Wilson's Lane, Goodmans Lane, Mott's Lane, Coggeshall Road

²⁰⁴ ECC (2016) Flood Investigation Report Haven Road and Distillery Pond and

²⁰⁵ Environment Agency (2022) Anglian River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan 2021-2027: Available at: Anglian River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan 2021 to 2027 (publishing.service.gov.uk)

Figure 5.8 Location of the Colchester Flood Risk Area



Source: Anglian River Basin District Flood Risk Management Plan (2022)

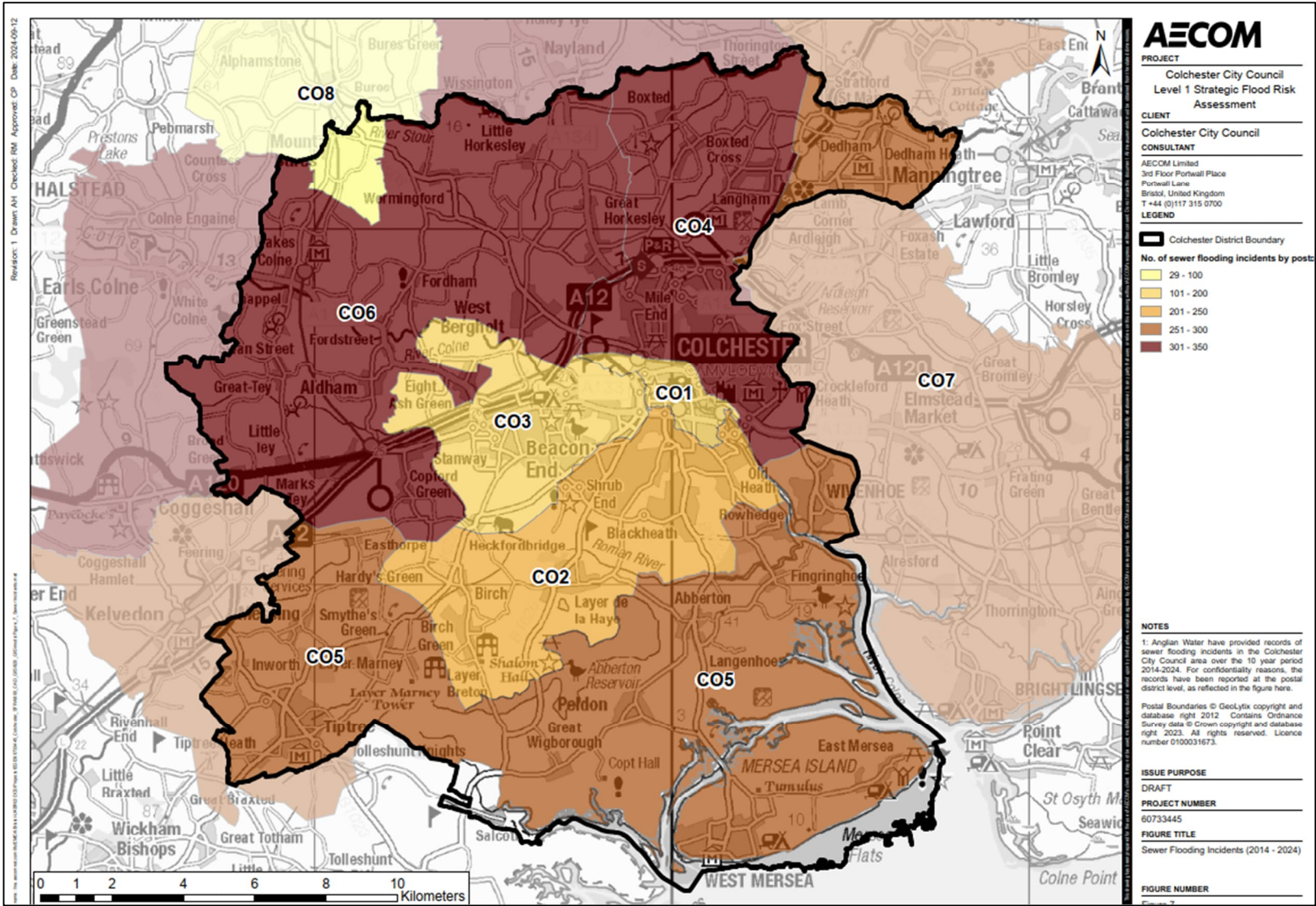
- 5.8.3. As part of the Colchester Town Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP)²⁰⁶ (2013), surface water modelling was undertaken to aid the identification of Critical Drainage Areas (CDA) within the City of Colchester. An update to the SWMP was undertaken in 2018²⁰⁷ which updated the CDAs and associated action plan. The SWMP indicates Colchester has 11 areas classified as Critical Drainage Areas (CDAs) with a total of approximately 940 residential properties identified as being at risk of surface water flooding during a 1 in 100 year storm, or 1% AEP. This has potential to increase to around 1,630 residential properties should the upper limit of 40% increase in storm intensity be considered to account for future climate change.
- 5.8.4. Anglian Water's DG5 register²⁰⁸ shows incidents of public foul, surface water and combined sewer flooding. Figure 5.9 shows this data on a postcode basis which was obtained from the emerging Colchester Level 1 SFRA and highlights areas potentially affected from surface water and sewer flooding as a result of capacity exceedance and discharge from sewers. This information can help identify flooding hotspots, where there is limited sewer capacity, and help inform future schemes and mitigation. From 2014-2024, there were a total of 1,763 recorded incidents, with the north west and north of Colchester, including the CDAs, and the south and south west of Colchester with the highest total recorded events.

²⁰⁶ Essex County Council and Colchester Borough Council Colchester Town Surface Water Management Plan (2013): https://cbccrmda.blob.core.windows.net/noteattachment/CBC-Local-Plan-Colchester-Town-Centre-Surface-Water-Management-Plan-EBC%204.62%20Colchester_Surface%20Water%20Management%20Plan%20Jul%202013.pdf [Accessed: July 2026].

²⁰⁷ Essex County Council Revised CDAs (2018): [https://cbccrmda.blob.core.windows.net/noteattachment/CBC-Local-Plan-Colchester-Surface-Water-Management-Plan---Maps-EBC%204.64%20Surface%20Water%20Management%20Plan%20\(Maps\).pdf](https://cbccrmda.blob.core.windows.net/noteattachment/CBC-Local-Plan-Colchester-Surface-Water-Management-Plan---Maps-EBC%204.64%20Surface%20Water%20Management%20Plan%20(Maps).pdf) [Accessed: July 2026].

²⁰⁸ The DG5 is a register of locations of recorded historic internal and external sewer flooding events with a Water Company area. Due to data protection requirements the data is not provided at individual property level; rather the register comprises the number of properties within postcode district areas that have experienced flooding either internally or externally within the last 10 years (2014-2024).

Figure 5.9 Anglian Water Sewer Flooding Incidents (2014-2024) for the Colchester District



Source: AECOM (2024) Colchester District Council Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment

Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 5.8.5. Climate change is expected to increase the number and severity of extreme rainfall events in the coming decades. This may result in increased instances of surface water and sewer flooding, creating a need for additional capacity within existing urban drainage systems. Furthermore, urban development increases the area of impermeable surfaces, which if not mitigated, results in an increase in the rate and volume of surface water runoff.
- 5.8.6. Within the Colchester local authority boundary, no identified flood alleviation schemes involving SuDS have been identified at this stage. Potential actions that could be undertaken to reduce the risk of surface water flooding within each identified CDA are outlined in the Colchester Surface Water Management Plan (SWMP) Action Plan²⁰⁹.
- 5.8.7. The City of Colchester Local Plan 2017-2033 states that all major planning applications and development within the Colchester should be accompanied by a surface water drainage strategy to ensure that the need for SuDS has been properly considered as part of the planning application process. Only where there is a significant risk of pollution to the water environment, inappropriate soil conditions and/or engineering difficulties, should alternative methods of drainage be considered.
- 5.8.8. While no schemes relating to SuDS have been identified within the Project Schedule, it is likely that all the development sites referred to in the development trajectory are of sufficient size to require SuDS provision under the NPPF, though smaller sites may pose feasibility challenges to including provision within the development boundary.
- 5.8.9. Anglian Water's Drainage and Wastewater Management Plan (DWMP) includes strategies to increase drainage capacity in defined schemes to 2050 through surface water management and upsizing, and in emerging schemes in catchments susceptible to emerging growth. In particular, between 2025-2050, up to £836 million will be spent across the Essex Rivers Catchment Partnership area by Anglian Water to manage future risks, including new permits and increases in Water Recycling Centre (WRC) capacity, removing surface water from the network and investment in SuDS.
- 5.8.10. Across the Essex Rivers Catchment area (within which Colchester sits) Anglian Water expects a population increase of approximately 118,000 by 2050. A number of settlements have been forecast as areas with high growth between 2025-2050. As such, Anglian Water have identified expected investment required to meet the long-term growth at the catchment scale. Although these funds have not been specifically allocated to projects, each water recycling catchment in each area has been examined and a strategy produced. For example, at Copford, Tiptree and Dedham, the long-term strategy indicates a focus on surface water removal and at Salcot, a potential wetland.

Costs, funding and delivery

- 5.8.11. Anglian Water's DWMP identifies the need for future investment to increase drainage capacity in Essex. Across the Anglian region, over 25 years, a total of £5 billion will be invested in the network across a range of schemes, including increasing drainage capacity through SuDS and upsizing. The DWMP does not identify specific areas for the investment for specific SuDS schemes at this stage. However, across the Essex Rivers Catchment, a total of up to £836 million is to be invested to 2050 to increase drainage capacity and WRC capacity, subject to agreement by Ofwat.
- 5.8.12. All the proposed development sites that come forward under the Local Plan will need to manage surface water run-off in line with national and local policies and guidance to control runoff rates; SuDS required for new developments will need to be solely funded by the developer. All new developments in Colchester urban area falling within Critical Drainage

²⁰⁹ BMT (n.d.) Colchester Surface Water Management Plan Action Plan. Available at: Remote Desktop Redirected Printer Doc. [Accessed: December 2024].

