

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 2022 to March 2023 – Year Report	
National RTPI awards for planning excellence winners 2022	Karen Syrett, the Council’s lead officer for planning and place strategy, was awarded the Head Planner of the Year Award . Beth Jones, Principal Planning Officer, was a finalist in the Young Planner category. These are the most established and respected awards in the UK planning industry. Running for over 40 years, they celebrate exceptional examples of planning and the contribution planners make to society. December 2022
East of England Local Government Association - Senior Leadership Challenge	This aimed to give aspiring leaders the skills to support their councils to better serve their communities. It involved a Council team competing against teams from other local authorities. Our team won the ‘Best Collaborators’ award. As winners they now have the opportunity of taking part in a development session with the East of England Local Government Association, with a focus on stakeholder engagement. November 2022
Colchester tops the league for Covid business support	The Council was named as the top-performing local authority in Essex for getting urgent financial support to businesses hit by the coronavirus pandemic. November 2022
Quest - UK quality scheme for sport and leisure	Colchester Sports Park is now a Quest Accredited Site , with the full report highlighting the facilities as “Very Good”. Quest is the Sport England recommended continuous improvement tool for leisure facilities and sports development teams, designed to measure how effective organisations are at providing customer service. It is the industry’s recognised barometer of success. October 2022
British Parking Awards	The North Essex Parking Partnership (NEPP) were finalists in five categories. The ‘ Rising Star ’ award went to Jake England, Group Operating Manager, Environment. This award shines a spotlight on the rising stars of parking, in recognition of the person “who has consistently made an outstanding contribution to their team and the wider parking sector”. October 2022
Park Mark awards and Park Mark Plus - British Parking Association (BPA)	All 20 CBC-owned car parks across Colchester borough have retained national Park Mark awards for their safety, accessibility and quality management for the fourteenth consecutive year. In 2020, the Council’s Priory Street Car Park was only the second car park in the country to receive Park Mark Plus status, and it has retained this elite award in 2022. The award recognises only the highest-quality car parks, and assesses a range of criteria, including services, operations, design and build. To qualify for the award, car parks must already have the BPA’s Park Mark award and meet the Disability Parking Accreditation criteria. September 2022

Fantastic for Families Awards and the Museums and Heritage Awards	Colchester and Ipswich Museums were shortlisted in both the 'Partnership of the Year' category of the Museums and Heritage Awards and by Fantastic for Families . This is for the Creating Joy at the Jobcentre project when Ipswich Museum created five days of arts, crafts and play at Ipswich Job Centre Plus. September 2022
Fields in Trust - UK's favourite parks	Colchester Castle Park and High Woods Country Park were voted 'East of England Local Favourites'. The public nominated 364 parks for UK's Favourite Parks 2022 and cast over 30,000 votes for local green spaces close to their hearts. Those parks finishing in the top 20% of the public vote achieved 'Local Favourite' status, reflecting the love shown for them by their local communities. August 2022
Working towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Community status	The Council has been recognised for its continuing efforts to raise awareness of dementia among staff and residents. The Council, which is a member of the Colchester Dementia Action Alliance (CDAA), has been accredited and awarded ' Working towards becoming a Dementia Friendly Community ' status. August 2022
Green Flag Awards	Castle Park, High Woods Country Park and Colchester's Cemetery and Crematorium have received Green Flag Awards . Green Flags set a benchmark of standards for management and maintenance of publicly accessible urban and countryside parks, and they promote the community value of green spaces. As well as receiving its twentieth Green Flag award, Castle Park has also once again been awarded Green Heritage Site status, which recognises its work to promote its historic surroundings. July 2022
East of England RTPi 2022 – Head Planner of the Year	Karen Syrett, the Council's lead planning officer, was presented with the Head Planner of the Year award at the East of England RTPi awards and goes through to the national finals in November. The prestigious awards celebrate outstanding plans, projects and people that demonstrate the power of planning – highlighting exceptional examples of how planning and planners have a positive impact on people's quality of life in creating exceptional places and protecting the environment. July 2022
Colchester named England's most recycling conscious town	Food waste disposer supplier, InSinkErator, analysed the recycling habits of towns and cities across England, generating a 'recycling-conscious score'. Colchester also came out on top, with a recycling conscious score of 94%. June 2022
Kids in Museums	Colchester Castle was one of three venues shortlisted for ' Best Accessible Museum 2022 '. Hundreds of families across the country voted for their favourite heritage attraction. A panel of museum experts, children and young people then whittled down the nominations to this shortlist, saying "What set the venues on our shortlist apart was that they not only created an excellent visitor experience for families, but also showed a great commitment behind the scenes to respond to family feedback and improve access, especially for those who are not regular visitors". June 2022
Promoting Awareness of Civil Enforcement through Reporting (PACER) Awards	North Essex Parking Partnership won the 'best use of Design' category of the 2022 PATROL PACER Awards for their NEPP Parking Annual Report 2020-21 . The PACER awards are presented to the best parking and traffic management Annual Reports across seven categories. June 2022

