

The Future of Essex

Ideas Book



The ideas in this book were gathered from creative sessions conducted between May and June 2017.

Participants working across a broad range of Essex organisations generated ideas around seven key ambitions for the County. They're not policy but they are a way to kick-start county-wide creativity.

The ideas they came up with are sometimes practical and at other times wild, frequently challenging, and always looking to lift the County up to its greatest potential.


Don't think of this book as a 'how to' guide. It's a 'what if' to inspire and inform. And while there are ideas that work specifically for one ambition, others pop up time and again throughout the book.


KEY:


As you read through the ideas, you'll notice a few additional numbers. So many ideas had multiple benefactors that it felt necessary to document where else change could be realised.


For instance:
The idea to launch a crèche and co-working space was generated during the Sense of Identity ① sessions. However, as an idea, it also impacts on Equal Start ③ and Prosperity ⑦.


BENEFACTORS:

- 

New Communities
Travelling across the globe to make Essex their home.
- 

Essex Families
Living, working and building safe, secure lives in Essex.
- 

Older People
Enjoying a fulfilling retirement.
- 

Future Talent
Driving prosperity with education and opportunity.
- 

The Environment
To be protected for future generations to enjoy.

Great minds think alike

In all, 277 ideas were generated over 15 hours of collaborative working with a number of Essex agencies and leaders. Many of these ideas were unique, new ways to engage with and empower communities.

The ideas we came up with cropped up again and again. It's in these areas of repetition that success can be found.

Almost every working group suggested some kind of mentorship programme or co-working opportunity. Working independently, many different people saw the value in reducing the numbers of cars on the roads, or building community

space into new developments. Despite the huge number of ideas, many shared the same core goals.

Grouping ideas by theme highlights a real desire to create change; to encourage walking, inspire future leaders or create space for businesses to grow. These themes show not only how creative Essex can be but also how even the wildest idea is grounded in a deep desire for action.

Partnership working relies on a shared responsibility and common goal. Change can only be achieved by sharing expert skills, resources and experience across Essex.

KEY AMBITIONS:

- ①
- ②
- ③
- ④
- ⑤
- ⑥
- ⑦

1

Unite behind a sense of identity

Essex is many places. A haven for wildlife, self-made millionaires, social housing and everything in between. Complicated, surprising, eccentric – there's no single way to describe who we are.

Our question...

*"How can we celebrate achievement in Essex?
How can we build a sense of civic pride and establish
Essex as a destination people want to visit?"*

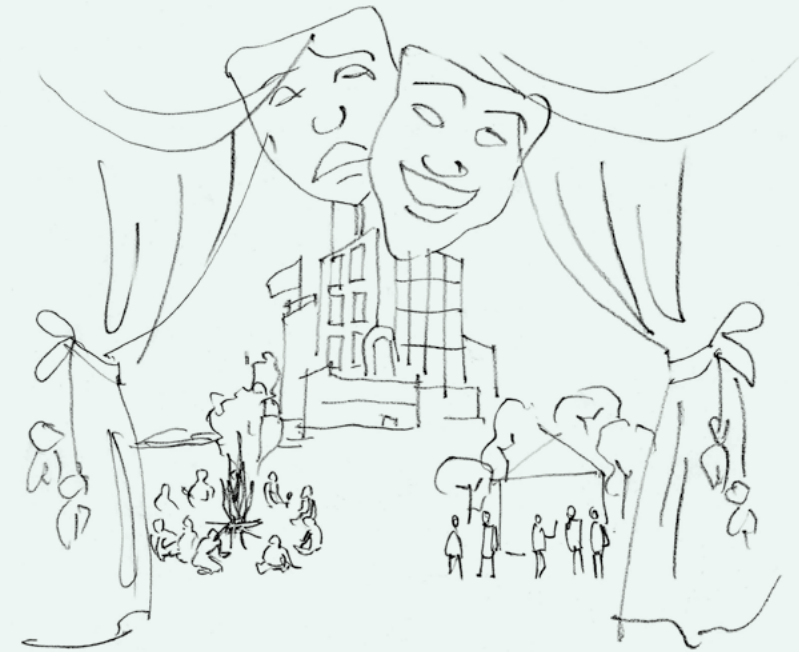


THEMES

Understanding Essex
Broadening young people's horizons
Celebrating county-wide achievement
Celebrating the hidden Essex