Areas (CDAs) will be required to contribute towards the delivery of flood defence solutions within the respective CDAs as specified in the SWMP Action Plan for Colchester.

- 5.8.13. Any new SuDS systems should be designed in consultation with ECC in their role as LLFA and design quality will be expected to conform with standards encompassed in the relevant BRE, CIRIA standards and ECC's SuDS Design Guide (and as updated) to the satisfaction of the LLFA.
- 5.8.14. As it currently stands (prior to enactment of Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act), SuDS may be retained within private ownership or adopted for maintenance by the LLFA, Highways Agency or Anglian Water on a site-by-site basis. The investment requirement cannot be quantified in this IADP, since it will depend on the details of the systems constructed and adoption agreements reached.
- 5.8.15. SuDS may form part of future schemes to mitigate any increased risk of localised flooding and, in line with the NPPF, it will be expected that SuDS will be designed, built and funded by developers for all major development. SuDS should be designed and developed in consultation with ECC which has the role of LLFA and works closely with other risk management authorities such as the Environment Agency.
- 5.8.16. More strategic schemes to address surface water flooding problems will be financed by ECC in their role as LLFA, or by the EA.
- 5.8.17. Developments located in any of the CDAs or Local Flood Risk Zones (LFRZs) and redevelopments of more than one property or area greater than 0.1 hectare should seek betterment to a greenfield runoff rate. New developments in CDAs will be required to provide or contribute towards the provision of flood mitigation options via CIL/S106 contributions to reduce or mitigate the risk of flooding to existing properties located within the CDA and to accommodate the drainage needs of the new developments.
- 5.8.18. Any future schemes to address surface water flooding problems will be investigated principally by ECC in their role as LLFA, and financing of these schemes will be sought through partnership funding approaches involving one or more potential partners including private developers, Anglian Water and/or the Environment Agency. The extent of investment required will depend on the extent of the flood risk and the solution proposed and cannot be quantified in this IADP.

Summary

5.8.19. Key findings are as follows:

- Surface water is one of the main sources of flooding across the Colchester local authority area. Several communities are at risk of flooding from this source. The areas of Colchester located within the CDAs and within Marks Tey have a high prevalence of reported surface water flooding events in particular.
- Strategic scale SuDS may form part of flood alleviation projects to reduce the impacts and frequency of existing surface water flooding problems. Anglian Water's DWMP includes long-term strategies to increase drainage capacity through surface water management and upsizing, and via emerging schemes in catchments susceptible to emerging growth.
- SuDS for new major development will also be essential to ensure that surface water discharge rates and volumes from growth are kept to a minimum or as close to the pre-development runoff rate as possible, minimising the increase in flood risk downstream, particularly along the River Colne and River Stour. While no schemes relating to SUDS have been identified within the Project Schedule, it is likely that all the development sites referred to in the emerging development trajectory are of sufficient size to require SuDS provision under the NPPF, though smaller sites may pose feasibility challenges to including provision within the development boundary.

- SuDS must be designed and constructed in consultation with ECC in their role as LLFA. The impacts of climate change must be considered in the design of SuDS schemes.
- Funding for SuDS related to growth will be provided by developers, and in some cases where SuDS can form part of a wider solution to manage existing surface water flood risk, these may be part funded by the LLFA, the Environment Agency or water companies on a site by site or project by project basis. Under the current legislative and policy position, SuDS constructed for new development will be maintained by private owners or in some cases, may be adopted by Anglian Water, or ECC. Once Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act is enacted²¹⁰ a SuDS Approval Board (SAB) will adopt SuDS built to the requirements of new national SuDS standards.
- Anglian Water's DWMP identifies significant investment in surface water management to manage WRC treatment and transmission capacity; however, SuDS specific schemes within Colchester are not identified at this stage of planning, and no costs have been allocated to surface water management within the Project Schedule.
- Liaison with the LLFA and EA will be required to determine site-specific requirements prior to SuDS construction and development.

5.9. Waste and resource management

Baseline

Current provision

- 5.9.1. ECC is both the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) and Waste Planning Authority (WPA) for Colchester.
- 5.9.2. As the WPA, ECC is responsible for ensuring sites are allocated for facilities to meet the waste needs of the County. To meet this requirement, ECC and Southend-on-Sea Borough Council adopted a joint Waste Local Plan in July 2017, covering all 12 District, Borough and City Councils within Essex County plus Southend-on-Sea City, with a Plan period of 2017-2032²¹¹.
- 5.9.3. As a WDA, ECC is responsible for making the necessary arrangements to dispose of household and commercial waste collected by Waste Collection Authorities (WCA), such as CCC. The WDA is also required to make places available for residents to dispose of their household waste. The waste managed by the WCA and WDA is referred to as Local Authority Collected Waste (LACW).
- 5.9.4. The WDA and the twelve Essex WCAs work collaboratively as the Essex Waste Partnership (EWP). The partnership aims to ensure cost-efficient and sustainable waste management for LACW across Essex. The EWP have adopted the ambitious joint Waste Strategy for Essex (WSfE) which, covers the period 2024-2054 and will be subject to periodic reviews. ECC and partner authorities are now developing appropriate Action Plans focusing on different elements of the strategy with a mix of short, medium, and long-term targets for the provision of waste management services and associated infrastructure to support both waste collection, treatment and disposal and publicly accessible Recycling Centres for Household Waste (RCHWs).
- 5.9.5. The WSfE includes a number of headline targets, such as:
- To reduce greenhouse gas emissions and contribute to achieving net zero by 2050;
 - To halve the amount of residual waste produced per person by 2042;
 - To reuse, recycle, or compost 65% of waste by 2035 with an ambition to achieve 70% or more;

²¹⁰ Commons Library Research Briefing (2026) <https://researchbriefings.files.parliament.uk/documents/CBP-10483/CBP-10483.pdf> [Accessed: June 2026]

²¹¹ Essex County Council, Southend-on-Sea, (2017); Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan.

- To stop using landfill by 2030; and
 - To ensure all residents have access to recycling services for food, plastic, paper, card, metal, glass, and garden waste by 2026; and to add plastic film by 2027.
- 5.9.6. LACW across Essex is managed through a network of Recycling Centres for Household Waste, five municipal waste transfer stations (WTS), and local depots across the area of the Waste Local Plan.
- 5.9.7. The Ardleigh WTS off the A120 sits just outside the authority boundary to the east of Colchester. The WTS provides a facility to bulk LACW for efficient and effective onward transport by road to waste treatment or disposal facilities. The Ardleigh WTS serves both Colchester City and Tendring District collected waste as well as waste from the recycling centres in the area and has a design capacity of 115,000 tonnes per annum.
- 5.9.8. ECC also owns and manages two waste recycling centres within Colchester at Shrub End and West Mersea. In addition, residents of Colchester are likely to use ECC recycling centres in the neighbouring districts of Braintree and Tendring.
- 5.9.9. ECC managed waste management facilities located within Colchester are presented in Figure 5.10.
- 5.9.10. Since the publication of the previous Infrastructure Delivery Plan, there have been two WTS schemes permitted within Colchester. Neither of these planning permissions limit the source of waste to Local Authority Collected Waste and allow the transfer of non-hazardous commercial waste:
- Daisy House and adjacent land, Haven Road – construction of a new building and operation of a WTS with a capacity of 38,500 tonnes per annum, permitted October 2021²¹². The purpose of the proposed WTS facility is to enable Veolia to manage recyclable and general/residual waste materials generated by commercial occupants in Essex higher up the waste hierarchy.
 - Oyster Haven Business Park, Haven Road – change of use of existing commercial building and yard to a WTS and construction of retaining bays with a capacity of 75,000 tonnes per annum, permitted May 2023²¹³. This facility is fully operational as of July 2024²¹⁴. The material to be handled on site will consist of non-hazardous inert and mixed waste derived from household, commercial and construction and demolition sources (there is no proportional split of throughput).
- 5.9.11. The new medium term (7-14 years) residual waste solution with Indaver confirms the contracted routes for residual waste from April 2025. This has led to a move away from landfill from October 2025 (four-years ahead of the Waste Strategy for Essex target). A long-term residual waste solution will be explored and, depending on the location, may require new waste infrastructure for waste transfer, bulking, haulage, and treatment in Essex. While there are no specific plans for new or expanded waste infrastructure at the moment any requirements will emerge during WSfE action planning and the scoping of future procurement activities and needs assessment. The WDA promotes the protection of new and existing employment land for category E requirements for waste infrastructure including but not limited to community facilities, waste transfer sites, depots and treatment facilities.
- 5.9.12. Existing issues for waste and resource management for LACW within Colchester, together with the cumulative impact of nearby developments such as TCBGC include:
- The Ardleigh WTS off the A120 occasionally operates at maximum capacity during peak times requiring waste generated in the area to be diverted to other facilities or requiring additional haulage fleet to be laid on to remove waste.

²¹² Please refer to Essex County Council planning reference ESS/118/20/COL for further information [Accessed: July 2024].

²¹³ Please refer to Essex County Council planning reference ESS/26/23/COL for further information [Accessed: July 2024].