LEXCEL	Legal Services have been re-accredited following the Lexcel standard's annual inspection, for the 22nd consecutive year. Lexcel is the Law Society's legal practice quality mark for excellence in legal practice management and excellence in client care. June 2022
Health and Wellbeing Awards – Colchester Gazette	Donna Hoy from Colchester Leisure World was awarded first place in the Personal Trainer category. The Activa Gym took third place in the Best Gym category. May 2022
GeoPlace Exemplar Awards	The Council has been awarded the ' Platinum Award for Address Data '. It recognises councils that have maintained Gold, which is the highest level of data quality in all of the Annual Improvement Schedule criteria. These awards recognise best practice and outstanding address data management by local authorities who have consistently maintained the highest level of data quality. Land, property, street and address information are used to connect different services across the Council – giving communities and individuals a 'property-level view' of the services available to them. May 2022
Museums and Heritage awards	Colchester + Ipswich Museums' Power of Stories exhibition won the temporary or touring exhibition of the year . Why the judges chose this winner: <i>The judges were impressed by how brilliantly the Power of Stories connected with its community. They felt it was genuinely powerful and demonstrated a clear and lasting benefit. Delivered on a budget which only just took them into this category, this block buster was extremely good value as well as being both surprising and smart.</i> CIMS won the 2022 award when other finalists included the V&A, Natural History Museum and Blenheim Palace. May 2022
EDIE Sustainability Leaders awards 2022	The Council's ' CAREless pollution ' campaign was Highly Commended in the Consumer Engagement Campaign category. The campaign was established in 2020 to tackle poor air quality in Colchester. The aim is to encourage drivers to switch off their vehicle engines when stationary, cutting pollution by up to 30%. April 2022
Councillor Development Charter	<p>This award recognises that the Council has achieved best practice in the way it provides learning and development opportunities for its elected members (councillors). The Council was first awarded Charter Status in 2011 and was reaccredited in 2015, 2018 and 2022. The accreditation lasts for a period of three years, followed by a full reassessment.</p> <p>The Charter is recognition of the Council's achievement of best practice in the way it provides learning and development opportunities for its elected members and also provides effective support to its elected members. This provides reassurance to current and potential members. It also provides a reassurance to residents that their elected representatives will be supported to enable them to undertake their roles and responsibilities effectively.</p> <p>To achieve Charter Status the Council had to demonstrate that it has met all of the following criteria:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) There is a clear commitment to councillor development and support b) The Council has a strategic approach to councillor development

	<p>c) Learning and development is effective in building skills and knowledge.</p> <p>To meet these criteria, the Council demonstrates its commitment to supporting and developing councillors and how this is reflected in its policies and procedures. Key elements include an all-party member development group, a member development policy and strategy and formal methods of assessing member training needs. April 2022</p>
<p>Customer Service Excellence standard</p>	<p>The Council's Contact and Support team were awarded the Customer Service Excellence standard for the third year in a row, following a rigorous assessment day.</p> <p>Customer Service Excellence is a government-backed industry standard that tests in depth those areas that research has shown are a priority to customers, with a particular focus on delivery, timeliness, information, professionalism and staff attitude. Achieving the standard gives us formal recognition of our commitment to, and delivery of, customer service. This helps confirm to our residents, current and potential customers and staff both the quality of the service and the support they will receive should they contact Colchester Borough Council. February 2022</p>

Other sources of performance data

Statistics and data – the way we collate and publish a range of council statistics, performance indicators, datasets and information has been updated. Pulling all this together will help us to maintain open and accessible information for customers, businesses, and other interested parties.

The [Council Data](#) section at colchester.gov.uk/council-data is designed so that people can easily find out information we hold, our obligations on open data and transparency, as well as how to make a freedom of information request.

Categories include spending, business rates, democracy, housing, land, parking, planning and licensing, recycling and waste.

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

Single Data List - this is a list of all the datasets that local government must submit to central government. The list is reviewed and updated annually. Local authorities are not obliged to provide any data which is not on the list without extra funding.