Creating supporting networks
Empowering female entrepreneurs
Empowering young women to achieve
Retelling the Essex story

① Celebrating the hidden Essex

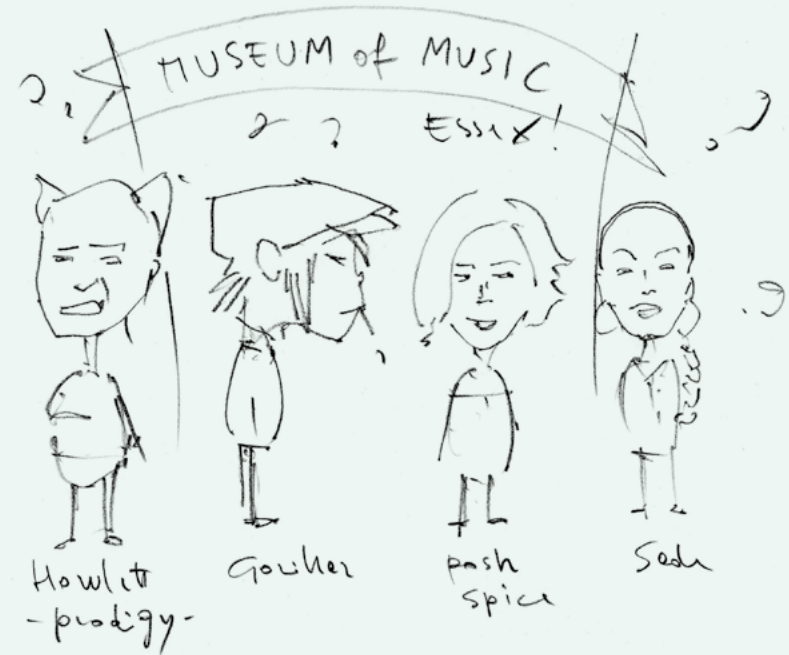


The Essex Story – a play

BENEFACTORS:

Create new work, performed across the UK to celebrate and dispel cultural stereotypes around Essex.

T Retelling the Essex story



Essex Music Museum

BENEFACTORS:

Celebrate Essex’s musical achievements in both history and popular culture.

T Celebrating the hidden Essex

Cultural listening posts

Create internet enabled objects, housed on interesting sites that tell unique stories about Essex.

4

T Celebrating the hidden Essex

Cultural tours of Essex

Guided tours of Essex delivered by interesting Essex characters.

4

T Retelling the Essex story

White van man art trail

Campaign to challenge the image and stereotype of Essex as a culture desert with a touring white van art trail highlighting and celebrating Essex artists and culture.

T Creating supporting networks

Mentoring app

Virtual business advice delivered via messaging service to share support.

3 7

T Empowering female entrepreneurs

Crèche and co-work

Combine co-working spaces with childcare to allow parents to work efficiently and build networks with other working parents.

3 7

T Retelling the Essex story

Cultural map of Essex

Map the untold story of Essex based on unusual and unique people’s history. Use a competition to crowdsource the most interesting, untold stories.

4

T Understanding Essex

The ‘new’ Essex girl

Create a new image of the Essex girl based on research into aspiration and attainment of successful Essex women.

T Understanding Essex

Write an Essex curriculum

Teach a revised history of Essex from primary to secondary school.

T Understanding Essex

The impact of the Essex girl

Academic study into the economic impact of the Essex girl image on outlook and aspiration for the County.



T Understanding Essex

MA in Essex

A year-long academic study into Essex history, culture and future.

T Broadening young people's horizons

Pupil premium for the arts

All schoolchildren to gain access to a number of free hours of arts workshops and performances every year.



