

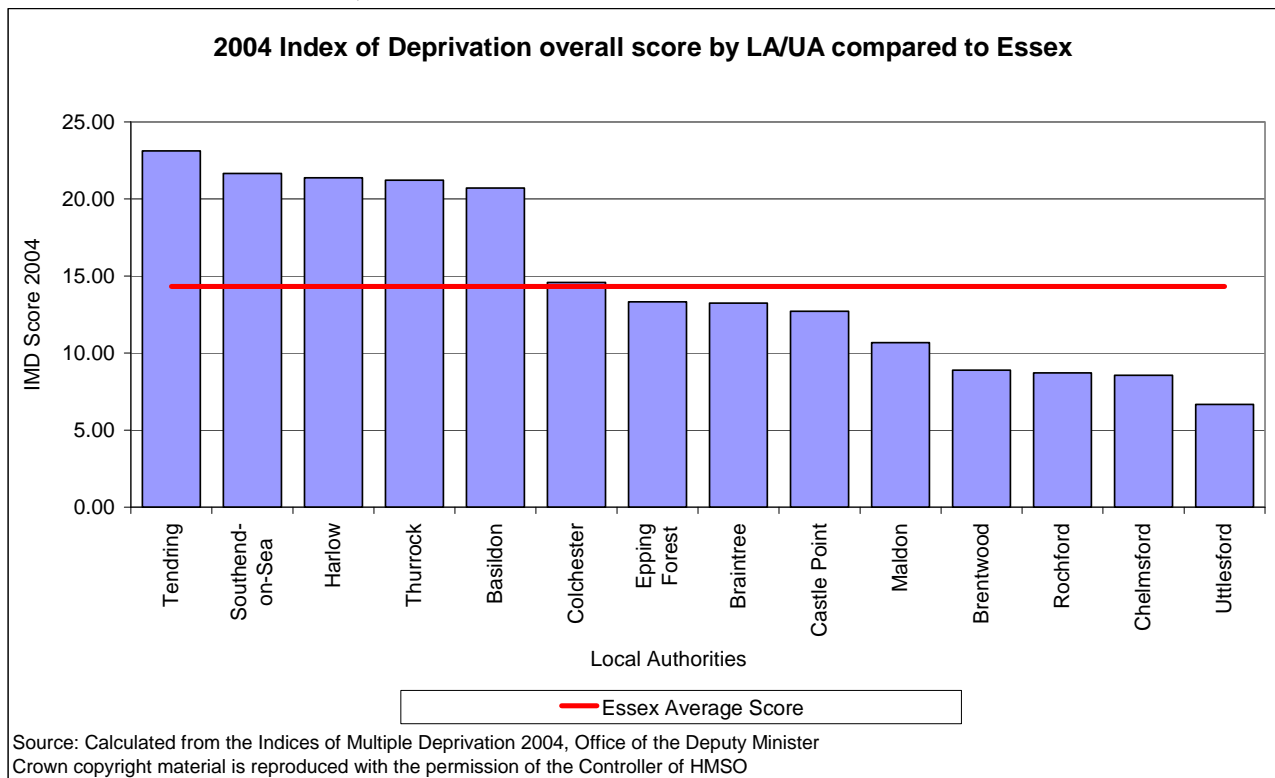
## CHAPTER 2: SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL CONTEXT

### 2.1 Deprivation

There is now good evidence to suggest that deprivation and social exclusion can impact on a number of aspects of life including employment and the economy; crime; education and skills; health; housing and the environment. One of the common measures used is the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD). IMD 2004 is a measure of multiple deprivation and comprises of seven domains denoting social or material deprivation which are combined into one index. The domains are: income; employment; health and disability; education; housing; living environment and crime. The higher the IMD score, the more deprived an area is said to be. Using the IMD 2004 score, the 354 local authorities in England are then ranked from 1 (most deprived) to 354 (least deprived).

Essex has some of the most affluent and some of the most deprived areas in the country, with Tendring and Southend being the most deprived (Figure 2.1). Many of the most deprived areas also experience the lowest levels of life expectancy.

Figure 2.1: Essex IMD 2004 scores



The IMD 2004 provides deprivation indices at sub-district level (super output area, SOA)<sup>7</sup> which can highlight small areas of deprivation otherwise masked by proximity to relative affluence. This allows pockets of deprivation to be targeted more effectively by services.

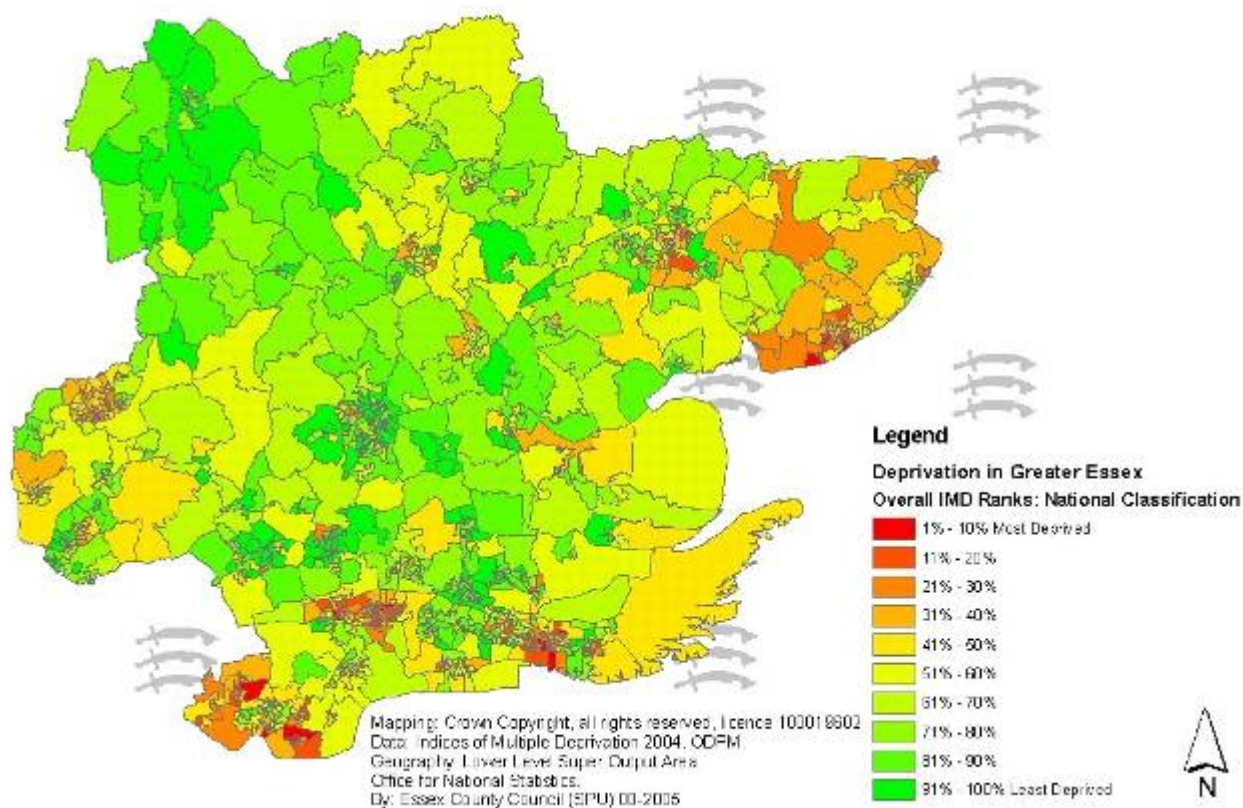
As can be seen from Figure 2.2 which shows deprivation at SOA level, areas across Essex show significant deprivation. Coastal Jaywick in Tendring is the most deprived SOA in Essex and is among the worst off 1% of areas in England. Parts of Clacton are in the 10% most deprived

<sup>7</sup> See Glossary for definition

areas nationally. Southend has pockets of high affluence and wards which suffer extreme deprivation. An estimated 45% of the borough's population lives within the 20% most deprived areas in the East of England. Although Harlow shows higher levels of deprivation relative to other areas of Essex, this is not acute when compared with the national picture – its relative position is more a case of there being no large areas of particular affluence within the district. Deprivation in Thurrock is concentrated in the west and south of the borough with three of the five areas in the 10% most deprived in England situated in Tilbury. A number of neighbourhoods around the Basildon town urban area fall within the most deprived 10% and 20% in England and Colchester's main concentrations of deprivation can be found in Colchester Town. Many areas in Chelmsford are among the least deprived in the country although north-west of the town has pockets of relative deprivation. Uttlesford is the least deprived district in Essex and one of the least deprived in the East of England. Most of the district falls within the 20% least deprived areas nationally.

Figure 2.2: Essex IMD 2004 rank by national decile group

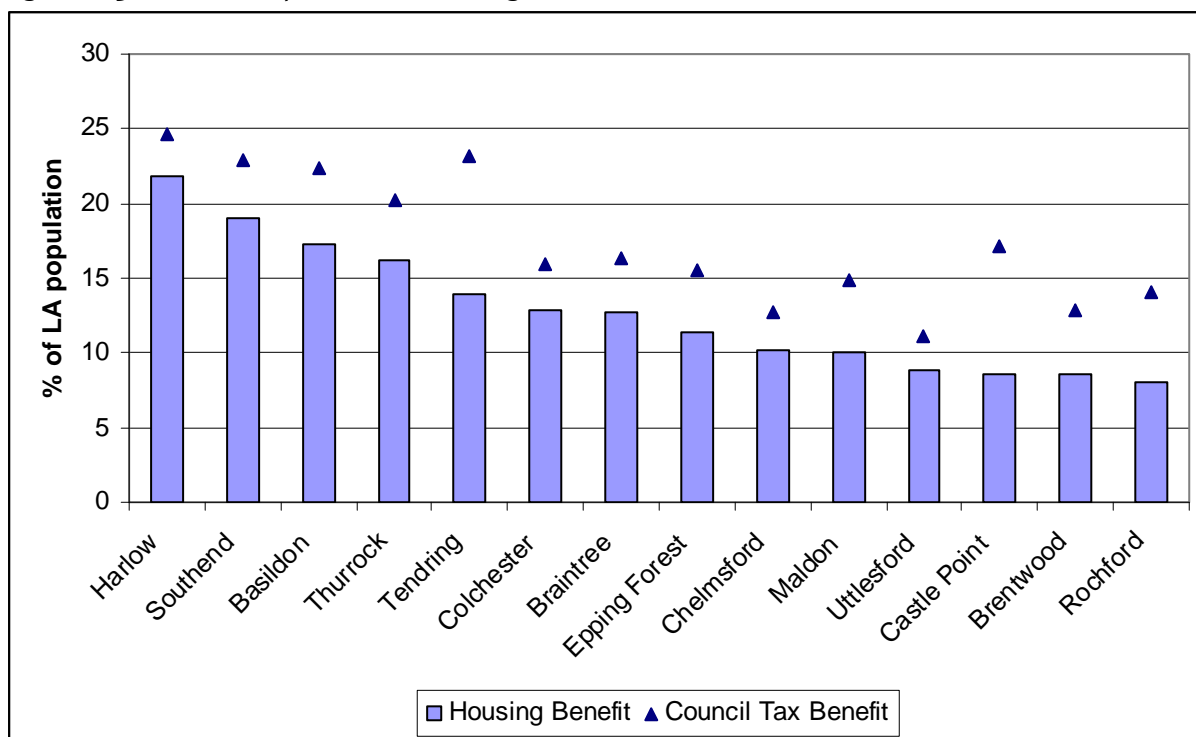
### Deprivation in Greater Essex: Overall IMD 2004 Rank by National Decile Group



## 2.2 Poverty and Social Class

Take-up of means-tested benefits can act as an indicator of income-based poverty. Harlow has the highest percentage of residents receiving both housing benefit (22%) and council tax benefit (25%). Southend and Basildon also have high proportions in receipt of these benefits. Rochford has the lowest percentage of housing benefit recipients and Uttlesford the lowest number of council tax benefit recipients.

