

The Better Colchester
Strategic Plan
2020–2023

Tackling the
climate challenge
and leading
sustainability

Creating safe,
healthy and
active
communities

Delivering homes
for people who
need them

Growing a fair
economy so
everyone
benefits

Celebrating our
heritage and
culture

Tackling the climate challenge and leading sustainability



PRIORITIES	2020–2023 GOALS
Respond to the Climate Emergency	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver carbon reduction targets and achieve carbon neutrality by 2030 for the Council's services • Work with businesses and communities to reduce carbon dioxide emissions • Seek innovative solutions to achieve a zero-carbon Colchester
Conserve and enhance biodiversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • End Glyphosate use in Council operations • Proactively work within communities to 're-wild' Colchester and help nature recover • Plant 200,000 trees over 5 years and green the Colchester Orbital
Minimise the environmental impact of waste management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reduce overall levels of waste through encouraging sustainable consumption and waste reduction • Improve our waste and recycling services, increase recycling and protect employee health & wellbeing • Explore options for decarbonising the Waste and Recycling fleet
Renewal of the River Colne	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to develop and deliver a vision for the upper, middle and lower River Colne • Improve the environment of the Colne and access to the river
Improve walking and cycling around Colchester	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to implement strategies and develop measures that reduce traffic in the town centre • Develop a new Cycling Strategy with partners and improve facilities and routes for cyclists and walkers • Work with partners to promote sustainable travel behaviours, healthier lifestyles and reduce car use • Ensure major regeneration projects put cycling and walking at the forefront of development
During 2020/21 we will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plant 20,500 trees through the Colchester Woodland Project • Test all Council decisions for their impact on Environment and Sustainability • Produce costed options to deliver the Climate Emergency Action Plan • Install Electric Vehicle Charging points in two locations and procure EV fleet where possible • Commence construction of the Northern Gateway Heat Network

Creating safe, healthy and active communities



PRIORITIES	2020–2023 GOALS
Building on community strengths	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve community facilities by building on existing assets (people and places) to enable communities to come together and encourage improved health and wellbeing • Encourage belonging, involvement and responsibility in all Colchester's communities and neighbourhoods • Maximise the utilisation of developer contributions (such as Section 106) to help fund community infrastructure
Provide opportunities for young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to improve facilities, activities and engagement including a potential Youth Zone
Improve community safety	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with Essex police and other partners to reduce anti-social behaviour and tackle serious crimes • Improve cleanliness and community safety in the town centre • Upgrade and extend the CCTV network to reach more places
Tackle the causes of ill health and support our most vulnerable people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support initiatives which help to reduce pollution levels and improve air quality • Support public health campaigns including helping people to become more active. • Provide outstanding sports and leisure facilities and access to open spaces • Coordinate interventions that help children and young people to get the best start in life • Support people to live in homes that meet their needs
During 2020/21 we will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Launch the Northern Gateway Sports Park • Adopt the new Local Plan following formal examination • Deliver the new Stanway community facility • Develop a full Business Case for a Youth Zone in Colchester • Work with partners to tackle domestic violence • Work in partnership with Essex County Council to support vulnerable people to live in homes that promote independence and wellbeing

Delivering homes for people who need them



PRIORITIES	2020–2023 GOALS
Increase the number and quality of homes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver 30% affordable housing on all sites the Council's housing company develops • Deliver 380 affordable homes • Improve existing Council homes to keep them in good repair and improve energy efficiency • Build new Council homes for our residents • Ensure all new homes are designed to a high quality across all tenures • Continue to improve and modernise our sheltered housing for older people
Deliver jobs, homes and infrastructure to meet the borough's future needs by creating new communities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create Development Plan Documents for North Essex Garden Communities (NEGC) • Establish a Delivery Vehicle and investment for the next phase of the NEGC project • Develop the Colchester Northern Gateway as a sustainable place to live, work and play
Adopt a new Local Plan	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure the Council has a good supply of land available for new homes • Create great places to live through the provision of new homes with facilities that support sustainable living and promote health and wellbeing
Prevent households from experiencing homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to Implement the 2020-23 Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy action plan • Intervene early to prevent homelessness and work in partnership with other organisations to sustain people's accommodation • Tackle rough sleeping
During 2020/21 we will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree sites for development by Amphora Homes and undertake feasibility and viability assessments • Deliver the first mixed tenure housing site built by the Council at Creffield Road • Deliver 100% Council homes at Military Road (8 homes) • Deliver up to 16 new Council homes on the Council's garage sites • Initiate the '100 Homes' project

Growing a fair economy so everyone benefits



PRIORITIES	2020 – 2023 GOALS
Ensure all residents benefit from Colchester's economic growth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Transform the town's Northern Gateway to improve health and fitness, jobs, housing and renewable energy • Tackle skills shortages working with businesses, University of Essex, Colchester Institute and other partners
Create an environment that attracts inward investment to Colchester and help businesses to flourish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure our strategy for inclusive economic growth supports the ambitions outlined in the North Essex Growth Strategy, the Local Industrial Strategy and our Town Deal • Ensure a good supply of employment land and premises to attract new businesses and allow existing firms to expand and thrive • Encourage green technologies and innovative solutions to the Climate Emergency • Maximise the Social Value benefits derived from third party contracts
Work with partners to deliver a shared vision for a vibrant town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Agree a Town Deal with partners and the Government to attract significant new investment • Collaborate with the town centre Business Improvement District (BID) • Continue to regenerate the town centre using Council assets, aligned private investment and the Town Deal and Town Investment Plan
Ensure the Council's assets continue to contribute to economic growth and opportunity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deliver a third phase 'Amphora' Office Development in Sheepen Road • Renew the Rowan House site to improve service delivery and generate income • Optimise commercial returns from the Council's property portfolio • Utilise our assets to increase Ultrafast Broadband coverage
During 2020/21 we will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult on options for the Town Centre and River Colne visions • Agree the Town Deal bid submission with partners • Deliver the Local Full Fibre Network project • Work in partnership to support our Business Improvement District

Celebrating our heritage and culture



PRIORITIES	2020-2023 GOALS
Protect, enhance and celebrate Colchester's unique heritage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Bring our history to life through the Heritage Live project • Enhance and promote our heritage
Agree and implement a new Cultural Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work with partners to deliver a collaborative Cultural Vision and Ambitions for the borough • Agree the key milestones and investment necessary to deliver the strategy
Strengthen Colchester's tourism sector and welcome more visitors each year.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Improve signage for key sites in the town centre • Promote Colchester's heritage and visitor attractions to increase visitor numbers and to support jobs • Expand the events programme to encourage more visitors and position Colchester as a destination for major events
Enhance our cultural assets	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide sustainable grant funding to support Mercury Theatre, Firstsite and Colchester Arts Centre • Identify further opportunities to improve the cultural offer for residents and visitors
During 2020/21 we will	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop and agree a new Cultural Strategy in collaboration with partners • Complete the Mercury Rising project • Light-up St Botolph's Priory • Introduce new interpretation and exhibitions that bring our heritage to life