3

T Celebrating county-wide achievement

Essex Festival

Annual celebration of the best Essex has to offer, from food and agriculture to pop culture and radical activity.

7

T Understanding Essex

The cultural impact of TOWIE

Academic study into the cultural impact of TOWIE on the UK, broadcast media and Essex.



T Empowering female entrepreneurs

Businesswoman of the year award

Celebrate successful female entrepreneurs.



T Broadening young people's horizons

Combine work experience and volunteering

Devote a number of days every school year to voluntary activities encouraging young people to see the benefit of helping others.



3

T Celebrating county-wide achievement

Museum of Essex

Chart the chronological history of Essex in a museum setting.

2

Enjoy life long into old age

Essex is full of people who have enjoyed a long, fruitful life here – the people who built our County. And it has the potential to offer everyone the same excellent quality of life as they live and grow old here.

Our question...

*"How can we close the gap in life expectancy across Essex?
How can we halve the number of avoidable illnesses, and ensure every adult who is able to, can live independently?"*

T THEMES

Building community health and wellness
Building lifelong wellness
Creating supporting networks
Encouraging healthy behaviour changes

Learning from success
Monitoring people when we can't be there
Reducing pressure on A&E
Understanding the cost of illness

Ⓣ Monitoring people when we can't be there



Older people accelerometer

Use motion tracking to monitor not only activity levels but also vital signs of older people when family members can't be close. iPads, motion sensitive cameras and pedometers can all be used to monitor the safety of isolated and frail people.

Ⓣ Reducing pressure on A&E



New health hubs

Deal with complaints that end up in A&E by creating attractive places with drop-in appointments.

Combine emerging health tech with free refreshments, a kids play area and attractive setting to create a place people want to visit.

T

Building lifelong wellbeing

Local cookery classes

Community-led cookery classes bringing people together to educate about diet and nutrition but also food poverty.

4

T

Creating supporting networks

Social media community groups

Empower community gatekeepers to create online community engagement groups.

4

T

Building lifelong wellness

Daily mile

Every Essex school child runs a mile a day.

3

T

Learning from success

Replicate success

Find and study those areas that are succeeding, for example the Bromley-by-Bow community centre scheme.

3

T

Creating supporting networks

Unlock community connections

Learn from success, celebrate and share good ideas, release pressure on specialist provision. Enable good ideas by reducing red tape.

4

T

Encouraging physical activity

Healthy school zone

Create a junk food exclusionary zone around all schools.

4

T

Building lifelong wellness

Community allotments

Use the outdoor gym model to promote physical wellbeing while teaching communities about healthy eating.

4

T

Understanding the cost of illness

My Health calculator

Let people visualise the impact of their health choices.

4

T

Learning from success

Communities map

A visual map of Essex’s successful community projects to help new groups create new networks.

3

T

Building lifelong wellness

Afterschool clubs as preventative care

Use the afterschool setting to identify potential health and wellbeing challenges at a very early, and preventable stage.

3

T

Building lifelong wellness

Mental health in schools

Mental health practitioner in every school in Essex.

3

T

Learning from success

Invest in healthy schools

Design in good lifestyle choices as part of all stages of education.

3

T

Creating supporting networks

A talking community suggestions box

Find a way to share difficulties, burdens and solutions in an open, caring community setting.

4

T

Creating supporting networks

Intergenerational Tinder

Link up young and old people to reduce isolation by sharing skills and experiences.

3

T

Learning from success

Brag pitch / Pecha Kucha

Create events to share success in a fun, informal environment.

4

T

Creating supporting networks

Parenting programmes

Contact-based support delivered in the community.

3

14

15

3

Provide an equal start for every child

Over three quarters of Essex's schools are good or outstanding, and as our County and our communities grow, so will the opportunities for every young person.

Our question...

"How can we improve school readiness, lift aspiration and ensure the children of Essex can build safe, secure life-enhancing relationships?"