Figure 2.3: Essex recipients of Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit



Source: DWP, February 2007

### 2.2.1 Social class

All the evidence suggests that social class inequalities – present early in life – persist throughout life and post retirement. Life expectancy at birth differs by three years for women and five for men between social classes I/II and IV/V. A number of measures can give an indication of social class including occupation and housing tenure.

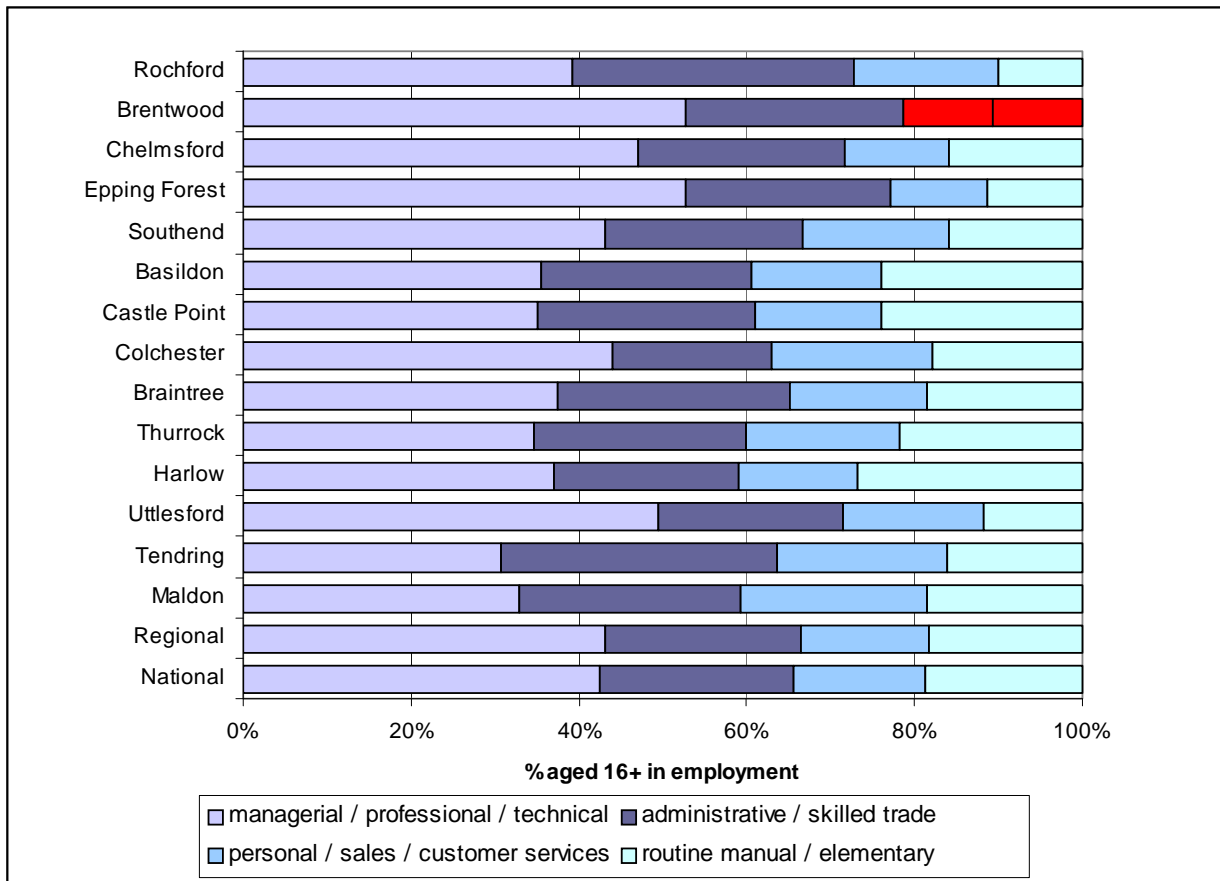
The charts below show the profile of occupation and housing tenure across Essex. Brentwood, Uttlesford and Chelmsford have a high percentage of managerial and professional workers whereas residents in Harlow, Basildon and Castle Point are more likely to be in very low-skilled occupations.

A high proportion of Essex residents own their own homes<sup>8</sup>: 75% compared to 69% across England. As detailed below, many Essex residents work in London and benefit from higher salaries, so that housing tenure is almost more an indication of commuting patterns than social class. Castle Point (with its good rail links and proximity to London) has the highest proportion of households owning their accommodation (88%) while Harlow (where more people work locally) has the lowest (60%). Basildon has the highest number of local authority dwellings and Chelmsford the highest proportion of registered social landlord stock<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> National Statistics: Census 2001

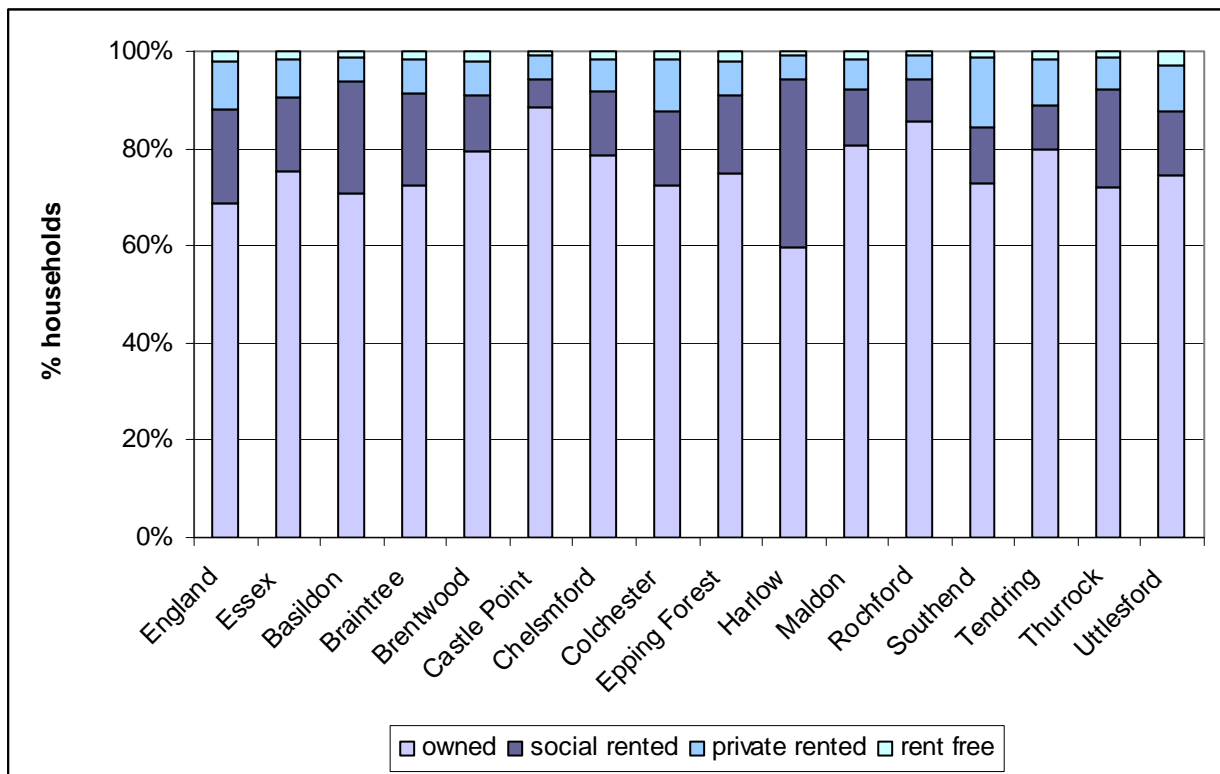
<sup>9</sup> NeSS: Dwelling Stock by Tenure and Condition, 2005

Figure 2.4: Essex occupational breakdown, 2006



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey (red indicates sample size too small for reliable estimate)

Figure 2.5: Essex housing tenure



Source: Census, 2001

## 2.3 Housing

### 2.3.1 Household composition

Household size is decreasing, which affects housing markets and the need for affordable housing. Chapter 5 considers the impact of older people living on their own but here we consider the economic and social vulnerability of lone parents. Poor outcomes are by no means inevitable for children growing up in one-parent families; outcomes depend on a range of factors, including conflict between parents, parental involvement and whether children grow up in poverty. One-parent families are less likely to own their own homes than other families, their housing is more likely to be in poor condition, they tend to live on lower incomes and are therefore more likely to face poverty, financial exclusion and debt than other families. Combining work and family is often difficult for lone parents due to lack of childcare and flexible working, poorer qualifications and the fact that work does not always provide a route out of poverty.

The number of one-parent families has grown over recent years. Figure 2.6 shows what proportion of households with dependant children are headed by a lone parent. The percentage for Essex is lower than the national figure, although there is considerable variation between areas.

