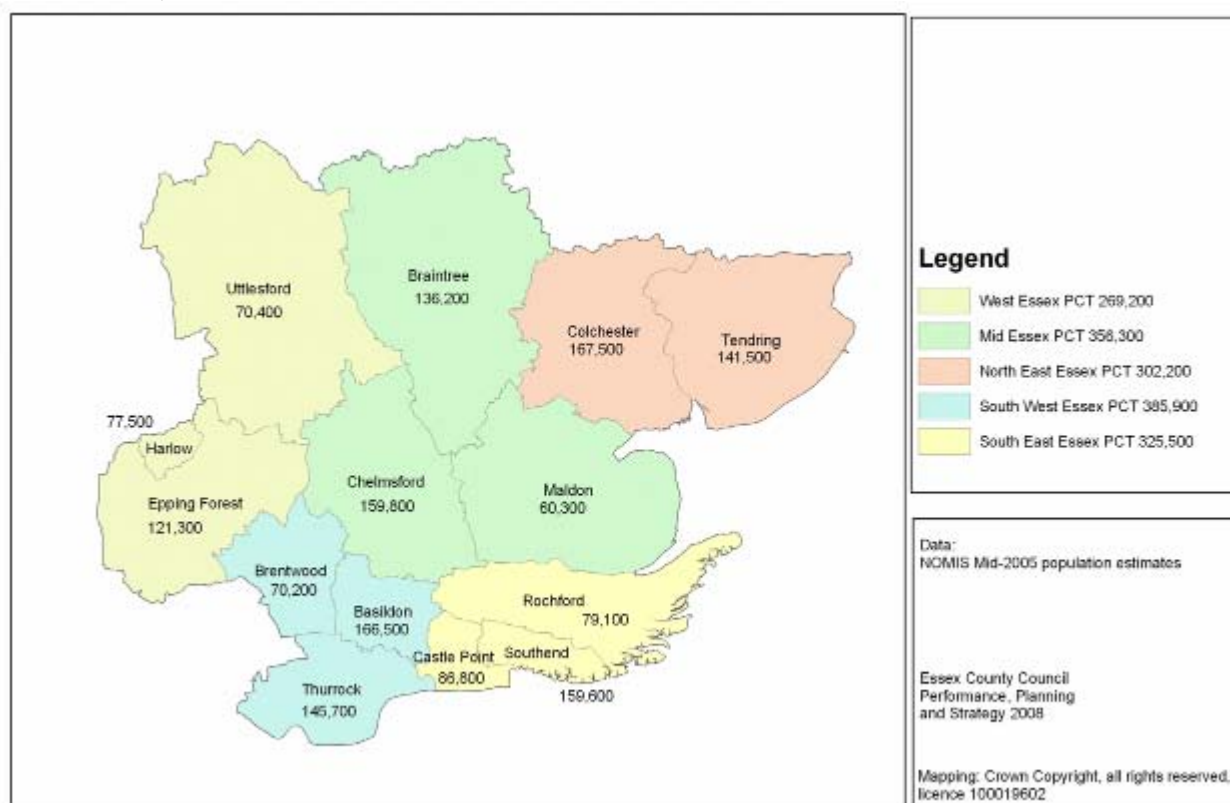


CHAPTER 1: GEOGRAPHY AND DEMOGRAPHICS

Essex³ has a population of around 1.66m, residing in its twelve district and borough councils and the two unitary authorities of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock (ONS 2005 MYE, revised). It is the sixth most populous county in England with the second-largest population of any non-metropolitan county after Kent, making up a quarter of the population of the East of England region. The biggest towns in Essex are Chelmsford, Colchester and the seaside town of Southend. In October 2006, there were mergers of primary care trusts leaving the county with five PCTs (Figure 1.1).