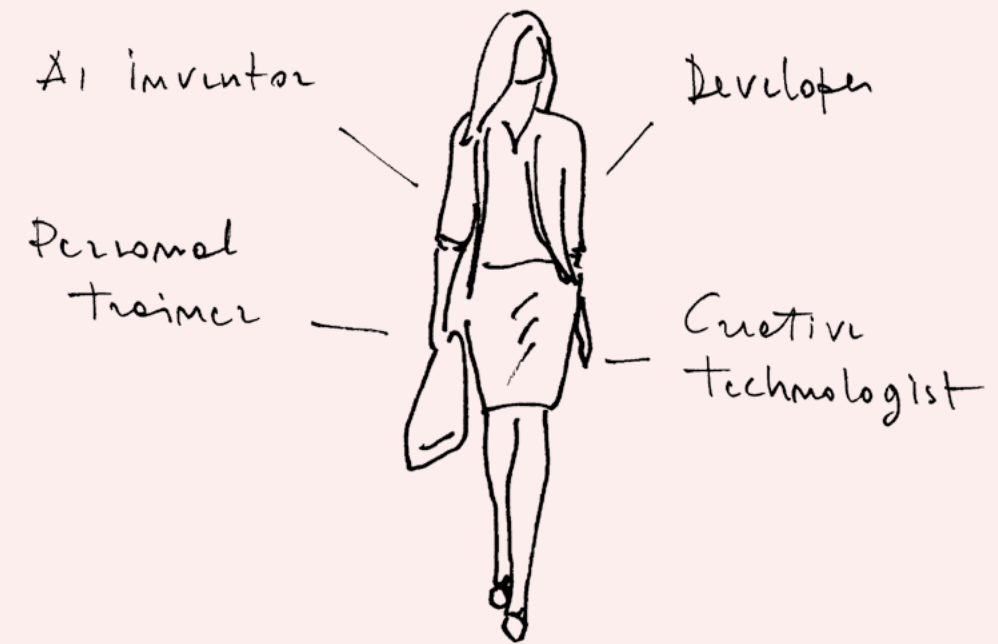
T THEMES

Forging better relationships
Building collaborative communities
Childcare support
Creating leaders
Delivering new skills
Rethinking education
Encouraging arts participation

Simplifying travel
Encouraging physical activity
Encouraging volunteering
Improving family life
Improving health
Investing in the future
Providing mentors