Figure 2.6: Essex lone parent households

	% households with dependant children headed by lone parent
Southend	27.6%
Harlow	26.6%
Basildon	25.1%
Thurrock	22.7%
Tendring	21.9%
Colchester	20.8%
Epping Forest	19.9%
Braintree	18.4%
Castle Point	18.2%
Chelmsford	17.9%
Brentwood	17.2%
Maldon	17.1%
Rochford	15.9%
Uttlesford	14.2%
Essex	20.0%
England	24.5%

Source: Census 2001

### 2.3.2 Affordable Housing

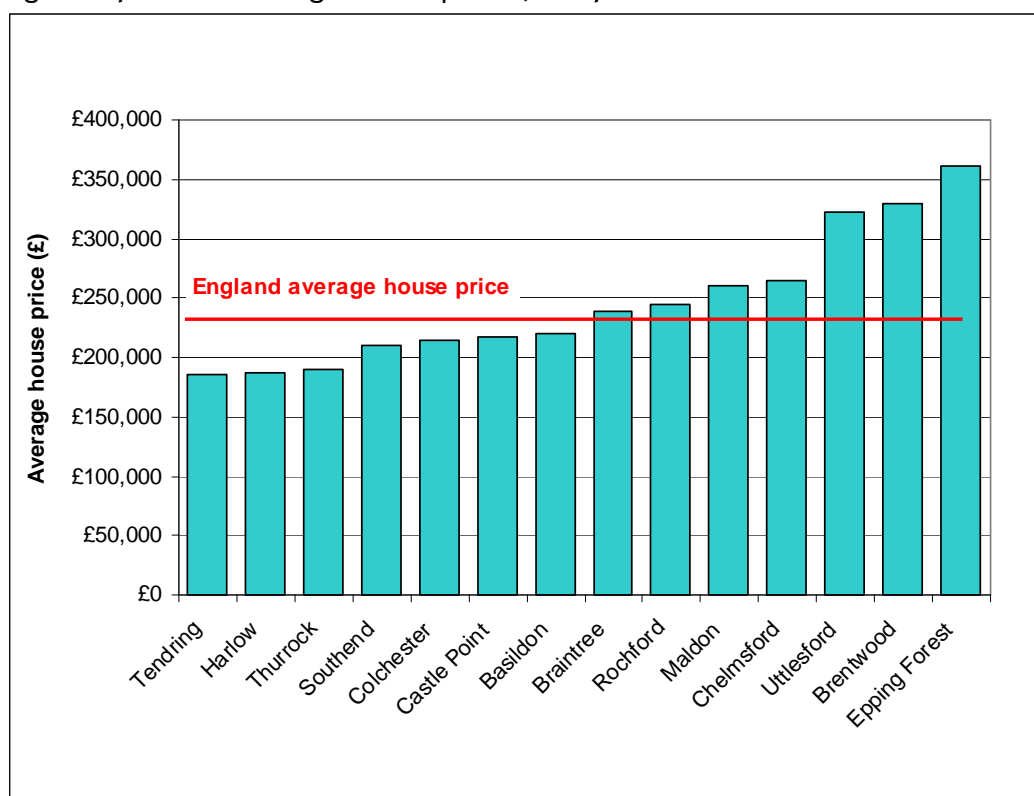
An adequate supply of good, affordable housing is essential to the quality of life of residents who cannot afford to compete in the open market. Affordable housing includes social rented accommodation (generally provided through Registered Social Landlords), shared ownership,

other intermediate tenures such as sub-market rent and key worker housing and supported housing. Affordable housing is aimed particularly at those on low incomes who earn too much to qualify for social housing but not enough to afford private sector rents or to participate in home ownership.

The need for affordable housing has increased in recent years as a result of high rates of growth in property prices combined with lower rates of growth in income and a widening of the gap between social sector rents and the costs of home ownership. There is a particularly acute shortage of affordable housing in many rural areas and, regionally, there is an expectation that some 35% of housing coming forward should be affordable<sup>10</sup>.

House prices in Essex are higher than the national average and very high in relation to average earnings. This raises challenges with regard to affordability, particularly for local workers whose salaries do not currently compete with that on offer in London. Clearly this is a challenge to creating a more self-contained economy and highlights the importance of creating high value jobs. Residents rated affordable decent housing as the third highest overall priority in the 2007 ECC Tracker Survey with Uttlesford and Harlow affording it particularly high priority.

Figure 2.7: Essex average house prices, 2007

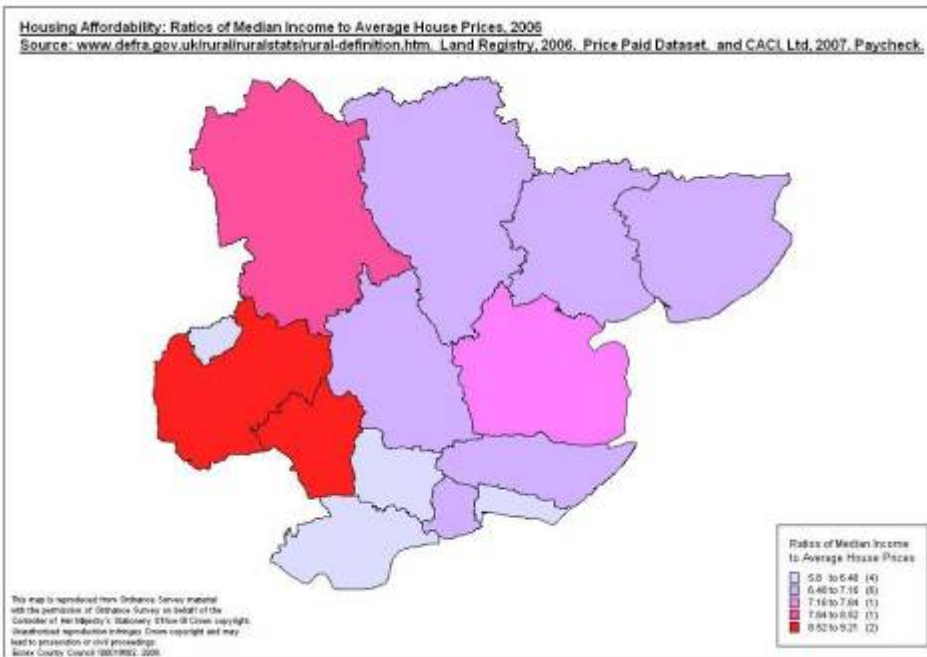


Source: Land Registry of England and Wales, 2007

Figures 2.7 and 2.8 show that not only are house prices highest in Epping Forest, Brentwood and Uttlesford but these areas are also those where they are greatest in relation to average income.

<sup>10</sup> Secretary of State's proposed changes to the Regional Spatial Strategy, December 2006

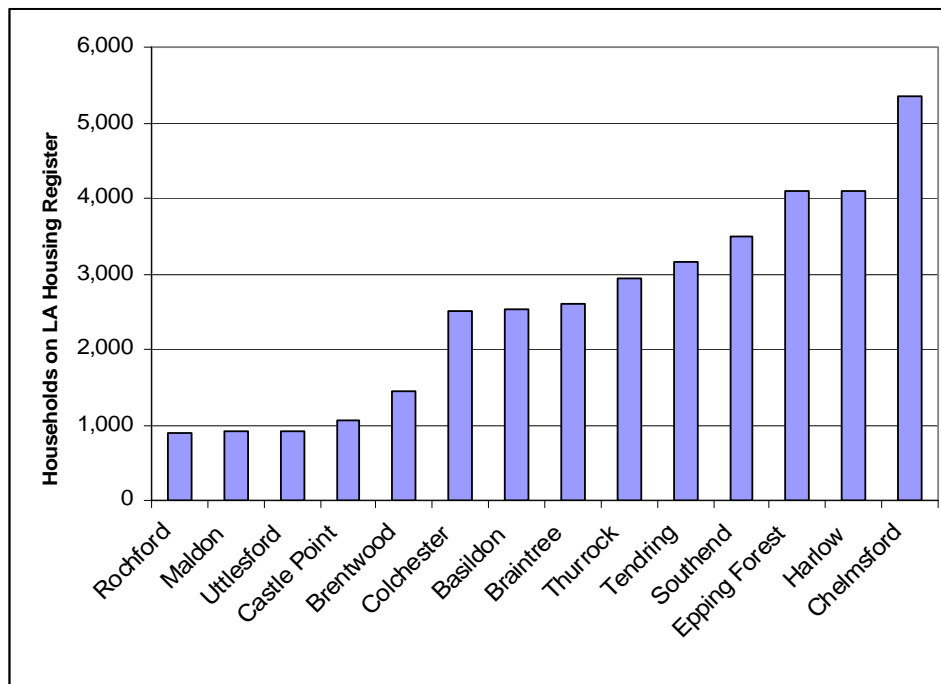
Figure 2.8 Essex map of housing affordability



Source: State of the Countryside. Commission for Rural Communities, 2007

In 2006 there were nearly 36,000 households (approx 5%) that had applied to a local authority for social rented housing and were waiting to be housed (includes those both in and not in housing need but excludes those seeking a transfer)<sup>11</sup>. The following chart shows that demand in Chelmsford is particularly high (approx 8% of all households). However, at 13% Harlow has the highest proportion of households on the local authority waiting list.

Figure 2.9: Essex demand for social housing, April 2006



Source: Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix. DCLG

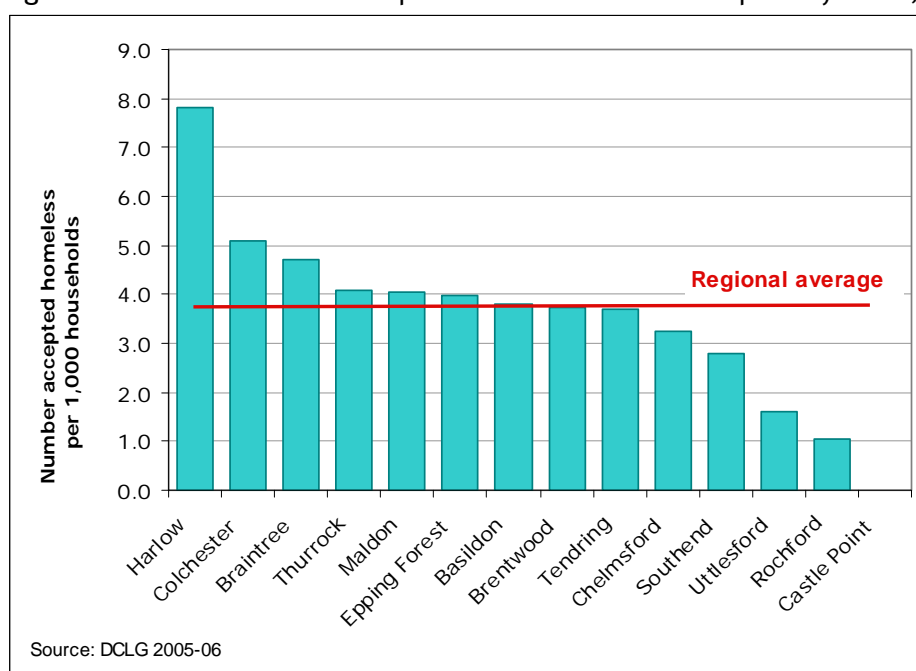
<sup>11</sup> Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix, April 2006. DCLG

### 2.3.3 Homelessness

Homelessness is associated with severe poverty and is associated with adverse health, education and social outcomes, particularly for children. Homeless people tend not to have equal access to adequate healthcare and chronic mental and physical illness is widespread among them. Moreover, their health needs can be directly related to their chaotic lifestyle. They regularly suffer from chronic respiratory and cardiac ailments (asthma and tuberculosis are particularly worrying), various skin diseases and mental health disorders such as schizophrenia and depression (Health Evidence Network, 2005). To be deemed statutorily homeless, a household must have become unintentionally homeless and must be considered to be in priority need. As such, statutorily homeless households contain some of the most vulnerable and needy members of our communities. National statistics suggest that 62% of officially accepted homeless households include dependent children or an expectant mother. Preventing and tackling homelessness requires sustained and joined-up interventions by central and local government, health and social care and the voluntary sector.