Figure 1.1: Population of Essex



1.1 Structure of the Population

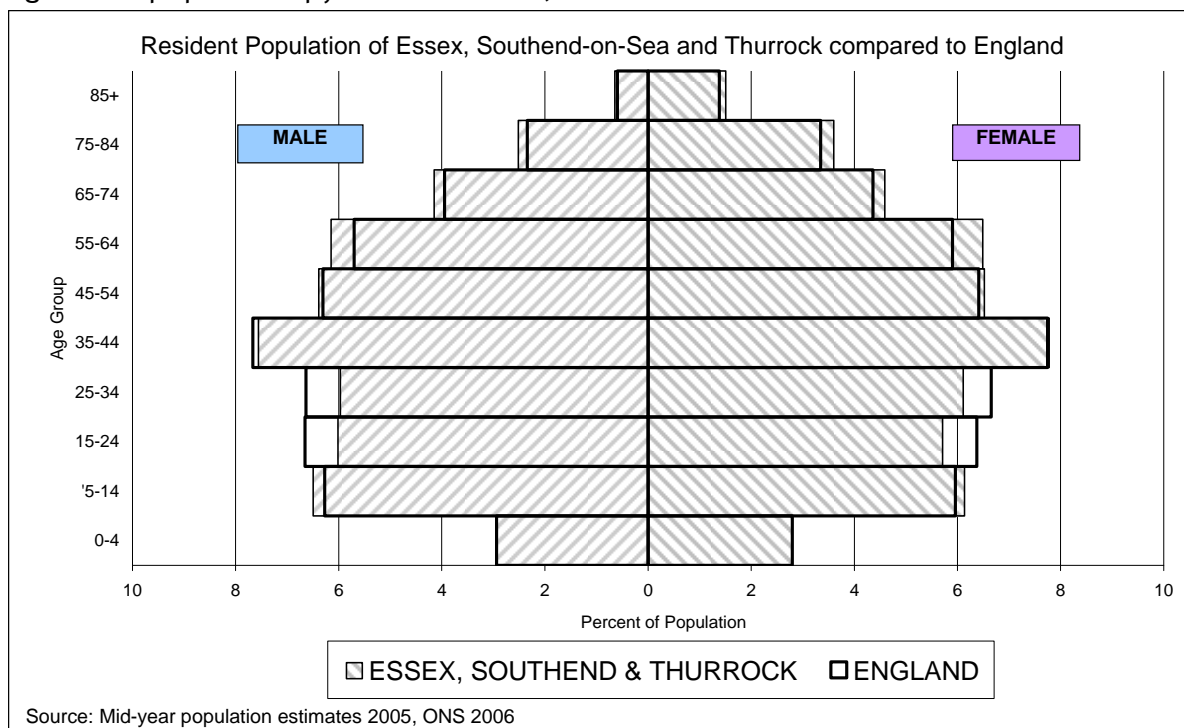
Essex has a different population structure to that of England as a whole; it has proportionally more children and older aged people. There is a similar proportion of u5s but there are marginally more 5-14 year olds in Essex. There are fewer 15-34 year olds than in England, which may reflect the movement of this portion of the population to other areas. The relative size of the 34-44 age group is similar to England, but all older age groups are larger in Essex.

³ Throughout this document Essex is used to refer to the county of Essex, which includes the unitary authorities of Southend-on-Sea and Thurrock. Where information only applies to the county council locality, the term ECC is used.

Tendring has the highest proportion of older people⁴ in the East of England, with 1 in 3 residents over the age of 65. Within this district are the seaside towns of Clacton-on-Sea and Frinton-on-Sea. Castle Point also has a relatively older population where almost 1 in 4 of the population is aged 65+. Thurrock has a much younger population with only 1 in 7 people aged 65+ and 21% children (aged 0-15).

As indicated in the chart below, males slightly outnumber females up until the age of 30. Of the population aged 65+ around 56% are women and by the age of 85+ this figure has increased to over 68%. These differences are largely due to consistent patterns of longer life expectancy in women. They are expected to continue but to decrease substantially in the long-term.

Figure 1.2: population pyramid for Essex, 2006



Essex has a working age population of 825,800, making up 60.7% of the total population, similar to the composition of the Eastern region (61.2%) and just under the working age composition of Great Britain (62.2%).

1.2 Projected Population Changes

Essex is home to a number of ‘growth areas’, identified for regeneration and growth:

- Thames Gateway South Essex (incorporating Basildon, Castle Point, Rochford, Southend and Thurrock)
- M11 Corridor (including Braintree, Epping Forest, Harlow and Uttlesford)
- Haven Gateway (including Colchester and Tendring).

The number of additional homes required within sub-regional development areas is shown in the following table.

⁴ Older people are males 65 and over and females over the age of 60.