T Delivering new skills

7

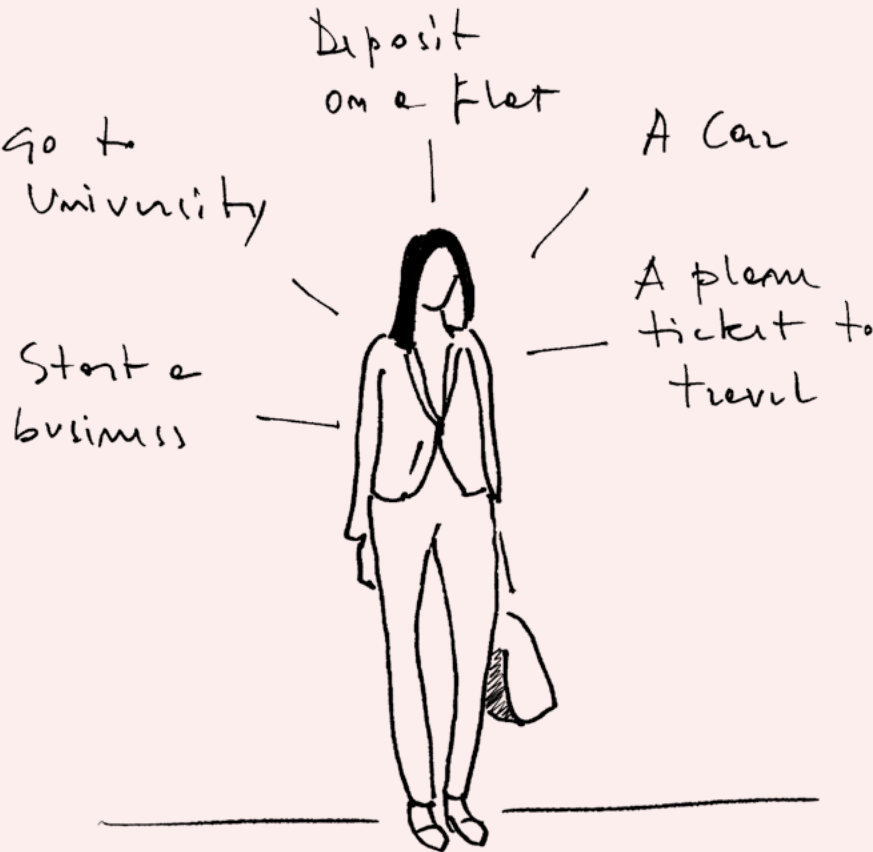


Enhanced careers advisors

Invite successful entrepreneurs to share their experience, delivering future-proof careers advice and focus on new ways of learning.

Identifying non-traditional learning providers such as General Assembly and Future Learn to understand what and how future skills can be achieved.

Ⓣ Investing in the future



Care leavers investment fund

Create an endowment fund so all looked-after children in Essex have the capital to buy a car or start a business when they leave education.

Ⓣ Building collaborative communities

Connecting centres

Create work opportunities for young people to work with Essex businesses, community projects and to access apprenticeships and training.

Ⓞ

Ⓣ Encouraging physical activity

Free personal training

Encourage young people to care for their bodies, improve mental wellbeing and learn to achieve goals through hard work.

Ⓞ

Ⓣ Providing mentors

Compulsory mentors

Every employee must mentor a young person.

Ⓞ

Ⓣ Investing in the future

Rewrite language around vulnerability

Change the language describing social deprivation to empower looked-after and supported young people.

Ⓣ Delivering new skills

Virtual interviews

Use VR to deliver practical interview skills and training.



Ⓞ

Ⓣ Providing mentors

Tech girls

Industry mentors to encourage young women in tech.



Ⓞ

Ⓣ Forging better relationships

Health drop-ins

Local 'one-stop shops' for young people teaching sex education, promoting healthy relationships, staying safe online, healthy eating and exercise.



Ⓞ

Ⓣ Forging better relationships

Better sex education

Educate young people about consensual, healthy relationships.



Ⓞ

T Broadening young people's horizons

Life swap

Give young people across Essex a chance to experience different lives.



①

T Investing in the future

Mental health in curriculum

Teach mindfulness from primary school age to manage stress and anxiety.



②

T Encouraging volunteering

Increased work experience

Create an enhanced work experience programme with multiple opportunities throughout the school career to try a range of career options.



⑦

T Delivering new skills

Future playground

Physical playground that teaches digital skills.



⑦

T Delivering new skills

Business academy for supported young people

Provide opportunities for children with complex needs to achieve good quality, aspirational employment.



T Rethinking education

Flexy schools

Allow children to study part-time, investigating their personal passions in the meantime.

T Encouraging arts participation

Arts mentorship

Encourage creative thought by pairing young people with established arts professionals.

T Simplifying travel

Essex-London free 16-21

Provide free transport for young people aged 16-21 between Essex and London to encourage career aspiration.

⑥

4

Strengthen communities through participation

The strength of Essex is its people. We are home to many tight-knit communities, with an incredible voluntary sector and community spirit.

Our question...

"How can we celebrate our voluntary sector and build strong, safe, welcoming communities?"

T THEMES

Mapping and celebrating Essex heritage
Spot, celebrate and empower community talent
Empower communities to lead themselves
Encourage volunteering

Improve housing
Bringing people together
Creating supporting networks

Ⓣ Bringing people together



Empty shops initiative

Ensure all empty shops can be leased to groups engaged in community development.

Empty shops can be used as meeting spaces, retail and community arts initiatives. Leased on a short-term basis, the scheme ensures continued activity on the high street and eliminates the number of empty shops.