²¹⁴ Essex County Council service provider engagement, July 2024

- Regulatory changes are requiring more waste to be segregated and managed through different routes. This is expected to increase over time and will have implications for space requirements, particularly for sorting and segregation operations.
- The Shrub End and West Mersea Waste Recycling Centres are operating above or at full design capacity during peak times. This is particularly noticeable at the weekends.
- The Witham and Clacton Recycling Centres in neighbouring areas are likely to be impacted by the scale of emerging development and are both operating at or above design capacity at peak times.
- Waste flow modelling can be complex due to the impact of external factors such as changing behaviours product design and legislation. This requires significant flexibility and headroom to ensure waste infrastructure can deal with both seasonal and permanent changes waste volumes and composition and individual choice.
- The impact of waste collections services provided by the WCA or other changes such as take back schemes operated by businesses will impact waste in other parts of the system. For example, CCC has recently started a garden waste subscription service, and it is likely that this, in turn, has led to a greater demand for free services provided at waste recycling centres²¹⁵.

5.9.13. Existing opportunities for waste and resource management of LACW within Colchester include:

- Opportunities to expand and/or reconfigure existing waste management sites to encourage better utilisation of those spaces²¹⁶.
- Explore the potential of adapting existing waste recycling centres from single level to split-level to encourage more efficient waste disposal practices²¹⁷.
- Explore the potential for additional site allocations particularly in the area east of Colchester.
- ECC is currently modelling usage and operational capacity across its waste disposal facilities to better understand where capacity improvements are required²¹⁸.

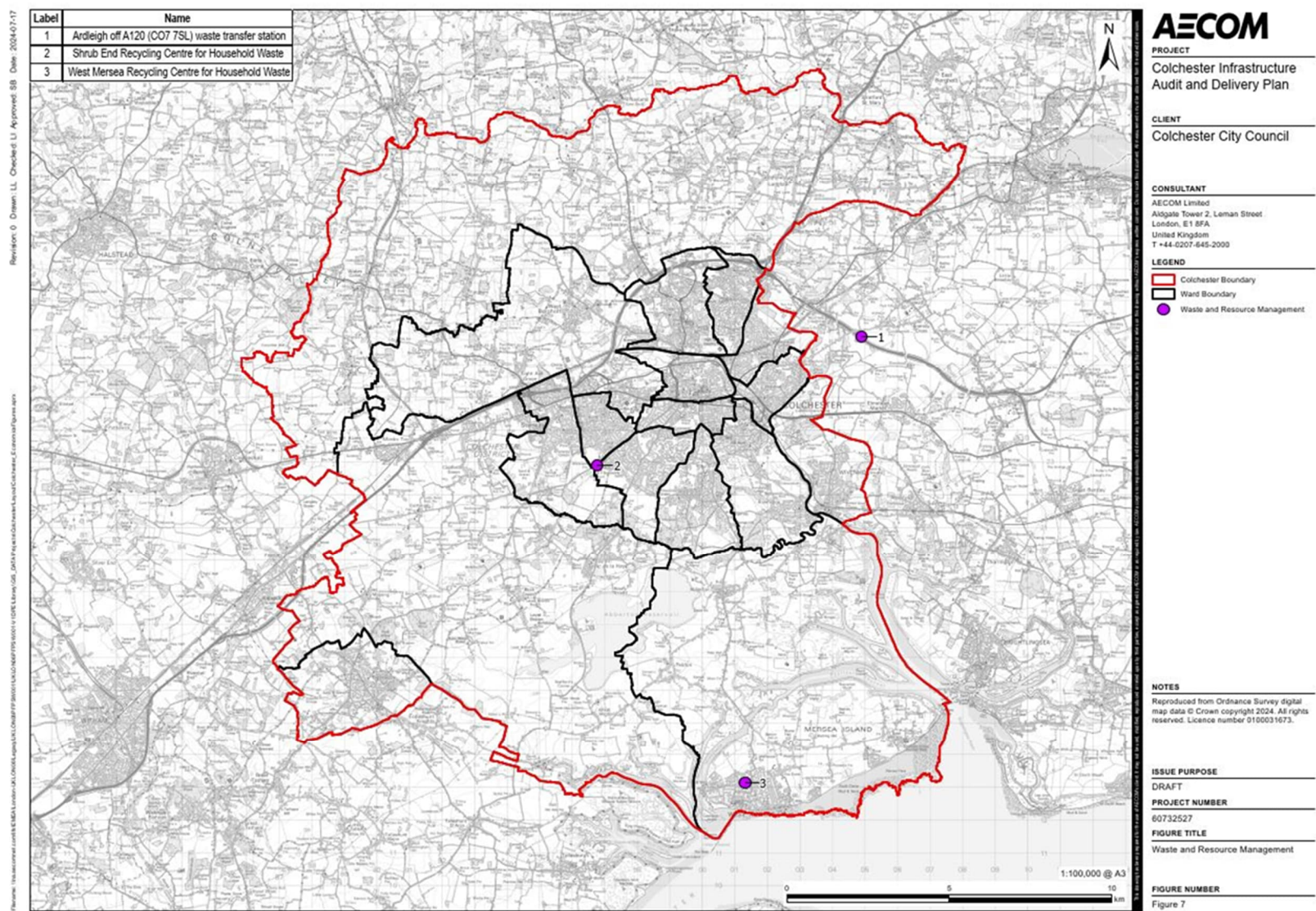
²¹⁵ Essex County Council service provider engagement, July 2024

²¹⁶ Essex County Council service provide engagement, July 2024

²¹⁷ Essex County Council service provide engagement, July 2024

²¹⁸ Essex County Council service provide engagement, July 2024

Figure 5.10 ECC-managed waste management facilities across Colchester



Infrastructure requirements to 2043

- 5.9.14. As per the adopted Waste Local Plan²¹⁹ and set out in the Project Schedule (Appendix A), the following capital projects will be delivered during the Plan period up to 2032:
- Bellhouse landfill site, Colchester - biological waste management and inert landfill site. The Bellhouse landfill site remains operational, with the extant planning permission²²⁰ requiring the completion of the final landfill operations by 31st December 2026. Restoration must be completed by 31st December 2028. Restoration would require “inert waste and other materials for engineering and restoration of the site”. Although the site remains allocated in the WLP (2017), ECC (WPA) have not been made aware of any plans for infilling with inert waste (other than the above permitted activities) or for the provision of a biological waste treatment facility to date.
 - Fingringhoe Quarry, Colchester – inert landfill site. Site is currently in restoration; although it remains allocated in the WLP (2017), ECC (WPA) have not been made aware of any plans for infilling with inert waste to date²²¹.
- 5.9.15. It is the policy of ECC (the WDA) to use Energy from Waste for treatment of residual waste. As noted above, there has been a move away from landfill from October 2025 (four-years ahead of the Waste Strategy for Essex target).
- 5.9.16. As per the adopted Waste Strategy for Essex²²² and set out in the Project Schedule (Appendix A), the services provided by the following recycling centres and associated logistical infrastructure will be need to be enhanced to accommodate additional waste and waste types by 2030:
- Ardleigh WTS off the A120;
 - Colchester (Shrub End) Recycling Centre;
 - Witham Recycling Centre;
 - West Mersea Recycling Centre; and
 - Clacton Recycling Centre (which is located within Tendring).
- 5.9.17. Further sites may be required to meet the future infrastructure needs.
- 5.9.18. Due to limited opportunities to significantly enhance the RCHW assets in TCBGC to meet growth expectations, a new recycling centre requirement has been identified. This could be co-located with a WCA depot and/or WTS facility (e.g., Tendring Green area).
- 5.9.19. In addition, the Waste Local Plan²²³ designated a number of 'areas of search' which are deemed suitable in principle for waste management development outside of the allocated sites:
- Land off Axial Way, Myland;
 - Severalls Industry Park;
 - Tollgate, Stanway; and
 - Whitehall Road Industrial Estate.
- 5.9.20. There have been no planning applications to date for waste management facilities within the first three areas of search, and the sites remain as areas of search in the WLP (2017). The

²¹⁹ Essex County Council, Southend-on-Sea, (2017); Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan. https://www.essex.gov.uk/sites/default/files/migration_data/files/assets.ctfassets.net/5MMZ5nNFmOCIpF56igb0Jc/e6f7ab4cba4ed1198c67b87be7b375e7/waste-local-plan-2017-compressed.pdf [Accessed: July 2026].

²²⁰ Please refer to Essex County Council planning reference ESS/03/22/COL for further information

²²¹ Essex County Council service provider engagement, July 2024

²²² Essex Waste Partnership, (2024); Waste Strategy for Essex 2024-2054.

²²³ Essex County Council, Southend-on-Sea, (2017); Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan. https://www.essex.gov.uk/sites/default/files/migration_data/files/assets.ctfassets.net/5MMZ5nNFmOCIpF56igb0Jc/e6f7ab4cba4ed1198c67b87be7b375e7/waste-local-plan-2017-compressed.pdf [Accessed: July 2026].

aforementioned Oyster Haven and Daisy House applications were within the Whitehall Road Industrial Estate Area of Search²²⁴.