The number of Essex households ‘officially’ accepted as homeless each year has shown an annual decrease of around 500 over the past three years. According to the most recent published data, around 2,500 households in Essex were accepted as homeless during 2005-06 with the highest rate in Harlow<sup>12</sup>. These figures do not include households that have become unintentionally homeless but are not considered to be in priority need or households that have become intentionally homeless. Nor are rough sleepers included. The measure is, therefore, an underestimate of the extent of homelessness.

Figure 2.10: Households accepted as homeless and in priority need, 2005-06



## 2.4 The Environment

Conditions in the home and of the neighbourhood can have a big impact on our health and well-being. The physical, chemical, biological, social, and psycho-social factors in the

<sup>12</sup> HSSA (Housing Strategy Statistical Appendix) 2005/06. DCLG

environment can affect a number of aspects of human health and quality of life. The contamination of water and the air can trigger diseases, both chronic and acute in the population. Planning our towns, location of services and access to green spaces are all important issues to the well-being of the population.

### 2.4.1 Housing quality

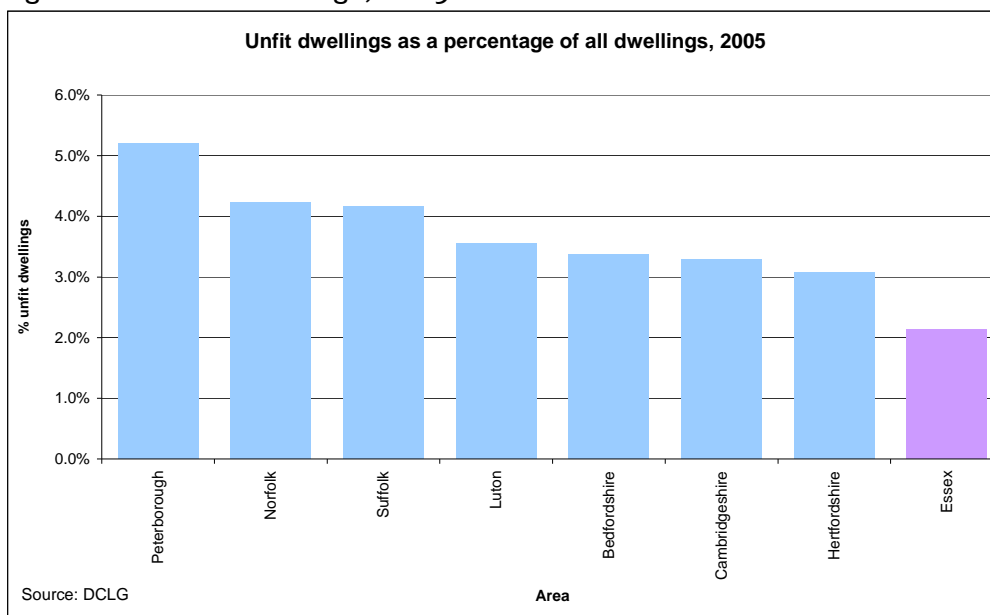
Poor quality housing is associated with increased levels of limiting long-term illness, respiratory and infectious diseases, accidents, psychological problems, perceived poor general health and even increased mortality. The most important risks appear to be cold, damp and mouldy housing conditions. Cold housing is one of the factors associated with excess winter deaths.

Overcrowding and living in high-rise flats is associated with psychological symptoms including depression. *Our Healthier Nation* recognises the importance of good housing in reducing stress and its association with other factors such as poverty, pollution, crime and poor access to facilities.

Overcrowding is not an issue in Essex. At the time of the Census (2001), the majority of Essex's 686,650 households (some 73%) had a ratio of less than 0.5 persons per room. This is equivalent to a family of four living in a house with four bedrooms, a kitchen, dining room and living room. Only 1% of Essex households have more residents than rooms.

Figure 2.11 shows the proportion of dwellings in Essex and comparator areas that are 'unfit'<sup>13</sup>. Of Essex's 715,000 dwellings, some 15,000 (2.1%) are unfit. This is the lowest percentage of dwellings of any county or upper tier authority area in the East of England region. Of the 15,000 unfit dwellings within Essex, the vast majority (97%) are privately owned. Only 3% of dwellings classed as unfit are public-sector owned.

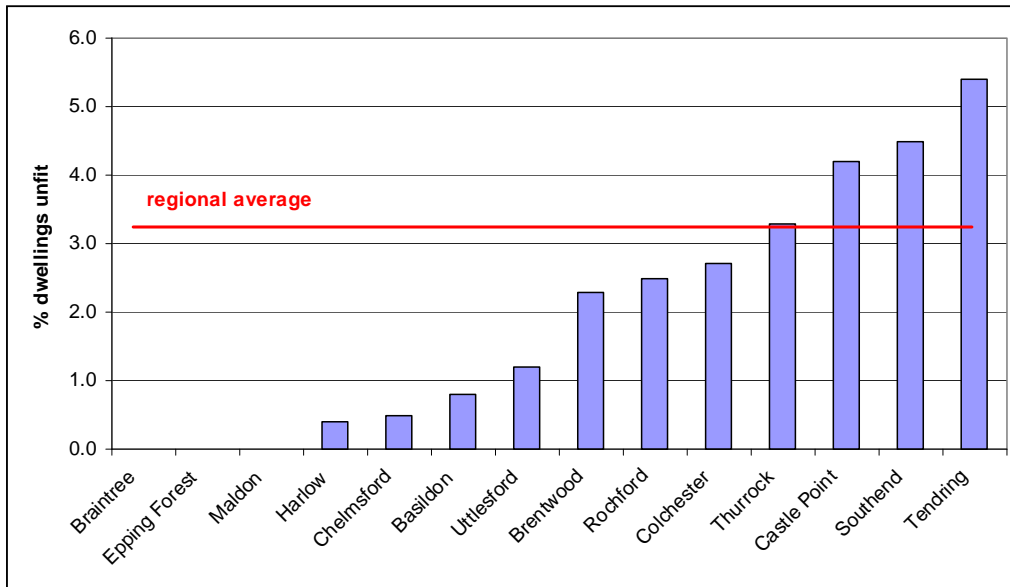
Figure 2.11: Unfit dwellings, 2005



<sup>13</sup> See glossary for full definition

However, as can be seen in the following chart, there is variation across the county with Castle Point, Southend and Tendring appearing significantly above the regional average.

Figure 2.12: Essex dwellings deemed unfit, 2005

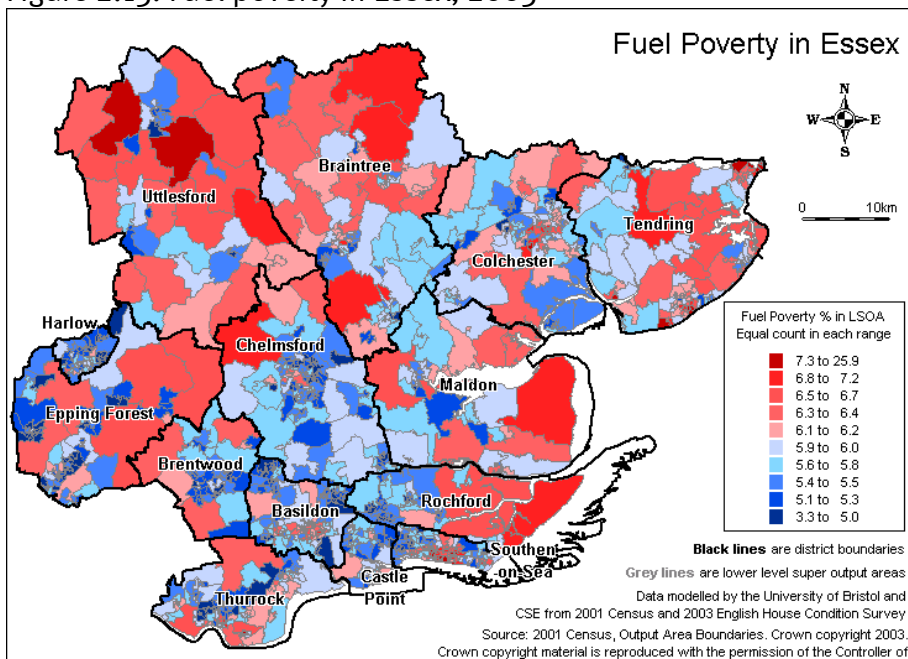


Source: DCLG

### 2.4.2 Fuel poverty

Fuel poverty occurs when a household needs to spend more than 10% of its income on fuel to maintain satisfactory heating and other energy services. In 2004 there were around 1.2m households in fuel poverty in England, according to official figures. However, the Government estimates that fuel poverty doubled between 2004 and 2006, due to the rise in fuel prices over this period. The consequences of fuel poverty include cold, damp homes; reduced quality of life; poor health and debt. The following map identifies those areas in greatest fuel poverty across Essex; colours relate to decile ranges for England.

Figure 2.13: Fuel poverty in Essex, 2003

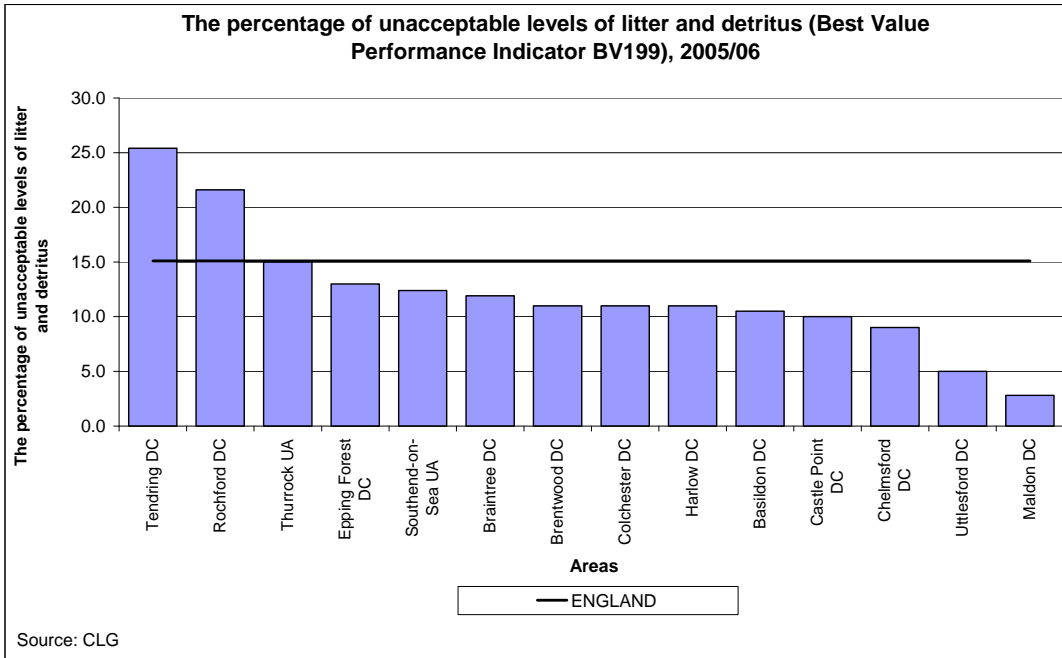


Source: [www.fuelpovertyindicator.org.uk](http://www.fuelpovertyindicator.org.uk)