Ⓣ Creating supporting networks



Micro-volunteering platform

Create a digital platform that can connect people who have snippets of time to volunteer with isolated, frail and older people who may want help and/or company.

Micro-volunteering allows busy people, who may be put off by long-term voluntary commitments, to help their community.

Micro-volunteering offers can be matched by time, location and/or skill set, allowing people with specialist skills to work efficiently.

T

Mapping and celebrating Essex heritage

Hidden Essex tour

Walking tours, wildlife activities, poetry events and wild camping to help the people of Essex reconnect with the County.

1

T

Spot, celebrate and empower community talent

Engagement checklist

Compile a checklist of requirements for success that should be delivered at the start of any community engagement project.

5

T

Encourage volunteering

Cross-departmental volunteering task force

Encourage collaboration across sports, education and health with a combined volunteering action team to efficiently share skills and resources.

2

T

Empower communities to lead themselves

Citizen juries

Panels of local people with a shared community interest gather to discover a solution. Especially useful when debating contentious issues such as new developments.

5

T

Spot, celebrate and empower community talent

Asset mapper role

Create a position for an individual to move between communities to map assets, investigate opportunities and create links between separate communities.

2

T

Spot, celebrate and empower community talent

Social media skill share

Create learning opportunities for passionate community members so they can share their skills and experiences with a wider audience.

Teach blogging, social media and community management skills so that successful groups can teach and inspire new groups.

1

T

Bringing people together

Creative hubs

Embed arts and creative professionals and the communities they serve within libraries, museums and other community spaces.

1

T

Bringing people together

Drop-in cafés

Repurpose community and village halls as drop-in, informal meeting places to reduce isolation and encourage engagement.

5

T

Empower communities to lead themselves

Connected communities prize

A campaign to find and celebrate cohesive, connected and active communities that already meet the ambition our vision aspires to.

2

T

Improve housing

New development community groups

Connect existing and new residents in all development projects to ease community integration from the outset.

5

T

Spot, celebrate and empower community talent

Cut red tape

Enable talented and engaged individuals to be active by using local authority knowledge to cut red tape and encourage more agile community working.

2

T

Empower communities to lead themselves

Community vision charters

Create community organisations entrusted with responsibility for shaping localised growth. Ask for input on how public services can work together to serve the community.

5

T

Mapping and celebrating Essex heritage

Heritage trails

A community art project to map and share memories and folk history from across the County.

1

T

Empower communities to lead themselves

Community budgets

Give communities more control over how money is spent within their community.

1

T

Spot, celebrate and empower community talent

Good citizen award

Celebrate kind deeds within a community.

1

T

Spot, celebrate and empower community talent

Social movers delivery service

Harness cyclists, walkers and car drivers to move messages and goods from point to point within a community.

6

5

Develop our County sustainably

Essex is unique. Historic market towns and radical new towns. The longest coastline in Britain and working port communities. Ancient, beautiful, modern, challenging.

Our question...

"How can we ensure everyone has access to good quality, affordable homes, while sustainably developing our County?"

T THEMES

Building communities

Repurposing housing stock

Secure homes for all

Visualising future developments

Bringing people together

Spot, celebrate and empower community talent

Building community health and wellness

Building communities

Bringing people together

Protecting the environment

Protecting our heritage

T Building communities

2 4



Building brick and mortar communities

Community space built into all new developments that facilitate meetings to connect people, encourage enabled health care and community based care.

Including residents, service providers and planners in the consultation from the outset allows all parties to have a say in how their towns and villages can be developed sustainably.

Ⓣ Visualising future developments

④



VR for housing developments

Virtual reality can help residents and community groups visualise development plans at an early stage.

Encouraging input can ease planning opposition while giving residents a greater say in how their environment is developed.

Ⓣ Visualising future developments

Community insight developments

Through consultation and co-creation, build developments people want to live in.



④

Ⓣ Building community health and wellness

Take ownership of future developments

Empower community action groups to take ownership of community building and design 'state of the art' primary care into all new developments.