- 5.9.21. The Waste Strategy for Essex 2024-2054²²⁵ sets out a number of priorities which have implications for capital assets, which include:
- Encouraging the growth of green businesses to find innovative solutions to deal with waste;
 - Designing waste services that increase closed-loop recycling;
 - Supporting businesses and communities to deliver local reuse and repair services;
 - Supporting activities that promote repair and sharing of pre-loved items;
 - Developing reuse and repair services at recycling centres;
 - Making it easier for residents to recycle different materials; and
 - Providing services that collect high quality material for recycling.
- 5.9.22. Demand for future waste and resource management facilities and services is impacted by a number of factors including waste tonnage, housing growth and waste composition, as well as the waste regulatory framework. These factors are continually reviewed by ECC's internal monitoring team to provide an understanding of likely impacts on infrastructure need. The County Council's growth model assumptions are based on:
- The latest ONS sub-national annual population projections by local authority area;
 - Housing growth by local authority area obtained via Local Development Plans;
 - Waste composition analysis by Essex local authority area;
 - Historic waste tonnage arisings by Essex local authority;
 - Local service changes; and
 - Impact assessment reviews of regulatory changes.
- 5.9.23. It is also well-recognised that waste tonnage and therefore demands on waste management facilities and services is impacted by wider macro-economic cycles, as during periods of economic downturn consumers typically purchase less goods, thus generating less waste.
- 5.9.24. In 2024/5, ECC estimate that average waste produced was 946kg per household, with Colchester figures being considerably lower than the countywide average at 829 kg. Waste generation per household is challenging to predict due to various factors influencing arisings. Incoming regulatory changes, such as Simpler Recycling will lead to the need to increase segregation of waste and recycling with an impact on logistic space.
- 5.9.25. When establishing the waste management requirements for growth, ECC refer to Section 51 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 (and associated legislation and regulation). As per the Developer's Guide to Infrastructure Contributions²²⁶, ECC then take a case by case approach to determining the impact of proposed development on waste and resource infrastructure.

Costs, funding, and delivery

- 5.9.26. Costs are not known for the eight capital projects identified above and set out in the Project Schedule (noting that the six recycling centre / logistical infrastructure projects set out within the Waste Strategy for Essex are ECC / local authority projects, while the two landfill projects are not).
- 5.9.27. Waste and resource management infrastructure is funded through a variety of means, with the main source being the council taxpayer. In 2024/25, ECC states that £94 million of public

²²⁴ Essex County Council service provider engagement, July 2024

²²⁵ Essex Waste Partnership, (2024); Waste Strategy for Essex 2024-2054.

²²⁶ Essex County Council, (2025); Essex County Council Developers' Guide to Infrastructure Contributions.

funds will be spent on waste reduction and recycling²²⁷. In 2022/23, £10,434 of S106 contributions were allocated to waste and recycling collection infrastructure²²⁸. There were no funds allocated to waste and recycling disposal infrastructure over the same period.

- 5.9.28. Delivery responsibility for the two landfill projects identified above sits with private delivery partners. Whilst ECC in its role as the WPA can allocate land within Essex for the provision of landfill capacity, this is done with landowner support and the expectation that the private sector will deliver the facility itself. The waste transfer station and recycling centre projects will be delivered by ECC. Depots and other waste collection infrastructure will be delivered by CCC in its capacity as the Waste Collection Authority.

Summary

- 5.9.29. ECC is both the Waste Disposal Authority (WDA) and Waste Planning Authority (WPA) for Colchester. Household and commercial waste is collected by the Waste Collection Authorities (WCA), such as CCC.
- 5.9.30. Waste management facilities are currently operating at or near capacity throughout Colchester. ECC is currently exploring options for site expansion and/or reconfiguration at its waste transfer station (Ardleigh off the A120) and its waste recycling centres (Shrub End, West Mersea, Witham and Clacton). The adopted Waste Local Plan (2017-2032) has allocated two sites in Colchester (Bellhouse and Fingringhoe) for waste infrastructure and has earmarked potential 'areas of search' where waste infrastructure may be suitable in principle.
- 5.9.31. Requirements for LACW waste and resource management infrastructure is funded through the council taxpayer, and ECC may also seek developer contributions on a case by case basis. Delivery responsibility for projects identified above sits with CCC and ECC alongside private delivery partners.
- 5.9.32. ECC will seek to secure contributions towards much needed waste management capacity from all developments with 10 or more dwellings. Developer contributions will be used towards:
- Reconfiguration of waste infrastructure, Recycling Centres for Household Waste (RCHW) and Waste Transfer Stations (WTS) alterations;
 - Provision of new plant and equipment;
 - Extensions and/or redevelopment of existing RCHWs and WTS;
 - Construction of a new RCHW and WTS;
 - Provision of reuse facilities;
 - Increasing capacity for waste segregation;
 - Provision of new logistical infrastructure, depots, vehicles and containers;
 - Provision of new waste treatment facilities; and
 - Activities that support waste minimisation, reuse, and recycling.
- 5.9.33. ECC notes that both regulatory and macro-economic changes and changing individuals' behaviours may have implications for waste management infrastructure demands over the Plan period. Changes to waste generations are hard to predict due to various complex factors. However, it is expected that regulatory changes will lead to greater waste and recycling segregation with space and logistics needed to accommodate this.

²²⁷ Essex County Council (n.d.) Spending and Council Tax. Available at: <https://www.essex.gov.uk/running-council/spending-and-council-tax/what-council-tax-pays> [Accessed: July 2026].

²²⁸ Colchester City Council (2022) Infrastructure Funding Statement. Available at: <https://cbccrmdata.blob.core.windows.net/noteattachment/CBC-null-Colchester-City-Council-Infrastructure-Funding-Statement-2022/23-Colchester%20City%20Council%20Infrastructure%20Funding%20Statement%202022-23.pdf> [Accessed: July 2026].

6. Key findings

6.1. Introduction

This section reviews the Project Schedule in order to draw together the key findings of the infrastructure assessment. It goes on to consider the mechanisms for delivering and funding the infrastructure required to support the Local Plan 2043, and to set out next steps for CCC.

6.2. Summary of Infrastructure Assessment

- 6.2.1. The IADP has identified infrastructure projects which will be required over the new Local Plan period to meet the needs arising from planned growth. These projects are listed in the Project Schedule (Appendix A). A summary analysis of the Project Schedule is presented in Table 6-1 below.
- 6.2.2. 164 infrastructure projects have been identified. Some line items in the Project Schedule relate to the modelled estimates of demand and costs for social infrastructure, rather than specific projects.
- 6.2.3. The majority of the line items (77) identified relate to transport. 62 relate to social and green infrastructure, and 25 relate to hard infrastructure.
- 6.2.4. It is possible to allocate a broad time period or phase to most line items in the Project Schedule, in line with the phased breakdown of the development trajectory set out in chapter 2. The majority of the infrastructure projects for which a broad delivery date has been identified are set to come forward within the next 10 years (21 during Phase 1, 63 during Phase 2, and 12 during Phase 1 and 2). It is not surprising that more information is available on near-term projects; most service providers operate to a three to five year programming cycle, and infrastructure provision associated with major allocations will be confirmed as these development projects move through the planning process.
- 6.2.5. 111 of the 164 line entries in the Project Schedule have costs against them²²⁹. Total costs of £1,306.9 million have been identified. Transport projects account for 42% of the costs identified. Social and green infrastructure projects account for 37% of the costs. Hard infrastructure accounts for 21% of the costs identified.
- 6.2.6. Funding of £367.2 million has been identified in relation to the projects within the schedule. This implies a total net cost of £939.7 million. While funding has not yet been fully secured for all projects, this does not mean that funding will not come forward in the future, from public, private or third sector sources (see section 6.3).
- 6.2.7. Transport projects account for 49% of the net costs. Social and green infrastructure projects account for 51% of the net costs. Hard infrastructure accounts for 0% of the net costs²³⁰.
- 6.2.8. The IADP has included the formulation of a prioritisation framework which sets out at a high level the priority of different infrastructure types where funding and delivery constraints arise. This is set out in **Appendix C**.
- 6.2.9. The line items with the highest cost in the Project Schedule (excluding schemes which are located entirely or partly outside of Colchester albeit they will cater partly for Colchester's need) are:

²²⁹ For five potable water schemes, costs have not been included in the total because the schemes are located partly outside of Colchester or are regional / national schemes with no detail currently available on potential local investment.

²³⁰ The 0% net costs for hard infrastructure does not imply that all funding requirement to meet needs to 2043 has been secured. Rather, it reflects a reasonable assumption that, as set out in the individual topic chapters, funding for planned growth will be identified by the regulated utility companies when they formulate their five-year investment plans for the relevant period rather than needing to be met by developer contributions or ad hoc income streams.

- Electricity substation upgrades in 15 locations to meet new demand (£243.6 million, assumed to be funded via the utility company and developer charges);
- A new strategic link road between the A120 and A133 (£86.0 million, assumed to be funded);
- Primary school provision to 2043 (high level benchmark estimate of demand and cost, £86.0 million);
- Secondary school provision to 2043 (high level benchmark estimate of demand and cost, £73.8 million);
- Adult social services to 2043 (high level benchmark estimate of demand and cost, £71.2 million);
- RTS extension City Centre to Marks Tey (£63.0 million); and
- Healthcare facilities to deliver primary, acute and mental healthcare services (£59.6 million).

Table 6-1 Summary Analysis of the Project Schedule

Infrastructure Category	Line Entries (no.)	Costs (£)	Funding (£)	Net costs (£)
<i>Transport</i>				
Highways	18	£195,650,000	£86,000,000	£109,650,000
Public Transport - Rail	1	£5,000,000		£5,000,000
Public Transport - Bus	18	£171,010,000		£171,010,000
Active Travel	40	£172,140,000		£172,140,000
Total	77	£543,800,000	£86,000,000	£457,800,000
<i>Social and Green Infrastructure</i>				
Primary Education	9	£86,014,367		£86,014,367
Early years and childcare	1	£28,837,427		£28,837,427
Secondary Education	4	£73,752,365		£73,752,365
Special Educational Needs	1	£24,269,650		£24,269,650
Further Education	1	£15,008,135		£15,008,135
Higher Education	3	£1,300,000	£1,300,000	
Adult learning	2	£5,000,000		£5,000,000
Primary, acute and mental healthcare	16	£59,600,415		£59,600,415
Adult social services	1	£71,226,358		£71,226,358
Children's services	1	£21,879,248		£21,879,248
Indoor and outdoor sports	3	£16,436,302		£16,436,302
Pitches	3	£6,817,647		£6,817,647
Open Spaces	4	£34,126,618		£34,126,618
Playspace	2	£1,941,807		£1,941,807
Green infrastructure	2			
Youth services	1			
Community centres	2	£22,104,285		£22,104,285
Libraries	3	£1,513,325		£1,513,325
Cultural facilities	0			
Police	1	£5,531,571		£5,531,571
Ambulances	1	£4,676,700		£4,676,700
Fire and Rescue	1	£3,116,750		£3,116,750
Total	62	£483,152,880	£1,300,000	£481,852,880

<i>Hard Infrastructure</i>				
Energy	1	£243,571,952	£243,571,952	
Potable water	7	£11,113,276	£11,113,276	
Wastewater	9	£25,249,800	£25,249,800	
Digital	0			
Waste & resource management	8			
Flood Defences	0			
Surface Water Management	0			
Total	25	£279,935,028	£279,935,028	£0
Total: all infrastructure	164	£1,306,887,908	£367,235,028	£939,652,880

Source: AECOM

6.3. Delivery and funding

- 6.3.1. Table 6.2 below summarises the key infrastructure delivery agencies and funding sources relevant to Colchester's new Local Plan to 2043, by infrastructure type.