### 2.4.3 Street cleanliness

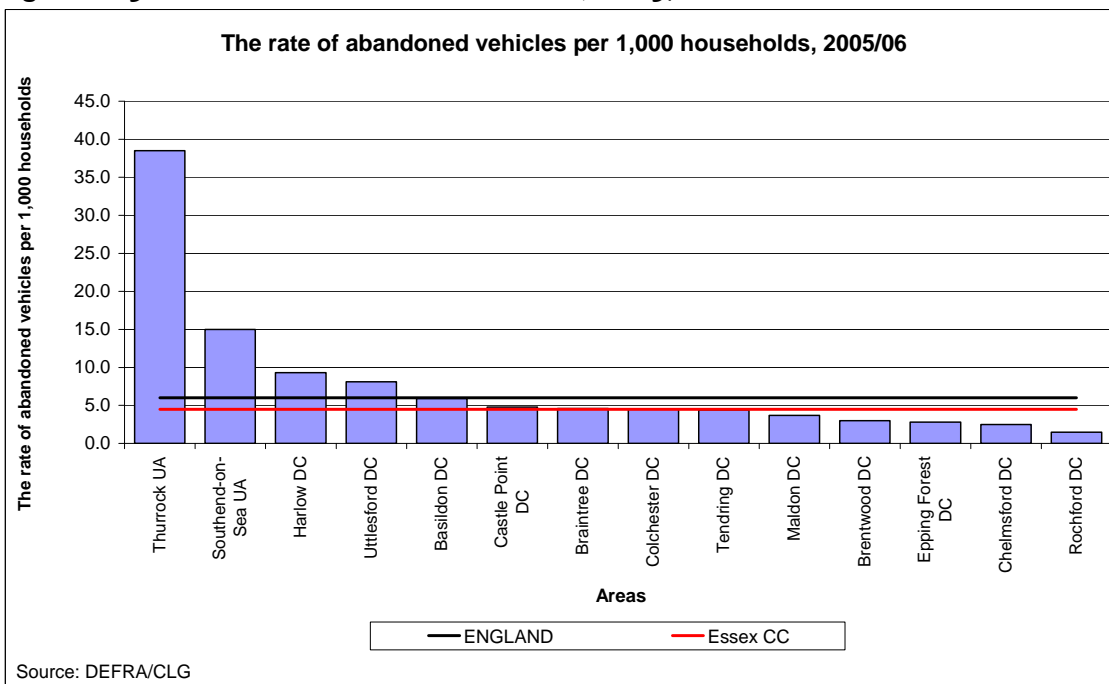
Street cleanliness was considered the sixth highest overall priority according to the ECC 2007 Tracker Survey and fell within the top two in Colchester, Epping Forest and Harlow. A survey of sites throughout the Essex area showed that Essex has two areas – Tendring and Rochford – which have higher than average percentages of unacceptable litter and detritus levels.

Figure 2.14: Essex litter and detritus levels, 2005/06



In 2005/06 there were 4.5 abandoned vehicles per 1,000 households in Essex – below the England average of 6.0 per 1,000 households. Four areas in Essex have rates higher than the England average although levels in Thurrock are six times higher.

Figure 2.15: Essex abandoned vehicle rates, 2005/06

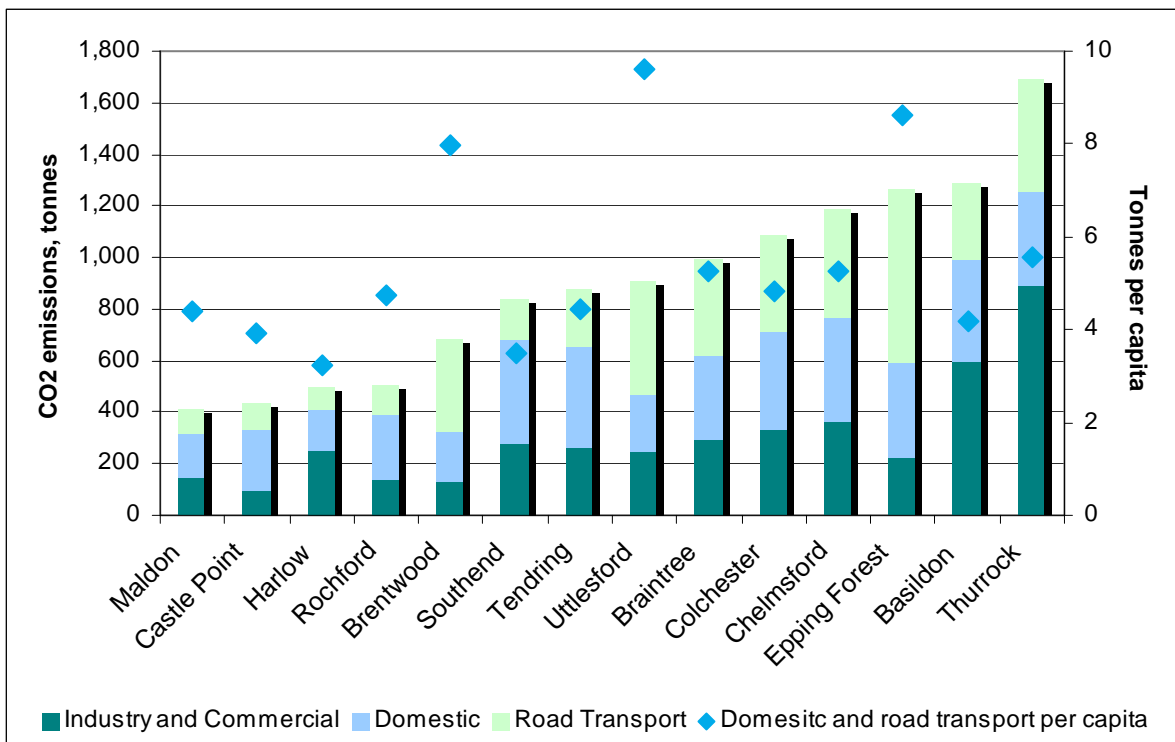


### 2.4.4 Pollution / CO<sub>2</sub> emissions

In 2004 ECC produced a total of 10,131 kilo tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> which equates to 8.5 tonnes per capita. This is almost 1 tonne per person per year less than the UK average (9.2 per capita) which is due to relatively low levels of emission from industrial and commercial sources. Road transport makes up the highest proportion of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in ECC, accounting for 35% of all emissions. This is higher than both national (27%) and regional (34%) averages.

Although Essex has a relatively low carbon footprint, the following chart shows significant differences exist across Essex. Thurrock has the highest total carbon emissions and Maldon has the smallest, emitting less than a quarter of the level in Thurrock. This reflects the fact that Maldon is a particularly rural district, with a relatively small population whereas Thurrock has the highest concentration of industry and several major transport links. However, on a per capita level, Uttlesford, Epping Forest and Brentwood have high emission rates, largely as a result of high levels of road transport emissions associated with the M11 and M25 motorways.

Figure 2.16: Essex CO<sub>2</sub> emissions, 2004

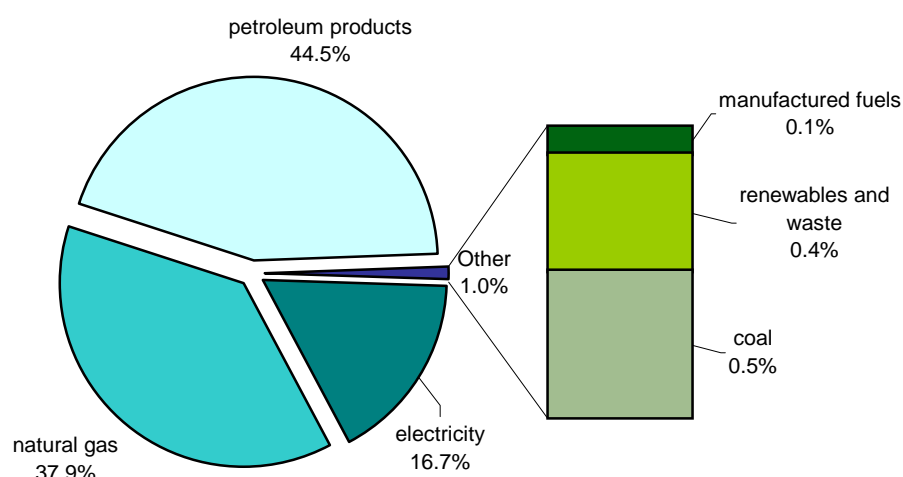


Source: AEA Energy & Environment for DEFRA

Most of the energy consumed in the UK is derived from the burning of fossil fuels (oil, natural gas and coal). Fossil fuels are finite in supply and are regarded as unsustainable energy sources. Figure 2.17 gives a breakdown of energy consumption in Essex. It shows that over 99% of all energy consumed in Essex is derived from fossil fuels.

Figure 2.17: Essex energy sources, 2004

Source: Department for Trade and Industry



## 2.5 The Local Economy

The Essex economy has been one of the fastest-growing in the East and South East since 2000<sup>14</sup>. The county has a dynamic business community and residents generally enjoy high salaries and low unemployment as a result of the county's proximity to London, its transport gateways and connections and because it hosts some of Europe's leading companies. However, Essex's productivity rate is below both regional and national averages and there is a need to create more local jobs. Without locally available work, future growth in our population and housing stock will lead to increased commuting and dependence on London. We need to stimulate local job growth and attract inward investment.

In November 2007, the Greater Essex Prosperity Forum approved five key priorities developed through extensive consultation and based on evidence contained within the Greater Essex Economic Framework<sup>15</sup>. The five priorities are to:

- make a difference to the improvement of low skills attainment in Essex;
- create a competitive economy which is an international leader rather than a follower;
- create the right conditions in which businesses and people can flourish;
- be a leader in environmental technology and in helping our businesses to reduce their carbon footprint;
- build on the Essex entrepreneurial spirit by helping companies to start-up, innovate and grow.

Most partners agree that skills attainment is of the most pressing concern as it impacts on so many other areas. However, there are some important local differences, for example, there is variation across the county in terms of the skills gap requiring differential investment; business start-up and survival rates are lower in Southend; some of the largest development work will be taking place in Thurrock, calling for partners to work together to minimise the environmental impact; Harlow is home to some world-leading companies but lacks the

<sup>14</sup> based on GVA estimates produced by National Statistics

<sup>15</sup> The Framework and background information can be viewed at: <http://www.exdra.co.uk/programmes/greater-essex-prosperity-forum/economic-framework.cfm>

appropriate local skills-base to take full advantage of this; and the Bathside Bay development in the Haven Gateway area offers opportunities which need to be maximised.