④

Ⓣ Repurposing housing stock

Housing stock audit

Audit all pre-existing and unused buildings that could be brought into housing stock.



Ⓣ Building sustainability

Centre parks housing estate

Car-free estates with parking on the outskirts.

④

Ⓣ Building communities

New communities not just houses

Pilot new methods of communication to share development plans with existing and future residents to help alleviate community tensions.



④

Ⓣ Secure homes for all

Secure tenure

Protect chaotic households from eviction by not stopping their payments to private landlords.



③

Ⓣ Bringing people together

Free bike with every new home

Housing developers to provide every new home with a free bike.



② ③

Ⓣ Spot, celebrate and empower community talent

Environmental challenge prize

Use the challenge prize model to stimulate innovative thinking around environmental issues that would lead to sustainable development.



⑦ Building community health and wellness

Primary care in all planning application

No new development to give planning permission without the inclusion of primary care.



Ⓣ Building community health and wellness

Healthy planning

Use planning powers to build healthy community space into new developments.



Ⓣ Building communities

Childcare in every new development

Wrap-around childcare provision designed into every new development.



Ⓣ Protecting the environment

Young architects prize

Prize to celebrate the best young talent in sustainable development.



Ⓣ Building communities

Co-operative housing estates

Homebuyers pool their deposits to bulk buy self-build estates to get a better deal.



Ⓣ Bringing people together

Young and old living

Free up accommodation in elderly care homes for young people to live in reduced price accommodation in exchange for giving care and support.



⑦ Building community health and wellness

Adult playgrounds

Adult playgrounds to encourage mobility and balance throughout later life.



Ⓣ Protecting our heritage

Derelict stock audit

A county-wide audit of abandoned manufacturing space to determine what can be repurposed into commercial and cultural space.



6

Connect us to each other and the world

Essex has an unbeatable location – close proximity to London, a gateway to Europe and links to the rest of the world.

Our question...

"How can we increase trade connections between Essex and the world? How can we improve transport efficiencies and encourage investment in modes of transport other than our private cars?"

T THEMES

- Encourage walking
- Green strategy in urban development
- Increase public transport use
- Rethink the commute

- Make roads safer
- Reduce the number of cars on the road
- Reduce transport inefficiencies

Ⓣ Encourage walking



Council tax reduction for sustainable transport

The less you use the car, the less you pay.

Local authorities can offer reductions to those households who prioritise sustainable transport options.

Ⓣ Rethink the commute



Community co-working space

Repurpose libraries and unused community spaces as co-working hubs.

Libraries and other community spaces already exist and offer the foundations of thriving co-working hubs. Local authority support can help transform these spaces with superfast broadband, conference facilities and a welcoming breakout space.

T

Make roads safer

A new culture for transport

Redefine car journeys as limiting and frustrating. Not a tool for freedom.

5

T

Increase public transport use

Free public transport

Make all modes of public transport free to all passengers across the County.

3

T

Green strategy in urban development

Build high-quality transport provision into town planning

Each new development must prioritise sustainable transport that reduces reliance on single person car journeys.

5

T

Green strategy in urban development

Park and Ride end of the line

Roads into urban areas end at the Park and Ride so people must finish their journeys using sustainable modes of transport.

5

T

Green strategy in urban development

Electric-first road building

Electric car drivers are given priority status with dedicated lanes and toll-free driving.

5

T

Reduce the number of cars on the road

Council car tax

No-car households receive a discount, yet council tax rises the more cars a household owns.

3

T

Increase public transport use

Ferry across the Thames

A boat connecting South Essex and East Kent economies.

5

T

Increase public transport use

Nudge travel updates

Encourage efficient travel by highlighting when sustainable transport may be quicker and/or cheaper.

5

T

Reduce the number of cars on the road

No cars in town centres

Pedestrianise all town centres.

5

T

Reduce the number of cars on the road

School run app

Create an advanced journey share app for safe carpool to school.