Table 6-2 Infrastructure Delivery Agencies and Funding Sources in Colchester

Infrastructure type	Delivery agencies	Funding sources for capital investment
Education		
Primary education	ECC, central government (DfE), developers, academy schools	Developers, DfE
Early years education and childcare	ECC, Private, Voluntary, and Independent (PVI) sector	Developers, PVI sector
Secondary education	ECC, central government (DfE), developers, academy schools	Developers, DfE
Further education	ECC	Developers, central and local government, FE institutions
Special Education Needs and Disability (SEND)	ECC, Essex Schools Forum	Developers, DfE
Higher education	University of Essex	Developers, tuition fees, commercial services income
Adult education	ECC	DfE
Sports and community facilities		
Indoor and outdoor sports and leisure facilities	CCC, Sports England, private sector, governing bodies	Developers, governing bodies
Playing pitches	CCC, Sports England, private sector	Developers
Open spaces	CCC	Developers, public sector, third sector
Green infrastructure	Environment Agency, Natural England	Developers, charities, central government, Natural England, private sector, partnership between councils, EU
Playspace	CCC, parish councils	CCC, parish councils
Youth facilities	ECC, PVI sector, central government, parish councils, health bodies, schools and colleges	Developers, public sector, third sector, national funds
Community facilities	ECC	Developers, charities
Cultural and civic facilities	ECC	Developers, central government (e.g. Town Deal fund), charities (e.g. NLHF), cultural organisations
Emergency Services		
Police	Essex Police	Developers, central government, local taxation
Ambulance	East of England Ambulance Service	Developer, NHS England, Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC)

Infrastructure type	Delivery agencies	Funding sources for capital investment
Fire and rescue	Essex County Fire & Rescue Service	Developers, central government, local taxation
Healthcare		
Primary care (GPs)	NHS Essex ICB, North East Essex Health & Wellbeing Alliance	Central government (capital funding), NHS, developers
Acute care services	ESNEFT, NHS Essex ICB, North East Essex Community Services, Hertfordshire Partnership University NHS Foundation Trust	Central government (capital funding), ICB, NHS, developers
Mental health services	EPUT	Central government (public dividend capital), DHSC
Adult social care	ECC, private sector providers	ECC, developers, central government.
Specialist and supported facilities for children	ECC, ECFWS, private sector	ECC, developer, NHS Norfolk and Suffolk ICB, central government
Transport		
Active travel	ECC, LHA	Developers, ECC, CCC
Bus	CCC, bus service providers (First Bus and Arriva)	Developers, commercial operators, ECC, central government
Rail	Network Rail, train service operators	Network Rail, central government
Roads	National Highways, ECC	National Highways, central government
Electric Vehicle (EV) infrastructure	ECC, Transport East, local transport providers, energy suppliers, National Highways, DfT.	ECC, central government, developers
Utilities, waste, and water		
Electricity	CCC, UK Power Networks (East)	UK Power Networks (East), developers
Gas	National Grid, Cadent Gas Limited	Cadent Gas Limited
Renewable and low carbon	CCC, private companies	CCC, private companies
Telecommunications and digital	Amphora Connect, utility providers (Sky, Virgin Media and BT Openreach, Open Infra, Lightspeed and Gigaclear)	Public-private partnerships
Potable water	Anglian Water, Affinity Water	Anglian Water, Affinity Water, developers
Wastewater	Anglian Water	Anglian Water, developers

Infrastructure type	Delivery agencies	Funding sources for capital investment
Flood defence	Environment Agency, Natural England, Internal Drainage Board, ECC	Central government (Defra), drainage rates, Anglian Eastern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) funding
Surface water management	Anglian Water, ECC, Environment Agency, private sector	Anglian Water, developers
Waste and resource management	ECC, private sector	ECC

Delivery

- 6.3.2. This IADP demonstrates that work is well underway by CCC, service providers and partners to identify and deliver the future infrastructure required for development over the Plan period.
- 6.3.3. As noted above, the majority of the infrastructure projects for which a broad delivery date has been identified are set to come forward within the next 10 years. It is to be expected that more information is available on near-term projects; most service providers operate to a three to five year programming cycle, and infrastructure provision associated with major allocations will be confirmed as these development projects move through the planning process. However, it will be important for CCC and partners to continue their work to develop and firm up the infrastructure projects required to deliver growth.
- 6.3.4. The IADP has formed a basis for conversations about how future growth in Colchester can be delivered. Going forward, as a comprehensive assessment of infrastructure and projects needed to support growth, the IADP can provide a tool for future partnership working and co-ordination in the planning and delivery of services.
- 6.3.5. CCC has engaged with neighbouring Local Planning Authorities (LPAs) as part of the process for formulating the new Local Plan to 2043. Cross-boundary strategic matters of particular importance relate to housing need and provision and infrastructure. CCC is also engaged with sub-regional partners through the North Essex Economic Board (NEEB). NEEB is made up of Braintree, Maldon, Tendring, Uttlesford and Epping Forest District Councils, Colchester and Chelmsford City Councils, and Essex County Council. The IADP may present opportunities to feed into emerging sub-regional and regional proposals.
- 6.3.6. In December 2024, the English Devolution White Paper was published which set out the governments ambition to reform local government structures to widen devolution across England²³¹. Essex County Council, Southend City Council and Thurrock Council were accepted onto the government's Devolution Priority Programme in February 2025. In March 2026, the Government confirmed that Greater Essex will move to a five unitary council model by April 2028, including the creation of a new unitary authority for North Essex, comprising Colchester, Braintree, and Tendring Councils, as well as incorporating services currently delivered by Essex County Council^{232,233}.

Mainstream Funding Sources

- 6.3.7. Table 6-2 above shows key infrastructure funding sources and delivery agencies relevant to Colchester's new Local Plan, by infrastructure type. Most infrastructure receives all or a major part of their funding from national government, whether that comes through ECC, CCC or via a central government agency. Funding also comes from the charitable sector and the private sector, in the form of private equity and financial or in-kind contributions from developers.

Developer Contributions

- 6.3.8. The town planning process provides the means for developers to contribute to the cost of infrastructure necessary to support new development. Developer contributions can take various forms including planning conditions, S106 agreements between local authorities and developers, Section 278 agreements which cover contributions to highways, and the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL).
- 6.3.9. There is potential for many items in the Project Schedule to be funded by developers. Charges on development and how they are levied will be determined in due course, in line

²³¹ Ministry of Housing, Communities & Local Government, (2024); Policy Paper: English Devolution White Paper.

²³² Colchester City Council (2026) Statement from Colchester City Council on LGR decision for Greater Essex. Available at: <https://www.new.colchester.gov.uk/news/2026/statement-colchester-city-council-lgr-decision-greater-essex#qsc.tab=0> [Accessed: May 2026].

²³³ Colchester City Council (2026) Government confirms five new councils for Greater Essex. Available at: <https://www.new.colchester.gov.uk/news/2026/government-confirms-five-new-councils-greater-essex#qsc.tab=0> [Accessed: May 2026].

with CCC and ECC policy on developer contributions. Current CCC policy states that developer contributions will be secured under S106 agreements and/or through a CIL as appropriate. However, CIL will complement and not duplicate planning obligations²³⁴.

6.3.10. S106 contributions will be determined on a site by site basis, and must be:

- Necessary to make the development acceptable in planning terms;
- Directly related to the development; and
- Fairly and reasonably related in scale and kind to the development.

6.3.11. In 2024/25 CCC reports that²³⁵:

- The total amount of money to be provided under any planning obligations which were entered into during 2024/25 was £5.84 million;
- The total amount of money under any planning obligations which was received during 2024/25 was £1.90 million.
- The total amount of money under any planning obligations which was received before 2024/25 which has not yet been allocated by the authority was £8.99 million.
- A total of £995,000 was spent, including £455,000 for leisure/open space, £309,000 for transport & sustainability, and £95,000 for the Essex Coast Recreational Disturbance Avoidance Mitigation Strategy (RAMs).
- A total of 69 affordable housing units were delivered via S106 agreements in 2024/25.

6.3.12. The income associated with S106 Agreements collected in the 2024/25 financial year is shown in Table 6-3.

Table 6-3 S106 Income 2024/25

Monetary contributions through planning obligations in 2024/25	£
Total money received	£1,901,635.91
Total money spent	£994,851.67
Total money retained	£2,253,258.33

Source: Colchester City Council, (2024); Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024/2025.