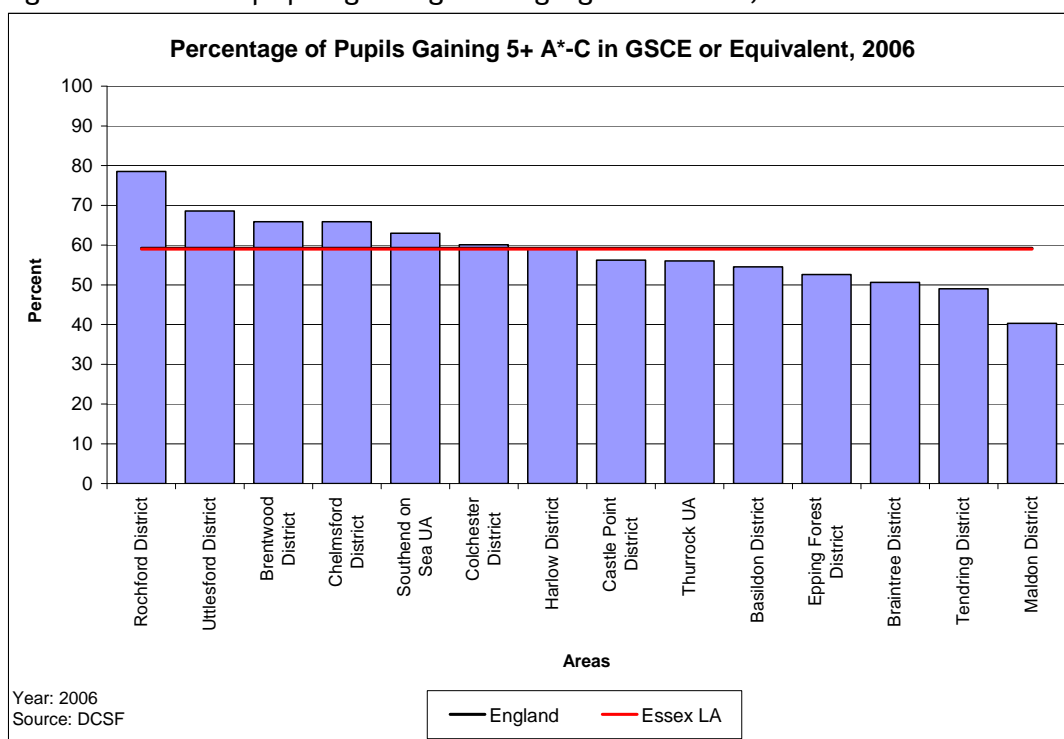
## 2.6 Education and Skills

### 2.6.1 Educational attainment

Educational attainment is influenced by both the quality of education children receive and their family socio-economic circumstances. Educational qualifications are a determinant of an individual's labour market position, which in turn influences income, housing and other material resources. These are related to health and health inequalities. Young people who do not get 5 A\*-C grade GCSEs (or equivalent) by age 16 tend not to have good opportunities to achieve success later (14-19 White Paper).

In 2006, 59% of Essex pupils gained 5+ A\*-C grade GCSEs (or equivalent). Although this is just below the England average of 59.2%, half of Essex areas show attainment levels the same or higher than the England average. However, there is wide variation between areas with nearly 80% of pupils in Rochford gaining 5+ higher grade GCSEs compared to only 40% in Maldon. Across Essex as a whole, only 2.4% of pupils left school without a GCSE or equivalent qualification – slightly more than the England average (2.2%).

Figure 2.18: Essex pupils gaining five high-grade GCSEs, 2006

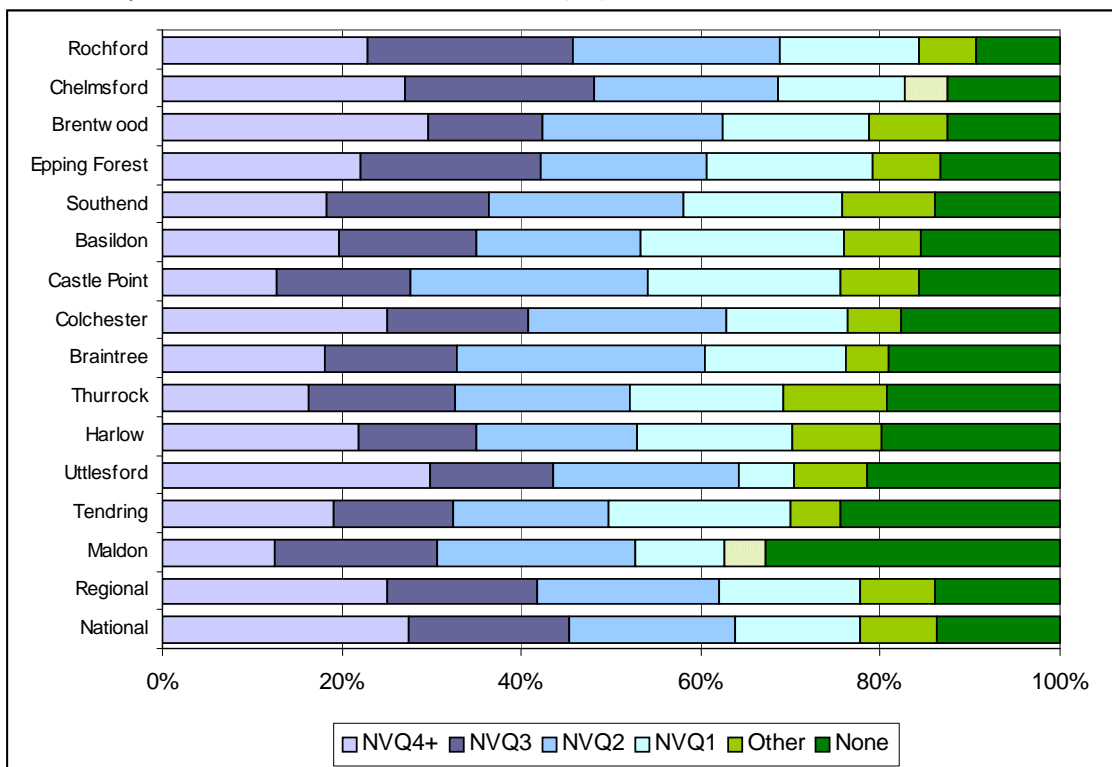


If, as set out above, Essex is to become a leader in environmental technology and help businesses reduce their carbon footprint, it is recognised that local pupils need to be encouraged to take up STEM (Science, Technology, Maths, & Engineering) subjects at school in order to try to affect development of the right skills set at the earliest opportunity.

## 2.6.2 Adult qualifications

The workforce in Essex tends to be slightly older than that across England and older people tend to have fewer qualifications. Essex is also a net exporter of 16-24 year olds who are more likely to hold qualifications. As a result, skills in Essex tend to be lower than elsewhere. Census data revealed that less than 15% of Essex adults had a degree or higher qualification (compared to 20% of the adult population in England) and that nearly 30% of the Essex working age population had no qualifications. More recent data from the ONS Annual Population Survey shows that the picture has improved although parts of Essex are still significantly behind both national and regional averages. For example, in Maldon 33% of the working population have no qualifications (compared to 14% nationally and regionally) and only 12.5% have a degree or higher qualification (compared to over 25% nationally and regionally).

Figure 2.19: Qualifications of working age population<sup>16</sup>, 2006



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey (shading indicates sample size too small for reliable estimate)

In order to improve the local economy, it is essential to develop more local high-value jobs and the skills to match. The challenge is to encourage both residents and employers to invest more time and money in skills. This will not be easy as many residents already enjoy a high standard of living with few formal qualifications and the proximity of London gives residents access to relatively highly-paid jobs but reduces competition for local opportunities.

<sup>16</sup> NVQ1: equivalent to fewer than 5 GCSEs grade A-C; NVQ2: equivalent to 5 GCSEs grade A-C; NVQ3: equivalent to 2+ A levels; NVQ4+: degree and higher

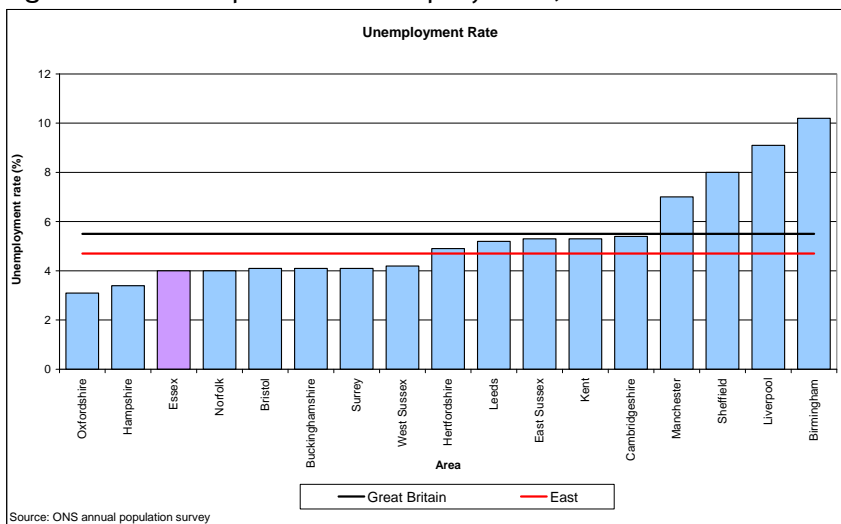
## 2.7 Employment and Unemployment

Work can be the basis of good health (particularly mental health), prosperity and well-being but there are also certain aspects of work that can adversely affect us. Unhealthy work patterns and workplaces and a lack of job security can all lead to poor mental health. The move towards less secure, short-term employment affects most of us, especially less-skilled manual workers, already faced with longer working hours for very low pay.

Unemployment can affect an individual's health and lifestyle dramatically. Long-term effects may include depression, loss of identity and self worth. In addition, work can play an important role in our social networks and the ways we participate in society. Mounting debts and hardship for the unemployed can create stress and anxiety in coping with their lives.

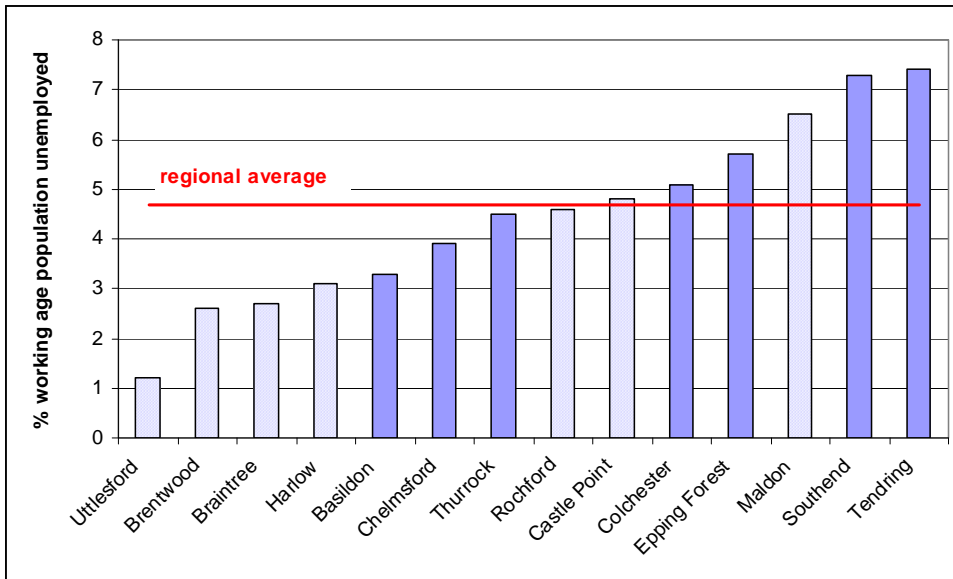
Around 31,900 people (4%) are unemployed in Essex. Mid-year population estimates show that Essex residents are 1.6% more likely to be in employment than the average person in Great Britain. As shown in Figure 2.20, the unemployment rate in Essex is low compared to other counties and lower than both the regional and national averages.