Figure 1.3: Essex allocations for minimum dwelling provision, 2001-2021

	Total to build
Maldon	2,400
Brentwood	3,500
Epping Forest	3,500
Castle Point	4,000
Rochford	4,600
Southend	6,000
Braintree	7,700
Uttlesford	8,000
Tendring	8,500
Basildon	10,700
Chelmsford	16,000
Harlow	16,000
Colchester	17,100
Thurrock	18,500
TOTAL	126,500

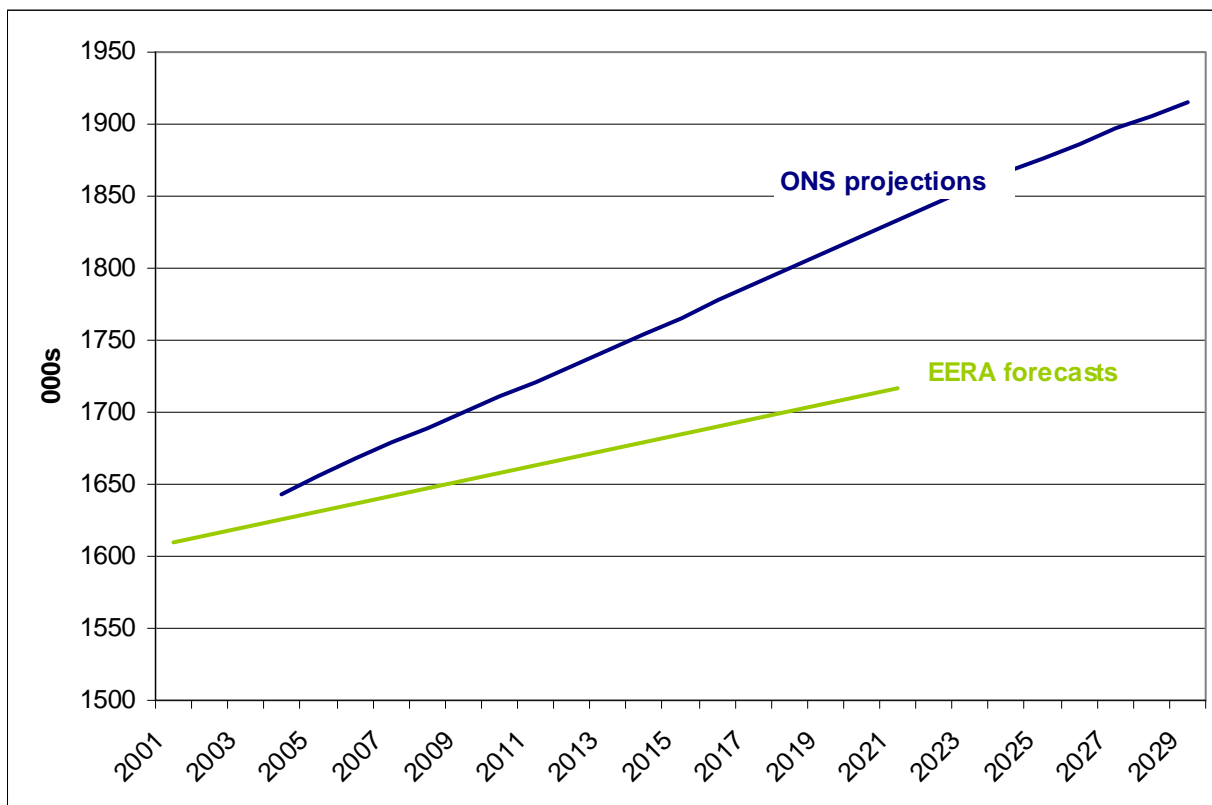
Source: Secretary of State's proposed changes to the Regional Spatial Strategy, policy H1 (Dec 2006)

Population forecasts developed for the East of England Regional Assembly (EERA) by the Population and Housing Research Group at Anglia Ruskin University (Dec 2006) taking into account the Secretary of State's proposed changes to the Regional Spatial Strategy forecast an increase in the population across Essex of 6.5% between 2001 and 2021. In Thurrock where the most additional homes are required, the population is forecast to increase by 16% over the same timeframe.

