

Other performance news

- **Awards and accreditations**

The highlights are summarised here and are also shown on www.colchester.gov.uk in the [achievements](#) section

Achieved April to September 2015:	
East Anglia Residents' Awards	CBH won the 'Best Tenant Training Programme' in recognition of the work that CBH does with its tenants. Throughout the year CBH runs a series of free training and development courses for its tenants and leaseholders to help them seek new employment and develop new skills.
Britain in Bloom	Silver Gilt award for Colchester in the small city category. One of just 70 finalists chosen from more than 1,000 groups.
Anglia in Bloom	<p>Gold award for Colchester, Castle Park and High Woods Country Park.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Castle Park took the prize for the best public open space, and its drought garden was judged the best drought, or sustainable, garden in the east of England. • High Woods Country Park also won the award for best conservation project and a special award for the best new entry. Silver Gilt award for the Cemetery and Crematorium. <p>Gold award for 2 Charles Smith House residents for Best individual/Community Floral Display (CBH).</p>
Carbon Action Network Awards 2015 HECA East - winner	<p>The Strategic Housing Team won for two projects that support Carbon Action Network objectives:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The team supported the Big Energy Saving Network (BESN) project by assisting with an application for DECC funding to deliver a project to support vulnerable people to switch energy suppliers. For the last two years, this project has run alongside the Council's Big Community Switch (BCS), which is only available online. The BESN project enabled the BCS to be digitally inclusive by supporting vulnerable people in Colchester to successfully switch energy supplier. • Through partnership working with En-form, the team also supported the first Colchester Green Open Homes event in 2014. The event was so successful that the project has been extended to the whole of Essex, and will see not just homes but community buildings and businesses with energy efficiency measures at work and open to the public throughout September 2015.
Park Mark - the safer parking scheme	Twenty of the Council's car parks across the town centre and borough were given the nationally recognised Park Mark award following independent assessment including a Police inspection. The annual award is given in recognition of investment to keep the car parks to a high standard, ensure the safety of customers and their vehicles, and where there are low instances of crime.
Green Flag Awards	Castle Park has received its thirteenth consecutive Green Flag, with High Woods receiving its twelfth. Green Flags set a benchmark of standards for management and maintenance of publicly accessible urban and countryside parks, and promotes the community value of green spaces.
GeoPlace – national Exemplar Gold award	Gold Performance Award for Address Data - for consistently maintaining the highest level of data quality. The Exemplar Awards recognise excellence in local authority business-critical data creation of Address data, known as a Local Land and Property Gazetteer (LLPG) and Street data, known as a

	Local Street Gazetteer (LSG). Only ten authorities in the east of England achieved this Gold standard.
LEXCEL	Legal Services achieved the Law Society's practice management standard – a Centre of Excellence.
Essex Digital Awards	Now in its second year, the Essex Digital Awards look to reward innovation and progressive thinking by businesses. CBC won in the Best mobile App category for Leisure World's MyLeisure App.

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Open and transparent data - The LGA's Data and Transparency Manager commended us as we are now one of just 11 councils who have 'gone the extra mile' on open data. We've used [Datashare](#) to publish everything we're obliged to in one place – helping to reduce FOI requests by 35% - and that's now 'harvested' from Datashare to also automatically show on both the national GOV.UK [Datasets](#) and the LGA's [Open data | LG Inform Plus](#) initiatives to improve openness and transparency of information to the public.

Localisation and Social Security: A Review –The Social Security Advisory Committee (SSAC) is an influential body on central government and specifically to the Department for Work and Pensions. Colchester played an active part in this review of subjects including local council tax support (LCTS), discretionary housing payments (DHP), local welfare assistance and Universal Credit. Officers were then invited to a SSAC roundtable meeting in London to provide more detailed insight into the innovative approach, implementation and performance at Colchester, and its responsiveness to change and local needs. The [full report](#) has now been issued with Colchester's input/case studies on pages 29, 34, 43 and 44. The insight has informed the [government's response](#).

Annual reports – the Council produces annual reports on its performance in various areas. These reports are brought into one place on the website [here](#) for ease of reference, and to make it easier for the public to find which annual reports are available.