Figure 2.20: Comparative unemployment, 2006



Unemployment rates have remained relatively stable over the past year. However, as can be seen from the following chart, there is still wide variation across the county (NOTE in some areas, figures should be treated with caution due to sample sizes).

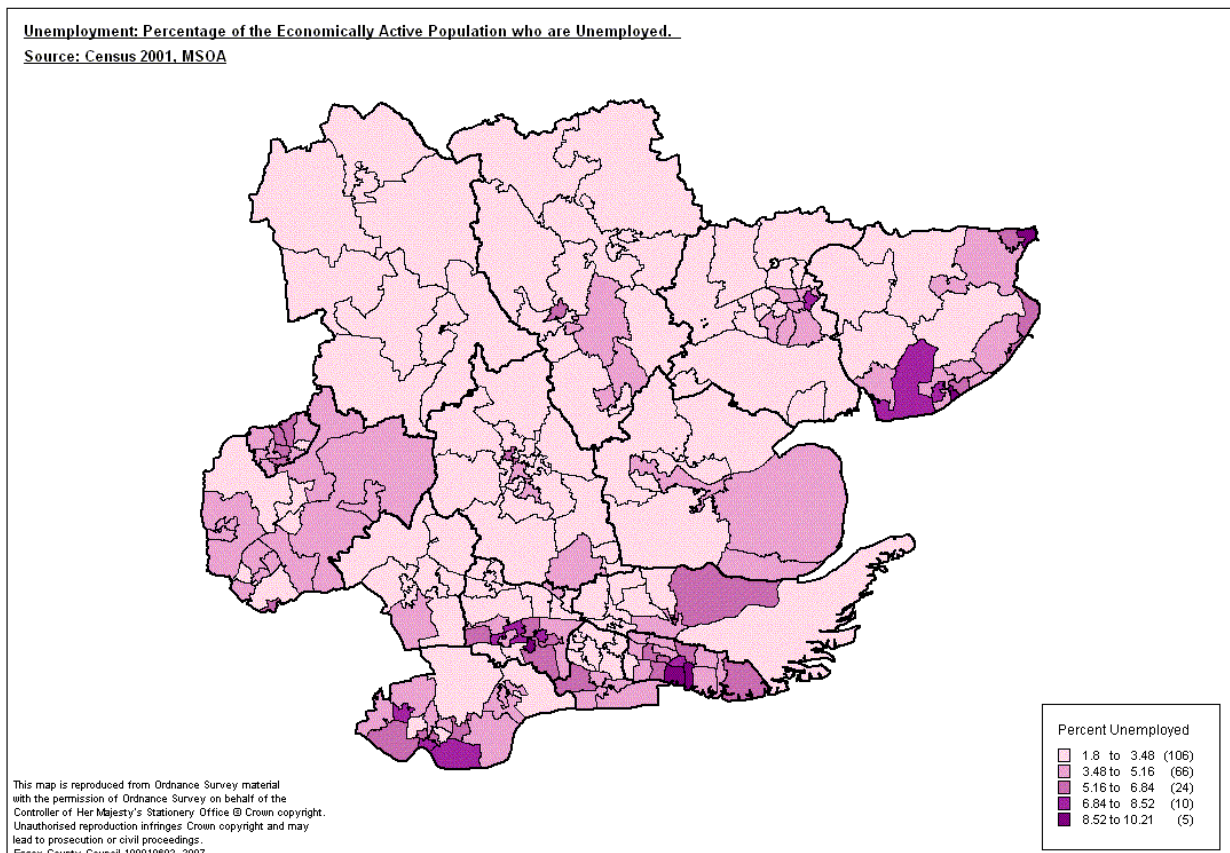
Figure 2.21: Essex unemployment rates, 2006



Source: ONS Annual Population Survey (shading indicates sample size too small for reliable estimate)

Although unemployment has fallen since the Census, the following map shows that a below district / borough level analysis is needed to identify pockets of high unemployment. Back in 2001, areas to note included the centre of Basildon, south and north east corner of Tendring, and parts of Southend and Thurrock.

Figure 2.22: Unemployment by MSOA, Census 2001



There are 730 jobs per 1,000 working age residents in Essex, compared to the Eastern average of 820 jobs per 1,000<sup>17</sup>. Despite local job shortages, unemployment in Essex is kept low in part by good transport links and Essex's proximity to London. Nearly 15% of Essex residents commute to London. This also explains the higher average income in Essex (£576 per week – £36 higher than the average in Great Britain<sup>18</sup>) despite the higher proportion of residents with no qualifications.

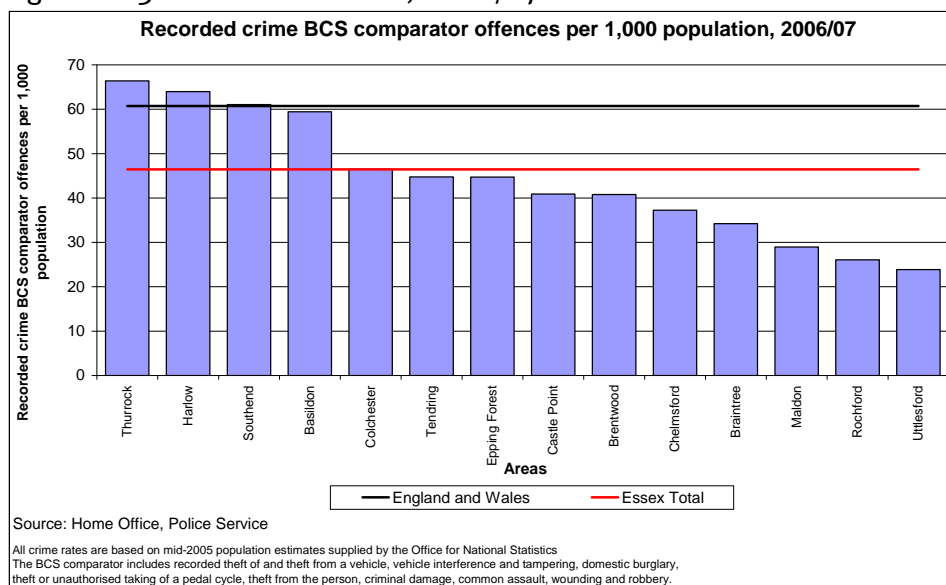
## 2.8 Crime and Disorder

Crime is associated with social disorganisation, low social capital, relative deprivation and health inequalities. The same social and environmental factors that predict geographic variation in crime rates may also be relevant to explaining community variations in health and well-being. Level of crime is afforded the top overall priority by residents according to the 2007 ECC Tracker Survey with only Maldon giving highest priority to activities for teenagers (associated with anti-social behaviour).

### 2.8.1 Crime rates

Crime rates can be compared by using a sub-set of recorded crimes that can be aligned to categories in the British Crime Survey. This is known as the BCS comparator rate<sup>19</sup>. Crime in Essex is relatively low (46 per 1,000 population compared to 61 per 1,000 for England & Wales) and, since 2003/4, BCS crimes have consistently fallen year on year. However, crime rates across Essex are variable and are typically higher in urban areas. For example, in 2005/6 the rate of crime was 72 crimes per 1,000 people in Harlow but only 23 per 1,000 in Uttlesford.

Figure 2.23: Essex crime rates, 2006/07



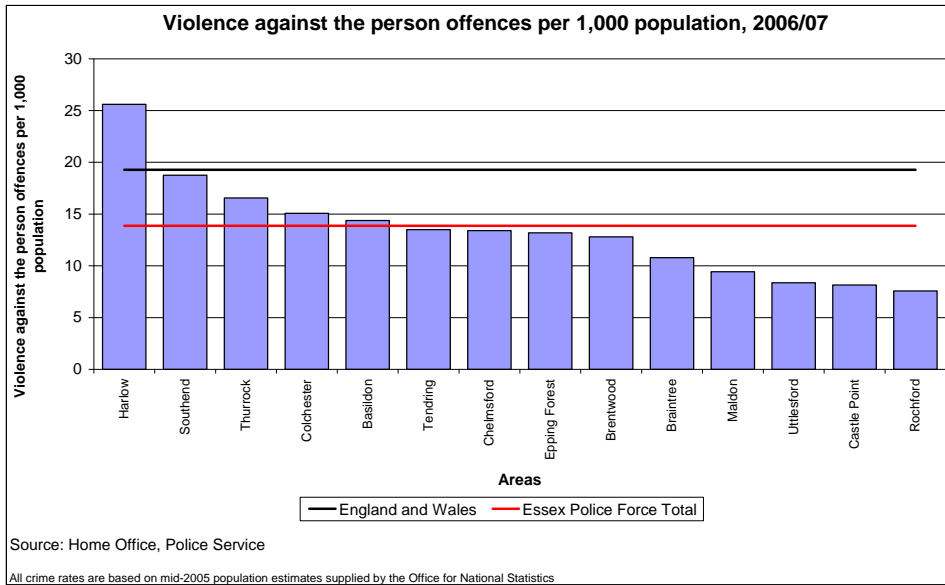
Essex also has a lower rate of violence against the person than the England and Wales average (13.87 per 1,000 population compared to 19 per 1,000). Harlow has a significantly higher rate than elsewhere in Essex.

<sup>17</sup> Labour Force Survey 2007

<sup>18</sup> Source: ONS Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings 2006

<sup>19</sup> See Glossary for full definition.