Alternative Funding Sources

6.3.13. In addition to mainstream funding sources and developer contributions described above, other funding sources potentially available to fund infrastructure in Colchester are set out below:

- One-off public sector grants - Recent examples of capital grants available via a competitive bid process include the Towns Fund, High Street Rental Auction Fund (MHCLG), Brownfield, Infrastructure and Land Fund (Homes England), Safer Streets Fund, the Active Travel Fund (Active Travel England/DfT), the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund (DfT), and Local Regeneration Fund (LRF).
- Business rates retention – Since reforms in 2013/14, local authorities have kept 50% of the business rates revenues raised locally (the granted received from central government has been adjusted to compensate those who generate less locally-raised revenue). There may be scope for CCC to agree with central government to retain a greater proportion of business rates in order to raise funding for infrastructure.
- Stamp Duty Land Tax (SDLT) supplement - SDLT must be paid if a person buys a property or land over a certain price in England. An SDLT supplement of 5% applies on

²³⁴ Colchester City Council, (2022); Colchester City Local Plan 2017-2033 Section 2.

²³⁵ Colchester City Council, (2025); Infrastructure Funding Statement 2024/2025.

the portion from £300,001 to £500,000 for first time buyers. When a non-first-time buyer purchases a property, the SDLT supplement varies between 0-12% depending on the price of the property. SDLT goes to HM Revenue and Customs i.e. central government, but a supplement could be charged and passed to a local authority to fund local infrastructure.

- National Wealth Fund - The National Wealth Fund was launched in 2024, replacing the UK Infrastructure Bank. It is owned by HM Treasury and acts as a policy bank and public investor, using both its own capital and its ability to mobilise private sector investment. The fund provides a variety of financial support such as loans, equity investments, guarantees, and advisory services and works with local authorities and private companies to deliver investment in infrastructure.
- Parking revenue - In 2024-25, local authorities in England generated £1.19 billion in profit from on-street and off-street parking²³⁶. Income from parking charges is generally spent on running parking services and any surplus is spent on essential transport projects such as road repairs, reducing congestion, tackling poor air quality and supporting local bus services.
- Tourist tax – At present, in England, neither the central government nor local councils have the power to introduce a levy on visitors. However, the government is planning to give Mayor Strategic Authorities in England power to create visitor levies on overnight stays in England²³⁷. To date, Mayoral Combined Authorities such as Greater Manchester and Liverpool City Region have been able to do this through Accommodation Business Improvement Districts.
- Clean air zone - Clean air zones and low emission zones are specified areas in the UK where vehicles are required to meet minimum emission standards. Driving a vehicle that exceeds the minimum emission criteria can incur a charge payable to the local authority. Examples include the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) in London which has been in place since 2019. Revenue from ULEZ helps Transport for London to fund expansion and maintenance of the rest of the transport network.
- Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) - Councils can obtain loans at low rates from the PWLB under prudential principles. However, the availability of revenue funding to repay the loan and the political appetite for borrowing are factors affecting the attractiveness of this option.
- Third-party equity investment – Opportunities for potential commercial returns for funders include institutional investors / sovereign wealth funds and pension funds who are attracted to the UK infrastructure market as a place to invest.
- Sponsorship – This can fund visible infrastructure like transport or leisure facilities. Examples include the Emirates Cable Car scheme in London which secured £36 million of its £60 million delivery cost through corporate sponsorship, or the Santander bike hire schemes.
- Philanthropic donations - It is possible that charitable donations from individuals or charitable foundations could make a contribution towards infrastructure funding, noting that this would be more appropriate for some infrastructure types (e.g. education) than for others.
- Local Climate Bonds – This is a way for councils to raise money directly from residents to support environmental and climate-positive infrastructure projects. These bonds appeal to residents who want their money to have a local impact, funding initiatives like renewable energy, sustainable transport, or green spaces.
- Direct delivery – CCC could purchase land with development potential, progress design and planning in order to increase land value and then raise funding from its disposal (this

²³⁶ Local Gov (2025). English councils report records £1.2 billion parking surplus. Available at: <https://www.localgov.co.uk/English-councils-report-record-1.2bn-parking-surplus/63075> [Accessed: May 2026].

²³⁷ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government and HM Treasury (2025) Visitor levy in England. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/overnight-visitor-levy-in-england> [Accessed: June 2026].

could be in the form of land receipts and / or a share of development profit or overage). Compulsory Purchase Orders (CPO) could also provide a potential route to enable direct delivery.

6.4. Next steps

- 6.4.1. This IADP forms part of the evidence base on infrastructure provision for the new Local Plan. Beyond adoption of the Local Plan to 2043, the IADP can be updated as more detailed information comes forward. It will therefore provide a valuable tool to ensure that the infrastructure required to support growth in Colchester is effectively planned, funded and delivered. In particular, the IADP schedule provides a comprehensive project database which can be further developed as project information emerges, providing a basis for future collaboration between stakeholders and a mechanism to appropriately align the work of service providers and other partner organisations.
- 6.4.2. The review of funding sources presented above demonstrates that the funding landscape is dynamic. There are risks around some well-established funding sources while new alternative funding opportunities are emerging at the same time. Appendix C sets out a framework which CCC and partners can use to prioritise projects (or clusters or portfolios of projects) and to explore further which specific combination of funding sources is likely to be most appropriate in each instance, if required. Through continued joint-working, CCC and partners will be in a strong position to respond promptly and effectively to infrastructure funding opportunities, and to attract investment.

Appendix A Project Schedule

Please see separate A3 attachment.

Appendix B Policy Context and Baseline

B.1 Introduction

Appendix B sets out the following context for the Regulation 19 IADP Report:

- Relevant policy and guidance at a national, regional and local level; and
- A current profile of Colchester's population and economy including location and population, workforce, deprivation, economic outlook, and housing.

A summary is included at the end of the Appendix.

B.2 Policy framework

National

National Planning Policy Framework (2025)

The National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), most recently updated in February 2025²³⁸, sets out national planning policies and is supplemented by the Planning Practice Guidance (PPG).

Paragraph 8 of the NPPF states that achieving sustainable development is the overarching goal of the planning system, comprising the three interdependent economic, social and environmental components.

Paragraph 11 makes clear that plans and decisions should apply a presumption in favour of sustainable development. Where there are no relevant development plan policies, or the policies which are most important for determining the application are out-of-date, planning permission should be granted unless there are strong grounds for refusal relating to the protection of areas or assets of particular importance, or adverse impacts would significantly and demonstrably outweigh the benefits.

Paragraph 16 outlines that Local Plans must be prepared with the objective of contributing to sustainable development and be prepared positively in a way that is aspirational but deliverable.

Paragraph 20 states that strategic policies should ensure sufficient provision for infrastructure and that 'strategic policies should set out an overall strategy for the pattern, scale and design quality of places, and make sufficient provision for: a) homes (including affordable housing), employment, retail, leisure and other commercial development; b) infrastructure for transport, telecommunications, security, waste management, water supply, wastewater, flood risk and coastal change management, and the provision of minerals and energy (including heat); c) community facilities (such as health, education and cultural infrastructure); and d) conservation and enhancement of the natural, built and historic environment, including landscapes and green infrastructure, and planning measures to address climate change mitigation and adaptation'.

Paragraph 25 sets out that strategic policy-making authorities should engage with relevant bodies including infrastructure providers to assess and determine local need for new infrastructure provision.

Paragraph 32 states that '...policies should be underpinned by relevant and up-to-date evidence. This should be adequate and proportionate, focused tightly on supporting and justifying the policies concerned, and take into account relevant market signals'.

²³⁸ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, (2025); National Planning Policy Framework. The Examination in Public (EiP) of the Colchester Local Plan will be against the NPPF December 2024 under transitional arrangements.

Planning Practice Guidance

National Planning Practice Guidance (PPG)²³⁹ is a web-based resource in support of the NPPF which provides additional guidance on how the NPPF is expected to be implemented. PPG relevant to the planning and provision of infrastructure which have been considered where applicable in the preparation of this IADP includes:

- Climate change;
- Effective use of land;
- Flood risk of coastal change;
- Healthy and safe communities;
- Natural environment;
- Open space, sports and recreation facilities, public rights of way and local green space;
- Plan-making;
- Transport evidence bases in plan making and decision taking;
- Travel Plans, Transport Assessments and Statements;
- Waste; and
- Water supply, wastewater and water quality.

UK 10 Year Infrastructure Strategy (2025)

The UK Government's 10 Year Infrastructure Strategy²⁴⁰ was published in 2025 and outlines the vision for the nation's infrastructure over the next decade. It is designed to address historical underinvestment and deliver a coordinated, long-term approach to infrastructure planning and delivery. Key themes relevant to this IDP include:

- Investment: At least £725 billion is pledged over the next decade to modernise and expand infrastructure. This funding will target critical sectors, including transport, energy, housing, and social infrastructure.
- Economic growth: Infrastructure is emphasised as a driver of economic growth and improved living standards. The strategy aims to enhance regional connectivity and reduce disparities between regions, and there is also a strong focus on sustainable development, including investments in green energy and low-carbon technologies.
- Coordination: The strategy promotes a coordinated approach to planning and delivery, overcoming past inconsistencies. It seeks to integrate various sectors to ensure an efficient approach to infrastructure development.
- Social impacts: Enhancements to public services are a priority, ensuring infrastructure supports better quality of life for all citizens. The strategy also aims to create jobs and foster community resilience via infrastructure delivery.

Local and Sub-regional

Colchester Local Plan Review

CCC is currently reviewing the adopted Local Plan, comprising concurrent reviews of Section 1 and Section 2, with the aim of ensuring it responds effectively to current and future development needs. The council is in the process of collating an evidence base to support this process. This IADP will be a component of the evidence base in support of the Local Plan review process.

²³⁹ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, (2024); Planning Practice Guidance. Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/planning-practice-guidance>

²⁴⁰ HM Treasury (2025). UK Infrastructure: A 10 Year Strategy, Available at: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-infrastructure-a-10-year-strategy>

It is anticipated that the Submission Local Plan will be submitted for examination in 2026.