As shown in Figure 1.4, these forecasts differ significantly from the ONS population projections. There are complex methodological reasons for this but, simply, the ONS projections assume continuation of recent trends in births, deaths and migration but do not take into account any future policy changes. The EERA population forecasts show the future population arising from the Regional Spatial Strategy policy to build the minimum number of dwellings shown in Figure 1.3 above.

ONS data shows that, over the last 10 years, the Essex population has grown at an average rate of 0.7% per year and is projected to grow to over 1.9 million (14% increase) by 2029.

Figure 1.4: Essex growth in population



Source: ONS SNPP 2007; EERA forecast 2006

While new housing will lead to considerable population growth, population ageing will also be an important demographic trend over coming years. In general, people are living longer and therefore there are increasing numbers and proportions of older people. Population ageing in Essex is predicted to occur at a higher rate than nationally but, according to the 2001-2021 EERA forecasts, there are some significant differences in expected population structures between areas. The highlights are summarised below.

u5 population	Across Essex this population is expected to decrease by nearly 5%, but potentially by as much as a fifth in Braintree, Maldon and Tendring. A significant increase is expected in Harlow.
5-15 year olds	Across Essex this population is expected to decrease by over 10%, but potentially by as much as a fifth in Braintree, Maldon and Tendring.
Working age population	Across Essex this population is expected to stay about the same but a significant increase is expected in Harlow.
Aged 65+	Across Essex this population is expected to increase by 45%. Expected increases are significantly lower for Southend and Epping Forest and highest in Maldon and Uttlesford.
Aged 85+	Across Essex this population is expected to increase by over 75%. The expected increase is significantly lower for Southend whereas populations are expected to at least double in Rochford, Castle Point, Harlow, Basildon, Brentwood, Maldon and Uttlesford.
Total population	Across Essex the population is expected to increase by 6.5%. The most significant increase is expected in Harlow.

As mentioned above, it is expected that the over-representation of women in older age groups will decrease in the long-term. For example, among those aged 85+, it is estimated that the proportion of women will decrease from 68% in 2008 to 61% in 2025.

1.2.1 Balance of population

With these changes, the balance between those of working age and the ‘dependent’ population is likely to shift, changing the proportion of economically active people in relation to the proportion supported by the state. As with much of the UK, the ratio of older people to those of working age across Essex is forecast to drop in all districts / boroughs – in many areas by over a third. The following table shows the number of people aged 15-64 per person aged over 65 and illustrates the demographic shift forecast to occur. This needs to inform workforce planning because less people of working age will be available to care for and support older people.

Figure 1.5: Number of people aged 15-64 per person aged over 65

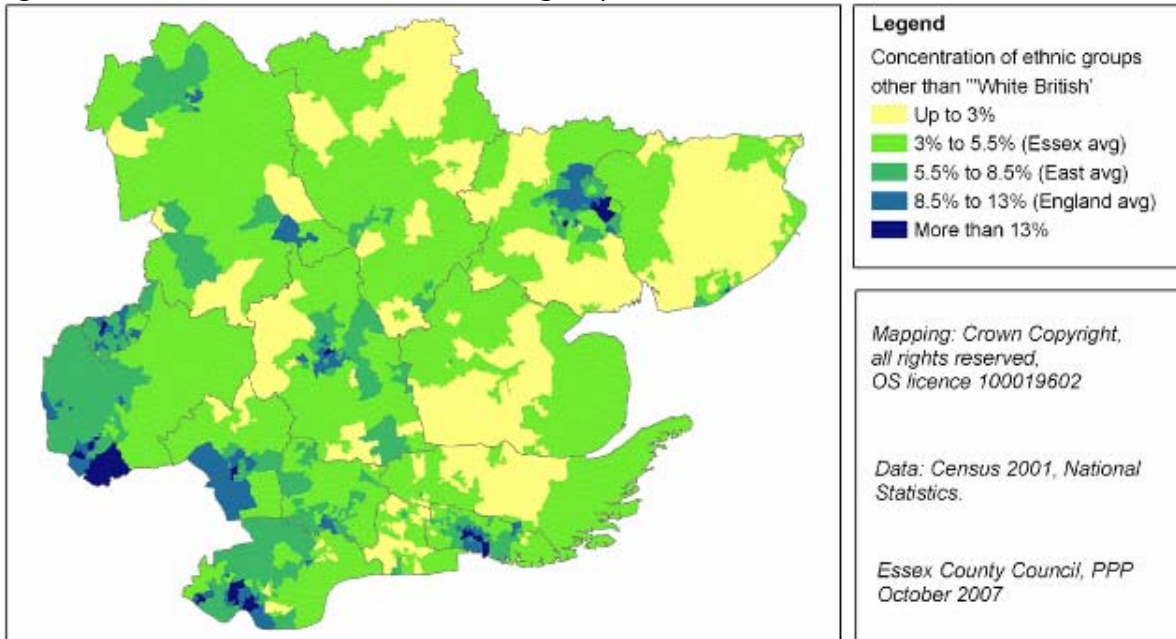
	2004	2029	% change
<i>Essex</i>	<i>3.83</i>	<i>2.56</i>	<i>33.1</i>
Brentwood	3.44	2.77	19.5
Harlow	4.37	3.42	21.6
Epping Forest	3.81	2.91	23.8
Southend	3.33	2.38	28.6
Tendring	2.21	1.54	30.5
Basildon	4.35	3.00	31.0
Colchester	4.57	3.12	31.7
Thurrock	5.14	3.44	33.2
Chelmsford	4.45	2.92	34.3
Rochford	3.44	2.18	36.5
Braintree	4.34	2.64	39.2
Uttlesford	4.11	2.33	43.3
Castle Point	3.52	1.97	44.0
Maldon	3.96	2.12	46.4