Figure 2.24: Essex violent crime rates, 2006/07



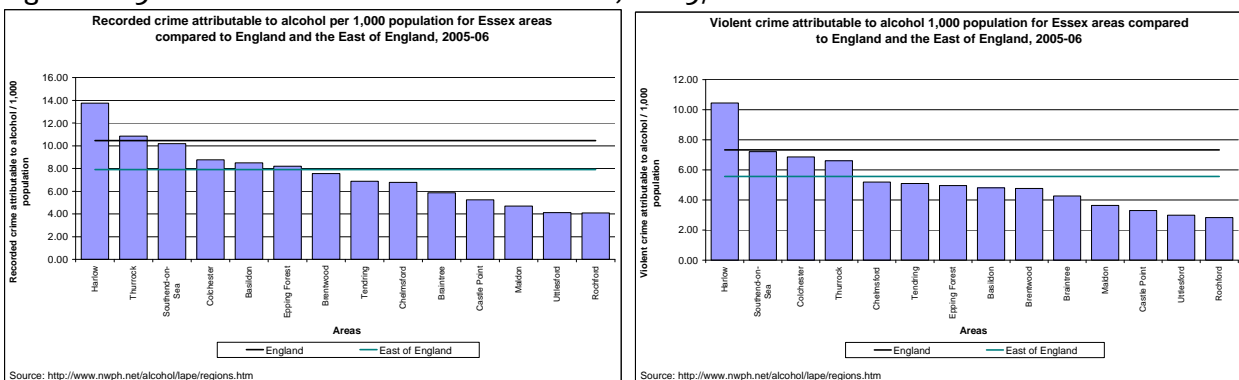
### 2.8.2 Alcohol-related crime

There is a strong link between excessive alcohol consumption and crime, particularly violent crime, assaults, accidents and anti-social behaviour. It has been estimated that alcohol misuse now costs around £20bn a year through its health, crime and social impacts.

*Indications of Public Health in the English Regions* (APHO, 2007) uses 36 different indicators relating to individual, community and population implications of alcohol use and their effects on health and wellbeing. The only indicators where East of England region performance is worse than average are associated with alcohol-related road accidents.

In Essex, Harlow and Thurrock have a rate of alcohol-related crime higher than the England average. In terms of violent crime, Harlow again shows a significantly higher than average rate.

Figure 2.25: Essex alcohol-related crime rates, 2005/06



### 2.8.3 Crime and disorder priorities

At local level, each district / borough is required to conduct a local crime and disorder audit to inform the development of their Crime & Disorder Reduction Partnership Strategies. The audit is a review of both statistical evidence and the views of the community about levels of crime and disorder. The 2004 audits highlighted significant commonality with drug and alcohol use;

anti-social behaviour; reducing crime and the fear of crime; dealing with domestic violence and hate crime all almost universally identified as local priorities.

From the local audits and a review of the evidence, the following issues were identified as crime and disorder priorities and adopted in the 2006-09 Essex Local Area Agreement:

- reduce the number of young victims of crime;
- reduced drug and alcohol use by children and increased successful completions of adult treatment programmes;
- reduction in rates of 10 key crimes;
- reduction in fear of crime;
- increased sanction detection rate for domestic violence offences;
- reduced re-offending;
- reduced public perception of drug dealing and drug use as a problem;
- build respect in communities and reduce anti-social behaviour.

## 2.9 Transport

Transport includes walking and cycling, as well as the use of private vehicles, public transport and goods vehicles. Transport can have a wide range of beneficial and deleterious effects on health. Positive effects include recreation; exercise; and access to employment, education, shops, recreation, social support networks, health services and the countryside. Negative effects include: pollution; traffic injuries; noise; stress and anxiety; danger; land loss and planning blight; and severance of communities by roads (Transport & Health Study Group, 2001). Data from the ECC Tracker and Disadvantaged Neighbourhood Surveys shows that poor transport is the biggest single factor that makes people feel excluded from society, especially in disadvantaged neighbourhoods.

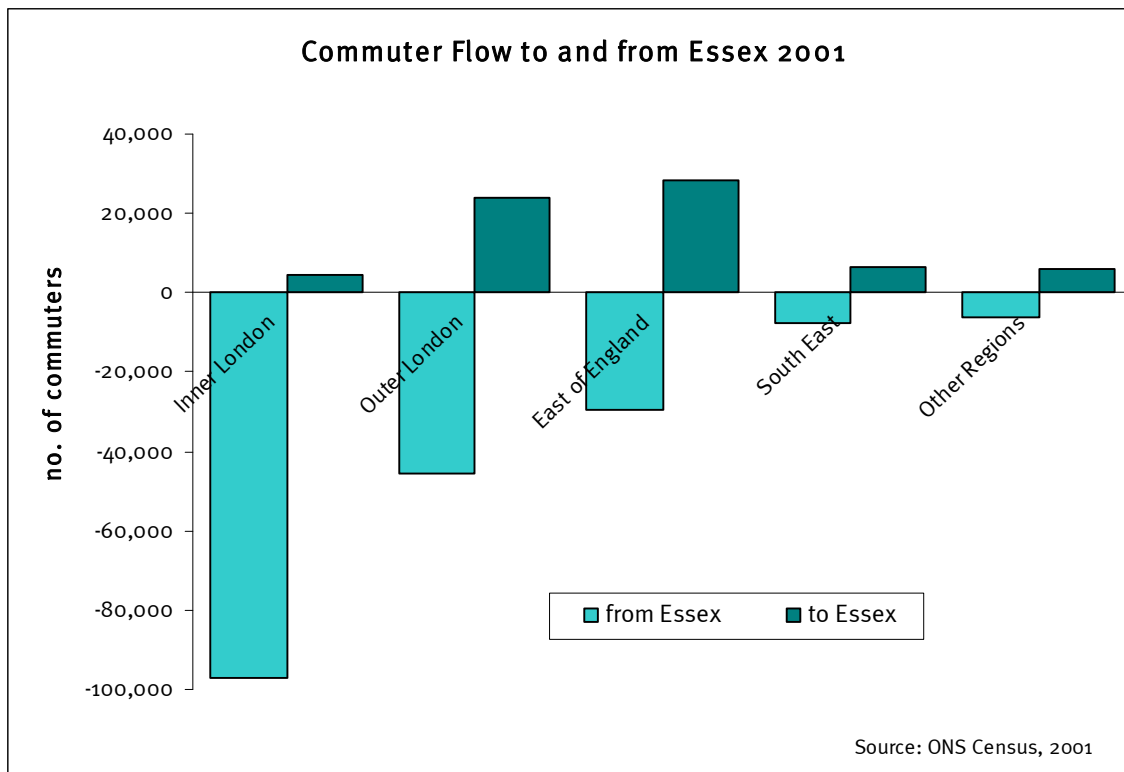
Essex has an extensive bus network (including a 'Village Link' network of rural bus services) and is served by good rail links. Some areas of west Essex also have London underground stations and there are frequent trains into London from all over Essex as well as to other counties including Suffolk, Norfolk, Hertfordshire and Middlesex. The Tilbury to Gravesend ferry is subsidised by Thurrock Council and Kent County Council and there are three foot ferries: the Harwich Foot Ferry, Brightlingsea Foot Ferry and the Wallasea Island to Burnham-on-Crouch ferry. The county is also home to Stansted Airport in Uttlesford and London Southend Airport.

The road and rail networks in Essex take well over half a million people to and from work every day. Almost a third of Essex workers commute out of the county with two thirds of this group heading for London<sup>20</sup>. Essex's urban and rural mix, coupled with the distances between its larger towns, means that almost a quarter of those who live and work in the county commute outside their own district<sup>19</sup>.

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<sup>20</sup> Census 2001. National Statistics

Figure 2.26: Travel patterns of Essex commuters, 2001



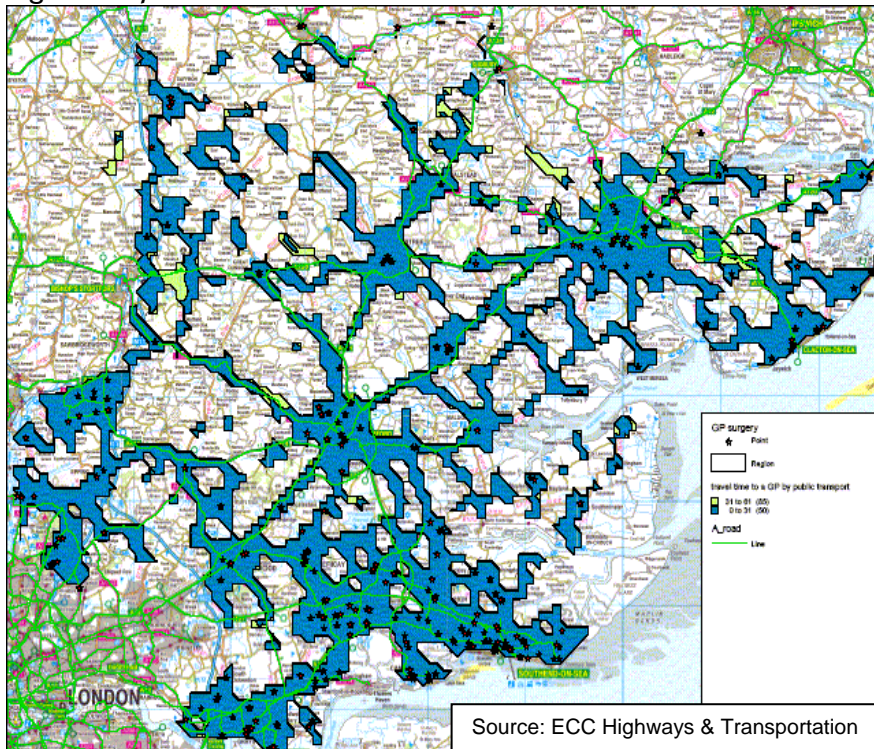
Our roads and rail network also support freight going to and from London, people and goods traveling to and from Stansted and some of the nation's busiest port complexes. The importance of these destinations means local networks are becoming overloaded by high traffic volumes and high levels of commuting. New housing growth will only make these problems worse. Continuing growth in car use is also raising levels of congestion and pollution and it is estimated that, without action, there will be a 31% increase in road traffic and a 30% increase in congestion on the roads by 2025<sup>21</sup>.

### 2.9.1 Access to health services

Sophisticated mapping software enables journey times to be calculated for individual households. The following map shows from which geographic locations residents are able to access a GP surgery within 30 and 60 minutes travel time by bus. Blue areas are those within 30 minutes of a GP, green are those within 30-60 minutes and areas of no colour are in excess of an hour's travel.

<sup>21</sup> Eddington Transport Report, 2006

Figure 2.27: access to GP



## 2.10 Conclusion

As a county, Essex is relatively affluent with no large concentrations of disadvantage. However, there are pockets of severe deprivation in many districts / boroughs with one area in Tendring falling within the worst 1% in England.

The county's proximity to London acts as a mixed blessing; it helps keep earnings high and unemployment low but inflates house prices and increases congestion on our roads and railways. As population growth and housing development accelerate, the need for inward investment and local job growth will intensify. Key to creating a more self-contained economy is affordable housing and increasing local skills. A relatively high proportion of the workforce has no qualifications and relatively few are well-qualified.

Although Essex has a relatively low carbon footprint, road transport emissions are high in certain areas due to major transport links and, in Thurrock, high levels of industry. With 99% of energy consumed unsustainable, realising opportunities in environmental technology is seen as a key means by which to improve both the local economy and the environment.

Despite Essex's relatively low crime rate, the reduction of crime, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime are given very high priority across districts / boroughs.