Colchester Local Plan Section 1 (2021)

The Colchester Borough Local Plan Section 1²⁴¹ was formally adopted in 2021 and sets out the policies for development covering the plan period between 2013 and 2033. The Local Plan was prepared by the strategic partnership of CCC, Braintree District Council and Tendring District Council, collectively known as the North Essex Authorities, in line with the NPPF principles of achieving sustainable development and supporting housing and economic growth across the authority areas.

Colchester Local Plan Section 2 (2022)

The Colchester Borough Local Plan Section 2²⁴² was formally adopted in 2022. In response to challenges facing the borough relating to population growth and change, evolving economic trends and need for more sustainable transportation, it sets out the policy framework, site allocations and development management policies for the local authority area over the period to 2033.

'Policy SG2 Housing Delivery' reiterates the local planning authority will plan, monitor and manage the delivery of 14,270 new homes between 2017 and 2033, retaining the 920 per annum housing target set out in Local Plan Section 1.

'Policy SG3: Economic Growth Provision' recognises the importance of supply of employment land to support job opportunities and economic growth and therefore allocated 32 ha of land for this purpose.

With specific reference to infrastructure provision, 'Policy SG7 Infrastructure Delivery and Impact Mitigation' states that *'all new development should be supported by, and have good access to, all necessary infrastructure'*.

Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document (2025)

The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document²⁴³ was adopted in May/June of 2025 and sets out the key planning policies specific to the development of a new garden community. It details the requirements of developers and well as the ways in which required infrastructure to support growth will be delivered.

B.3 Baseline profile of Colchester

Location and population

The local authority area of Colchester is located in the county of Essex in the East of England region. The main settlements of the local authority area are Colchester City, along with Wivenhoe, Tiptree, West Mersea and a number of other smaller settlements and villages. The local authority area covers an area of approximately 33,233 ha, of which 3,550 (10.7%) is in developed use and 29,625 ha (89.1%) is in non-developed use²⁴⁴.

At the time of the most recent Census in 2021²⁴⁵, the population of Colchester was 192,074, compared to a population of 173,074 in 2011²⁴⁶, reflecting growth of 11.3% (+19,641) over a ten-year period. The population growth rate over this period was higher than recorded in the East of England region (+8.3%) and across England (+6.6%).

The age profile of Colchester's residents is slightly younger when compared to the regional and national comparators. Around 17.8% of residents of Colchester are aged 65 or over, compared to 19.6% of residents of the East of England region and 18.4% of residents across England more widely²⁴⁷. The population of Colchester is nonetheless ageing. 15.8% of residents were aged over 65

²⁴¹ Colchester Borough Council, (2021); Colchester Borough Council Local Plan 2013 – 2033: Section 1.

²⁴² Colchester Borough Council, (2021); Colchester City Council Local Plan 2013 – 2033: Section 1.

²⁴³ Colchester City Council/Tendring District Council/Essex County Council, (2025); Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community Development Plan Document (DPD).

²⁴⁴ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, (2022); Land use in England, 2022.

²⁴⁵ Office for National Statistics, (2022); Census 2021.

²⁴⁶ Office for National Statistics, (2012); Census 2011.

²⁴⁷ Office for National Statistics, (2022); Census 2021.

in 2011 compared to 17.8% in 2021 reflecting an increase from 27,308 such residents to 34,312 (+7,004 people).

Workforce

In 2025, there were 100,500 economically active working age residents in Colchester, reflecting an economic activity rate for this age cohort of 80.5%. This was lower than the equivalent rate for the East of England region (81.8%) but higher than across England (79.5%)²⁴⁸.

According to latest available data, 41.2% of working age residents in Colchester have achieved a RQF4+ level qualification, which is lower than the East of England region (43.4%) and notably lower than England (47.1%).

Business Register and Employment Survey (BRES) data²⁴⁹ indicates that there were 87,000 employees in Colchester in 2024, compared to 81,450 in 2015, reflecting growth of around 6.8% (+5,550). This growth in number of employees was more subdued than exhibited across the East of England region (+10.6%) and nationally (+10.3% for England). A large proportion of employment is contributed by the health (19%), education (14%) and retail (9%) broad industrial groups. This is shown, along with a breakdown of the change in number of employees between 2015 and 2024 by broad industrial group, in Table B- 1.

Table B- 1 Employees in Colchester by broad industrial group (2015 – 2024)

Broad industrial group	2015	2022	Change (no.)	Change (%)
Agriculture, forestry & fishing (A)	450	600	150	33.3
Mining, quarrying & utilities (B,D and E)	1,000	1,000	0	0.0
Manufacturing (C)	4,000	4,000	0	0.0
Construction (F)	4,000	4,500	500	12.5
Motor trades (Part G)	2,500	2,000	-500	-20.0
Wholesale (Part G)	2,500	3,000	500	20.0
Retail (Part G)	10,000	8,000	-2,000	-20.0
Transport & storage (inc postal) (H)	2,000	2,250	250	12.5
Accommodation & food services (I)	6,000	6,000	0	0.0
Information & communication (J)	3,500	1,750	-1,750	-50.0
Financial & insurance (K)	1,750	2,000	250	14.3
Property (L)	1,500	3,000	1,500	100.0
Professional, scientific & technical (M)	6,000	6,000	0	0.0
Business administration & support services (N)	6,000	7,000	1,00	16.7
Public administration & defence (O)	2,250	2,500	250	11.1
Education (P)	9,000	12,000	3,000	33.3
Health (Q)	15,000	16,000	1,000	6.7
Arts, entertainment, recreation & other services (R,S,T and U)	4,000	4,000	0	0.0
Total	81,450	85,600	4,150	5.1

Source: Office for National Statistics, (2023); Business Register and Employment Survey 2022. Office for National Statistics, (2016); Business Register and Employment Survey 2015.

²⁴⁸ Office for National Statistics, (2024); Annual Population Survey: January – December 2025.

²⁴⁹ Office for National Statistics, (2023); Business Register and Employment Survey 2022.

Deprivation

In 2025, Colchester was ranked as the 168th most deprived local authority, out of 296 in England²⁵⁰. Only 2% of Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs)²⁵¹ in Colchester were ranked within the 10% most deprived nationally. The incidence of deprivation is spatially variable, with the most deprived areas in Colchester often being located in close proximity to the least deprived areas.

The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government also publishes data breaking down the overall index of deprivation into a number of domains. The proportion of LSOAs within Colchester ranked within each national decile by domain is shown in Table B- 2. With regard to deprivation, it is observed that there is a high proportion of LSOAs ranked amongst the least deprived deciles within the 'living environment' domain, which measures the quality of both the indoor and outdoor environment.

Table B- 2 Domains of deprivation in Colchester (2025)

Decile

	Overall index	Income	Employment	Education, skills and training	Health	Crime	Barriers to housing and services	Living environment
0 – 10% (most deprived)	2%	3%	2%	7%	5%	9%	3%	3%
10 – 20%	15%	4%	5%	5%	10%	15%	15%	6%
20 – 30%	9%	11%	11%	8%	8%	9%	14%	6%
30 – 40%	14%	15%	11%	13%	10%	13%	11%	7%
40 – 50%	5%	10%	19%	10%	15%	8%	15%	9%
50 – 60%	15%	14%	12%	12%	15%	8%	15%	6%
60 – 70%	17%	9%	19%	19%	16%	9%	8%	15%
70 – 80%	15%	15%	13%	11%	10%	14%	9%	20%
80 – 90%	10%	15%	8%	9%	8%	11%	9%	17%
90 – 100% (least deprived)	6%	6%	10%	6%	2%	4%	2%	11%

Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, (2025); Indices of deprivation.

Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding.