Source: ONS SNPP, 2004

1.3 Ethnic Breakdown

According to the Census, Essex has 72,000 residents from black and minority ethnic (BME) groups. There are 38,000 residents from ethnic groups other than white and 34,000 from white minority groups. People from all BME groups made up 5.5% of Essex residents - across England, 13.0% of people belonged to BME groups. People from ethnic groups other than white made up 2.9% of Essex residents. Three times as many people across England were from these groups (9.1%). White minority groups contained 2.6% of the Essex population compared to 3.9% across England.

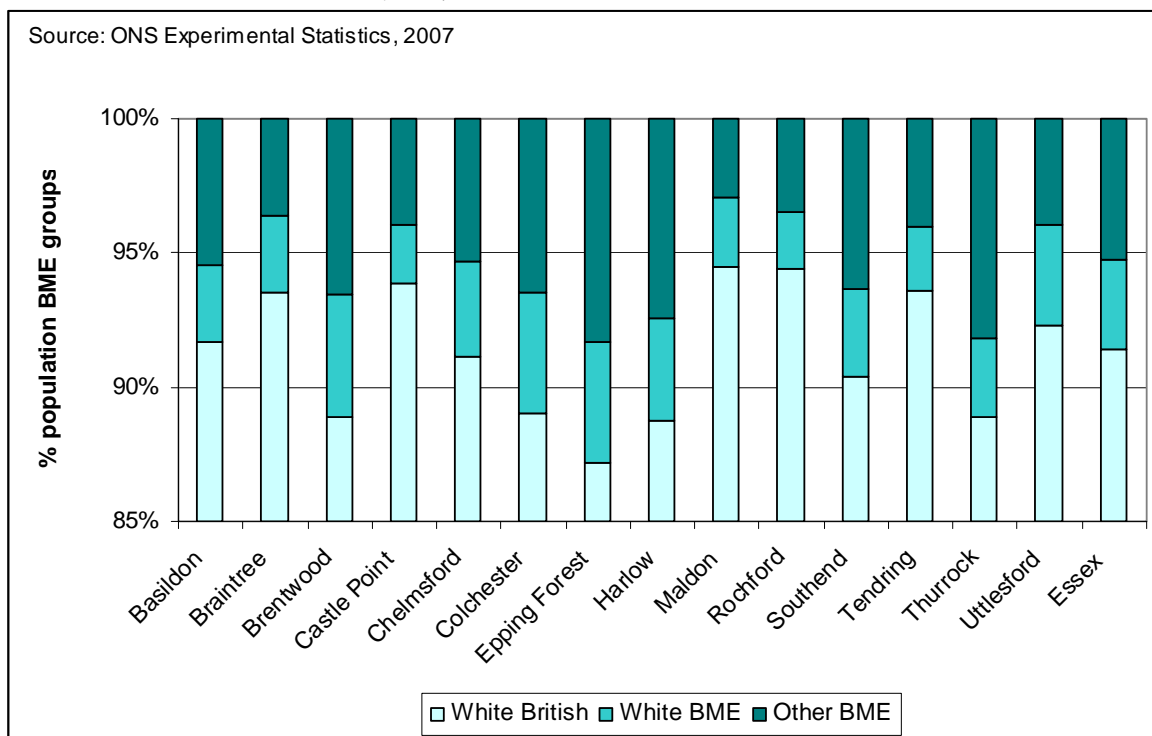
Figure 1.6: Essex concentrations of BME groups



