

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 2019 to September 2019 – half-year report	
Defence Employer Recognition Scheme	<p>The Council has achieved the Gold award from the Ministry of Defence’s Employer Recognition Scheme. This scheme recognises organisations which go the extra mile to demonstrate their commitment to aiding and employing members of the military community. It is the first time the Council has received the Gold Award, having previously received the Silver and Bronze accolade.</p> <p>The Council aims to maintain and develop this work and is pleased to set an example to others. We are actively working to raise awareness of the Armed Forces Covenant and encouraging other businesses and organisations in the area to also be Forces Friendly employers. August 2019.</p>
PATROL (Parking and Traffic Regulations Outside London) Parc awards	<p>North Essex Parking Partnership’s (NEPP) 2017/18 Annual Report was Highly Commended in the ‘Innovation and New Services’ category “where authorities have delivered examples of an innovative approach or new scheme to improve traffic management, in order to better meet the needs of the community”. July 2019.</p>
Green Flag Awards	<p>Castle Park and High Woods Country Park have again both been awarded Green Flag Awards, recognising them as two of the best parks in the UK. Colchester’s Cemetery and Crematorium also achieved Green Flag status. 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. The Castle Park also holds Green Heritage Site status. July 2019.</p>
Fairtrade town	<p>Colchester’s commitment to raising awareness of the benefits of Fairtrade products in the community has been recognised with a Fairtrade Town certificate – for the 13th year running.</p> <p>Colchester first received its Fairtrade Town accreditation in 2006. The certificate is awarded by The Fairtrade Foundation, which works to empower disadvantaged producers in developing countries by promoting and licensing the Fairtrade Mark – the symbol of the international Fairtrade system and most globally recognized ethical label. July 2019.</p>
Local Government Information Unit and the District Councils Network	<p>A major report, which spotlights the Council’s ambitions to build more council houses, was launched at the Local Government Association’s annual conference. It commended the Council for the “full commitment of its Cabinet to increase the level of affordable housebuilding” and as a good example for managing, and being realistic about, risk. It describes the Council as having “a healthy approach</p>

	to borrowing,” as it has modelled its debt projections from the additional borrowing over the next 30 years “to show the capacity to carry out a more ambitious programme of building.” July 2019.
Cycling UK's 100 Women in Cycling 2019	Pam Nelson, the Council's Travel Plan Co-ordinator has been named as one of the top 100 women to have encouraged others to get on their bikes at the Cycle UK Awards. June 2019.
GeoPlace Gold Performance Awards	These awards recognise best practice and outstanding address data management by local authorities. Land, property, street and address information is used to connect different services across the council – giving communities and individuals a ‘property-level view’ of the services available to them. May 2019.
Hot 100 UK Office locations 2019	When Property Week revealed this year's top office locations outside London, Colchester had jumped 34 places - up to 48 th from 82 nd in the 2018 UK rankings. Location strategist and data analyst experts CACI put together the Hot 100, a ranking of the best new and secondary office locations across the UK, excluding London. To compile the ranking CACI assesses 373 UK locations, taking into account a number of variables. May 2019.
LEXCEL	Legal Services have been re-accredited against this Law Society standard. Lexcel is the Law Society's legal practice quality mark for excellence in legal practice management and excellence in client care. May 2019.
Hoop Awards - Essex	Colchester Museums won the ‘Best Holiday Workshops’ category for its programme of children's events across its three museums - Colchester Castle, Hollytrees Museum and the Natural History Museum. These awards recognise and celebrate the people and activity organisers who go above beyond to entertain, educate and inspire children.
Municipal Journal (MJ) awards 2019	Housing Benefits Team was shortlisted as finalists in the ‘Workforce Transformation’ category. The judges also singled out the Council's Digital Access Support Team for a commendation in the ‘Delivering Better Outcomes’ category. The team was praised for its work to help bridge the digital divide and equip residents with the skills to be able to access online services. Housing Benefits Caseworker Lily Etherington received a commendation in the ‘Rising Star’ category. Lily joined the Council as an apprentice three years ago and won the Career Track 2018 Apprentice of the Year award. April 2019.

Other sources of performance data

Datashare – a wide range of Council performance data is available 24/7 via the online Datashare tool on the Council's website [here](#). Categories include spending, business rates, democracy, housing, land, parking, planning, 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.