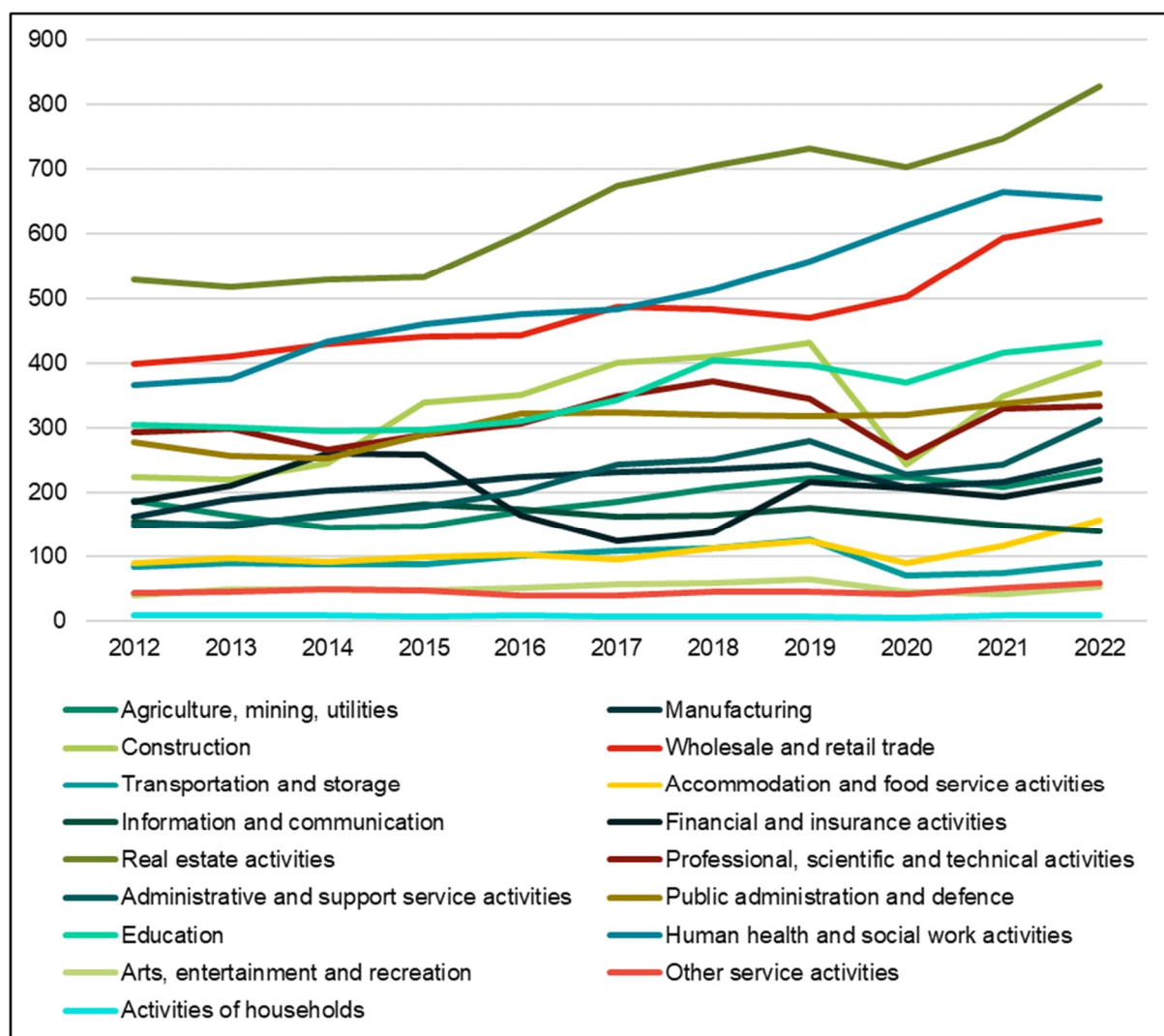
Economic outlook

In terms of Gross Value Added (GVA), the economy of Colchester grew from £3,494 million to £5,141 million between 2012 and 2022 (+47%). In absolute terms, the sectors which recorded the largest GVA growth were the real estate (+ £299 million), human health (+£290 million), and wholesale and retail trades (+£223 million). Proportionally, the administration (+110%), construction (+79%) and human health (+79%) sectors recorded the greatest growth in GVA over the same period. Figure B- 1 shows the trend in GVA by sector for the period between 2012 and 2022.

²⁵⁰ Lower Super Output Areas (LSOAs) are small geographical units with broadly consistent population sizes to allow comparison in the reporting of statistics.

²⁵¹ Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, (2025); Indices of deprivation.

Figure B- 1 GVA by sector (£ millions, 2012 – 2022)



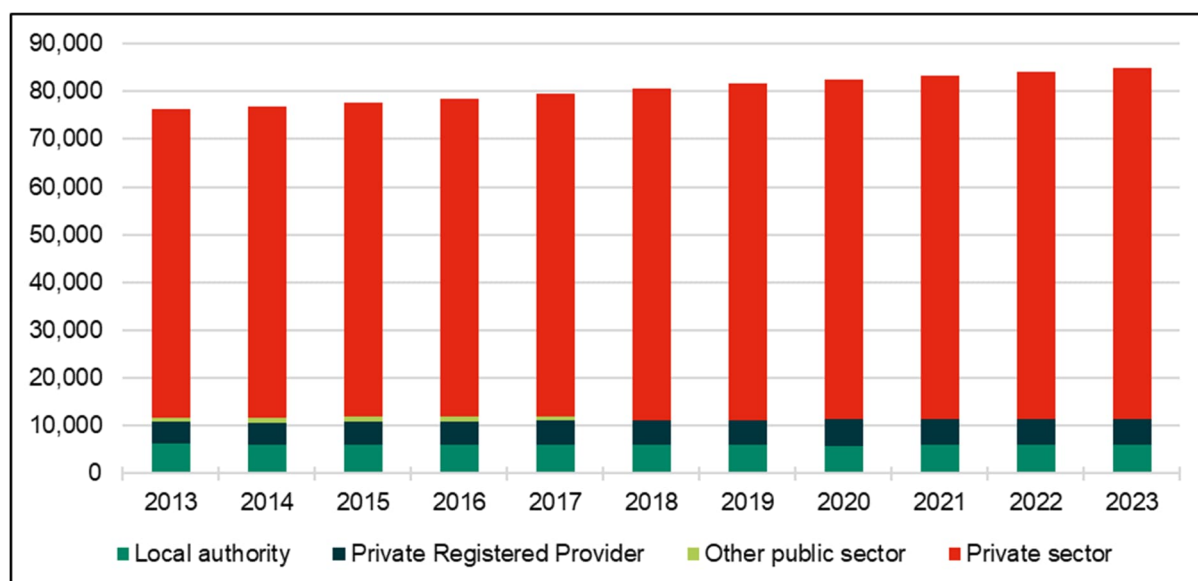
Source: Office for National Statistics, (2024); Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: local authorities by ITL1 region. Table 3: Regional gross value added (balanced) by industry: local authorities by ITL1 region: TLH East, current prices, pounds million.

Housing

It is estimated that in 2023, there were approximately 84,917 dwellings in Colchester, of which 73,481 were private sector tenure (87%), 5,934 were local authority tenure (7%), 5,490 were Private Registered Provider tenure (6%) and around 12 were other public sector tenure (<0.1%)²⁵². The overall stock of dwellings has increased over the period between 2013 and 2023, as shown in Figure B- 2.

²⁵² Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, (2024); Live tables of dwelling stock (including vacants). Table 100: number of dwellings by tenure and district, England.

Figure B- 2 Total dwelling stock in Colchester, by tenure



Source: Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, (2024); Live tables of dwelling stock (including vacants).
Table 100: number of dwellings by tenure and district, England.

B.4 Summary

The policy framework relevant to population and economic growth in Colchester over the existing and emerging Local Plan periods emphasises the importance of ensuring the appropriate infrastructure is in place to meet the needs of current and future communities. This IADP is therefore set against the context of positively planning for growth in line with the historic achievement of housing delivery targets, and policy aspirations to deliver against future housing needs.

The population of Colchester is growing and ageing, which in turn creates demand for housing and physical and social infrastructure. The economic activity rate is below the regional comparison, and some pockets of deprivation exist, although these are limited in spatial extent. The economy of Colchester is growing and there are good levels of educational attainment. Promoting sustainable communities in line with population growth will involve ensuring sufficient amounts of housing and employment opportunities are in place, and that communities are well-connected.

Appendix C Prioritisation Framework

C.1 Approach to prioritisation

The IADP has included the formulation of a prioritisation framework which sets out at a high level the priority of different infrastructure types where funding and delivery constraints arise.

The prioritisation framework can be used by CCC at a strategic level to inform stakeholder discussions relating to investment priorities, and its approach to funding opportunities which may arise. The framework can also be used by CCC to inform decision making at a site-specific level, although it should be noted that infrastructure requirement priorities for individual sites will be negotiated on a case-by-case basis, depending on the characteristics of the site and the circumstances when it comes forward.

The following priority categories have been devised:

- Category A - Essential: this infrastructure is typically a 'showstopper' to growth if not provided, i.e. development can't happen without it. Delivery of this infrastructure is required to 'unlock' a site and to allow development to commence.
- Category B - Important: this infrastructure is required before the site can be fully occupied by residents or businesses. The absence of this infrastructure may not be a blocker for development in the short term, but without adequate provision of this infrastructure occupation of the site will be delayed and / or limited.
- Category C – Supports sustainable development: this infrastructure will support development to be fully sustainable in the long term, promoting the health and well-being of the population and a high-quality environment.

Each infrastructure sub-topic within the IADP has been assigned a priority category as set out in Table C- 1.

Table C- 1 Infrastructure sub-topics by priority category

A – Essential	B – Important	C – Supports sustainable development
Electricity	Primary education	Early years
Roads	Secondary education	Higher education
Potable water	Further education	Adult education
Waste water	SEND	Playspace
Flood defences	Indoor and outdoor sports and leisure	Youth facilities
Surface water management	Playing pitches	Community facilities
Primary healthcare	Open spaces	Cultural and civic facilities
Acute healthcare	Green infrastructure	Renewable and low carbon
Mental healthcare	Police	
	Ambulance	
	Fire & rescue	
	Adult social care	
	Children's care facilities	
	Active Travel	
	Bus	
	Rail	

A – Essential	B – Important	C – Supports sustainable development
	EVs	
	Gas	
	Telecommunications & digital	
	Waste and resource management	

It is important to note that while this approach provides a starting point for analysis, there is potential to move individual projects between categories depending on the individual circumstances of that project, as well as the potential to order projects within the same category. Considerations when moving projects between categories might include:

- Relevant priorities from government, stakeholders, members and residents.
- Nature, importance and progress of growth site if supporting one.
- Urgency of any existing shortfall.
- Funding availability, including some government commitment or priority.
- Individual project's value for money and efficiency in tackling a priority issue.
- Strategic contribution towards growing the Colchester's reputation and significance.

C.2 Prioritisation outcomes

The framework has been applied to the Project Schedule. Each infrastructure project has been assigned a priority category according to its sub-topic, as shown in Table C- 2. CCC then undertook a project-by-project assessment of the Project Schedule, resulting in some limited movement of projects between categories.

Figure C- 1 below provides an understanding of how projects and costs are currently distributed across the different priority categories. It shows that Priority B accounts for the greatest number of projects, and the greatest proportion of the total infrastructure cost.

Table C- 2 Number of Projects by Priority Category

Priority Category	Number of Projects
A – Essential	50
B – Important	97
C – Required for Sustainable Development	17
Total	164

Figure C- 1 Total Cost and Net Cost by Priority Category