1.3.1 Growth in diversity

It should be noted that the Census information dates back to 2001. ONS has produced experimental statistics on ethnicity although it is not clear the extent to which new growth is reflected. The following chart shows that Essex has become more diverse with the areas closest to London and those containing the largest towns tending to have the highest concentrations of people from BME groups. For example, the proportion of BME residents in Thurrock has risen from 7.2% at the time of Census to 11.1% in 2005. The highest proportions of people from all BME groups are residing in Epping Forest, Harlow and Brentwood.

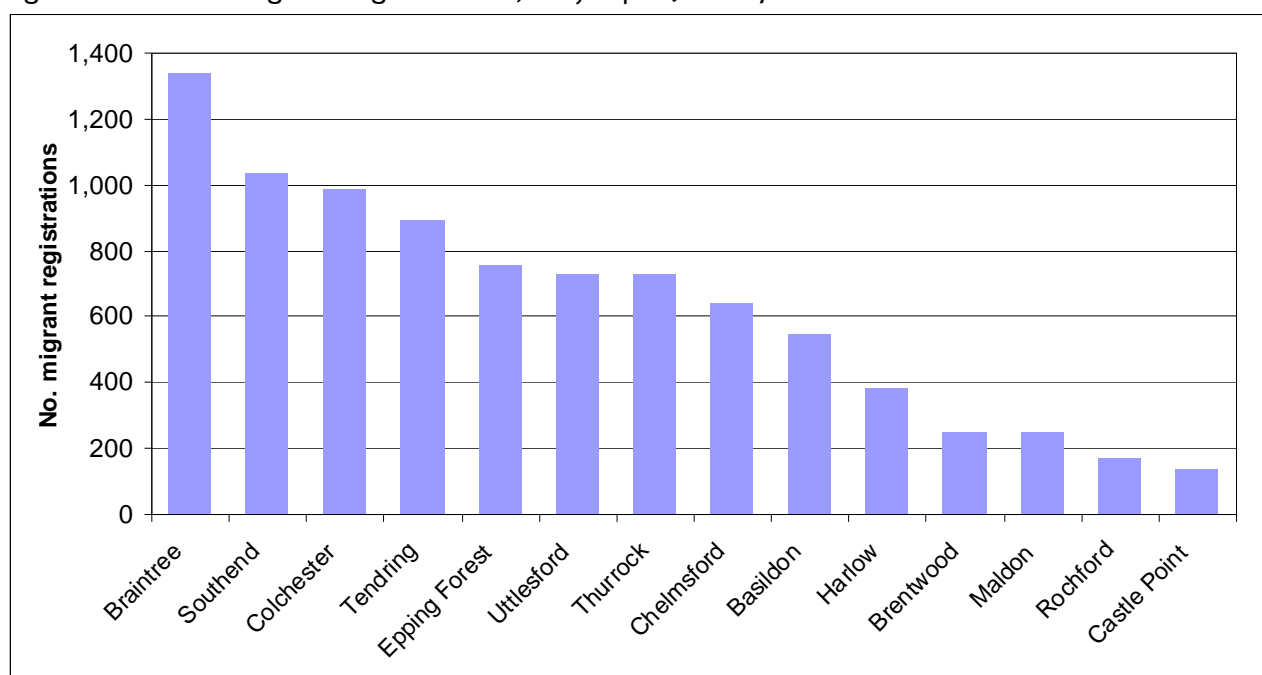
Figure 1.7: Essex ethnic groups by district / borough, 2007



1.3.2 Economic migration

The advent of economic migration associated with the expansion of the European Union has led to significant inward migration from the ‘A8 countries’⁵ into Essex. A cumulative total of 8,855 migrants registered to work in Essex between May-04 and Jun-07⁶. This represents 1.5% of the cumulative total for the UK as a whole – half what we would expect had the migrant population been dispersed in line with the overall resident population. Figure 1.8 shows the number of migrant registrations per district / borough and percentage of ECC total accounted for by each. Migrants tend to be young adults aged 18-34 and two thirds are Polish migrants. There are variations between areas: relatively high proportions of Czech workers in Chelmsford and Rochford; Slovakian workers in Chelmsford, Harlow and Basildon; Lithuanian workers in Castle Point and Tendring; and Latvian workers in Tendring.

Figure 1.8: Essex migrant registrations, May 04 to June 07



1.3.3 Travelling families

The travelling community includes Romany gypsies, Irish travellers and new travellers. In England & Wales, 91% of local authorities have travellers either living within them or passing through. Most of the travelling community live in caravans on sites that are either local authority managed or on private sites. A small proportion lives in caravans on unauthorised sites.

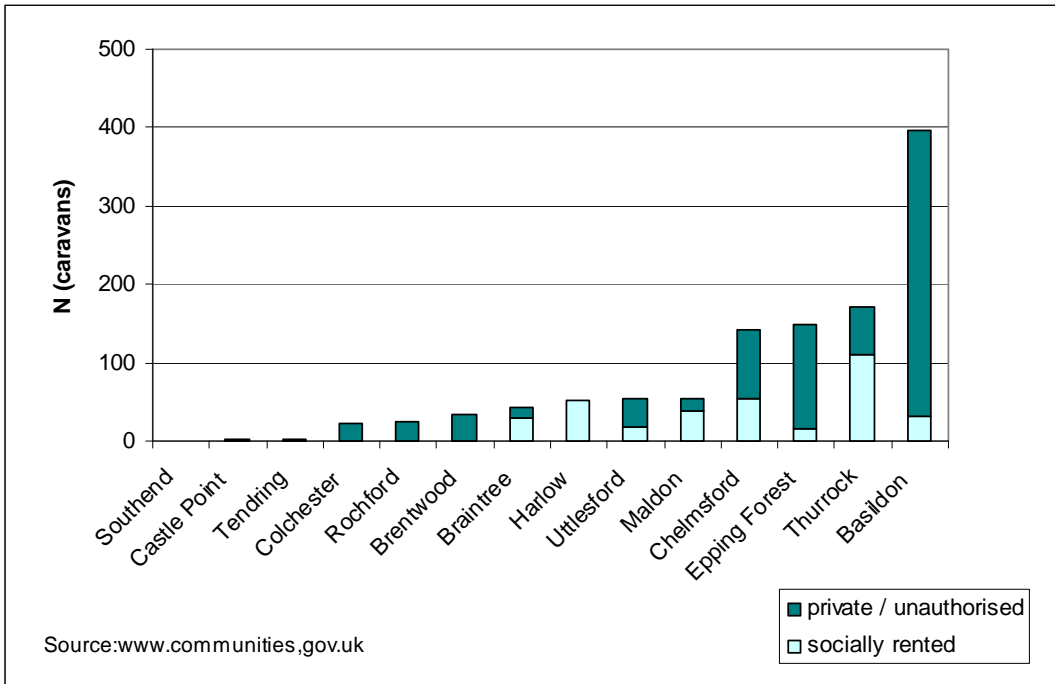
Gypsies and travellers have long featured in Essex. There are eleven registered sites, all of which are residential rather than transient. This affords a total of 228 pitches and capacity for 433 caravans. There are nearly 800 additional caravans on private / unauthorised sites across the county. Of all the counties in the East of England region, only Cambridgeshire has a larger caravan count but Essex hosts over a third of the region’s unauthorised developments. As can be seen from the chart below, 35% of the total number of caravans in Essex is in Basildon. Despite socially rented caravans only amounting to 9% of the total, Basildon is home to 40%

⁵ Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Poland, Slovakia and Slovenia

⁶ Figures are indicative and not national statistics

of private caravans and over 50% of caravans on unauthorised sites, the vast majority of which are classed as ‘not tolerated’.

Figure 1.9: Caravans at registered and unregistered sites in Essex, Jan 07



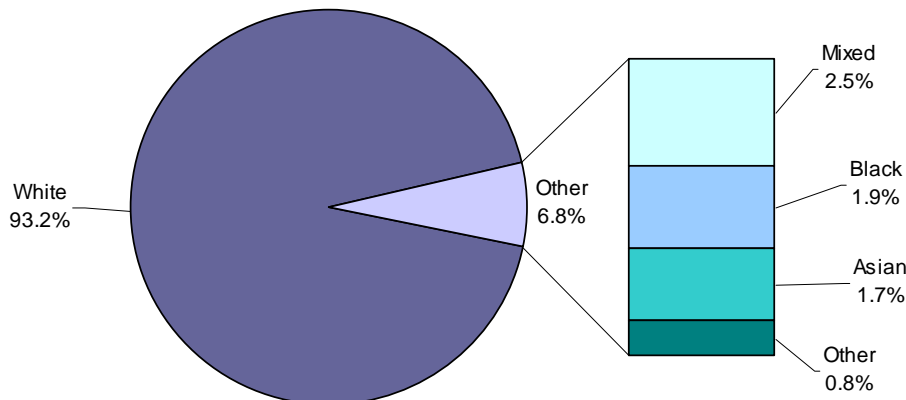
Life expectancy in the gypsy/traveller population tends to be below that of the general population with the literature highlighting high smoking prevalence and levels of coronary heart disease.

1.3.4 Younger residents

Ethnicity data from our schools can tell us more about current diversity within the younger population. Across the county, 9.4% of pupils are from all black and minority ethnic groups (compared to 5.5% in 2001 Census) and 6.8% from ethnic groups not classified as white (compared to 2.9% in 2001 Census). This suggests that the population of Essex is becoming increasingly diverse.

Figure 1.10: Essex breakdown of pupil ethnicity, 2007

Source: PLASC

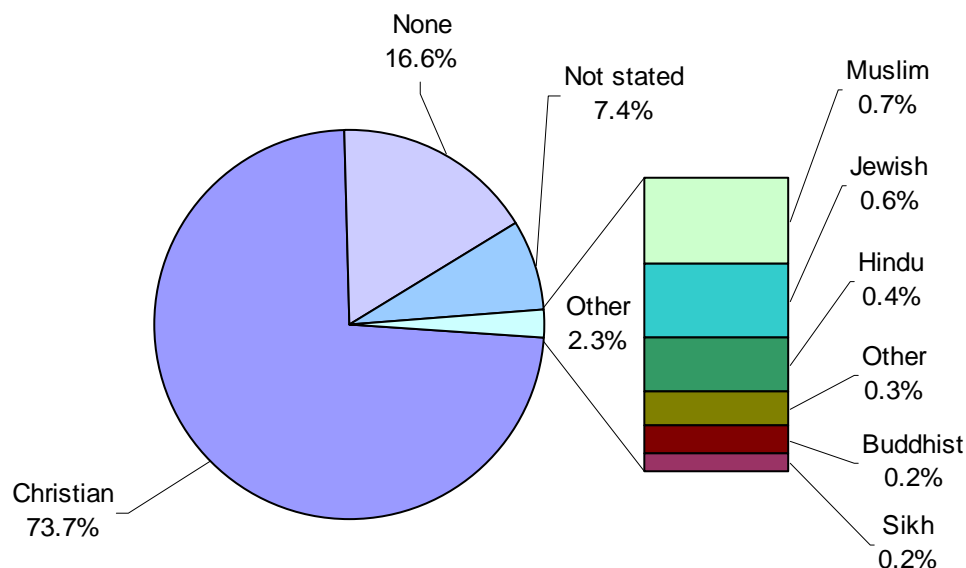


1.4 Religion

According to the 2001 Census, 74% of Essex residents are Christian and only 2.3% are of other faiths. However, as set out above, the population is growing increasingly diverse which may well have had an impact on the religious profile of the county.

Figure 1.11: Essex breakdown of religion, 2001

Source: Census



1.5 Conclusion

As a nation, our population is getting older but the older population in Essex is growing faster than average for the UK. Over the next 15 years, we can expect a 45% increase in the over-65s and a 75% increase in the over-85s.

Central government plans will also bring significant housing development to the county. Current proposals will increase the number of homes by almost a fifth.

As Essex grows, it is becoming more diverse. There is evidence to suggest that economic and inward migration is increasing the ethnic mix of our population – especially in areas close to London and our larger towns.