3

T

Reduce the number of cars on the road

Flexible working hours

Encourage home working and flexible hours to reduce rush hour congestion.

3

T

Reduce the number of cars on the road

Urban travelators

Moving pavements to reduce the need for cars on short journeys.

5

T

Encourage walking

Subsidised shoes

Comfortable, sturdy walking shoes for the people of Essex.

5

T

Green strategy in urban development

Centre parks towns

Create green towns with fruit trees and vegetable patches for public consumption.

4 5

T

Reduce the number of cars on the road

Multi-people app

In-car app to sense when people are making single car journeys.

5

T

Green strategy in urban development

Ultra fast, free broadband

Public spaces enabled with ultra fast, free broadband.

5

34

35

7

Share prosperity with everyone

Essex is home to some exciting organisations and more entrepreneurs for the size of our economy than anywhere else in the UK. We're known for our confidence, smile and swagger.

Our question...

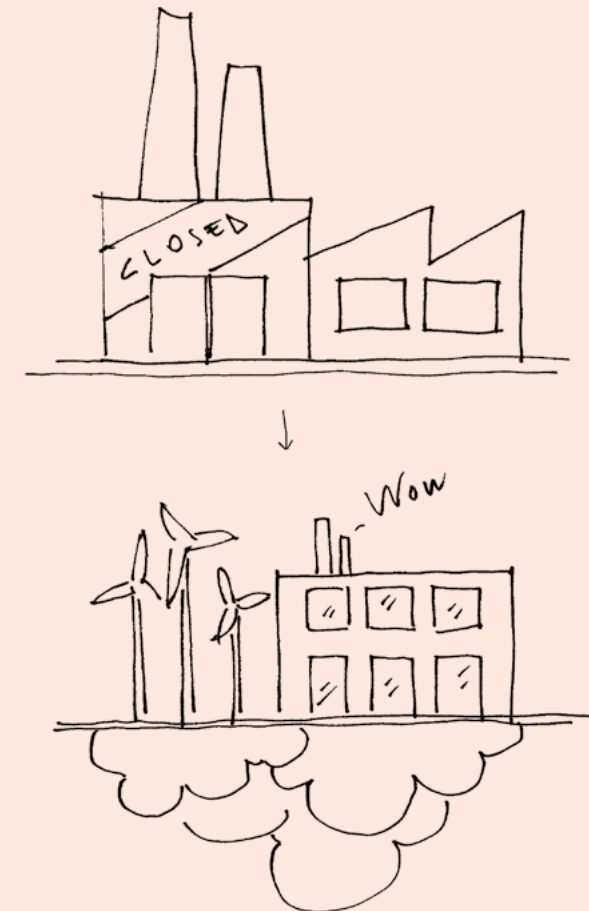
*"How can we lift aspiration for the people of Essex?
How can we provide a fertile ground for businesses to grow and productivity to increase? How can we capitalise on every opportunity that comes to Essex?"*

T THEMES

Create space to grow
Improve connectivity
Inspire future generations
Invest in healthy infrastructure

Invest in new technology
Prioritise future skills
Understanding assets

T Create space to grow



Repurposing grow-out space

Identify existing commercial space viable for refitting to create space for new businesses and industries to grow.

Realise the potential of out of date manufacturing and retail space to house emerging industries, giving SMEs the space to grow.

Ⓣ Prioritise future skills



Skills builder

Create a progressive skills school to build aspiration in bitesize chunks.

Utilising the Open University and online learning model to encourage people to acquire new skills around employment and education, enabling people to learn in a sustainable manner.

Ⓣ Create space to grow

Garden communities for major employers

Create live work communities that attract major employers to the area by providing affordable homes for their workers.



5

Ⓣ Inspire future generations

TFL Essex campaign

Advertise the benefits of living and working in Essex to tired London commuters.

1

Ⓣ Prioritise future skills

Create a design hub

Create a space to recognise the impact of design and creative sectors for the economy.



Ⓣ Inspire future generations

Business mentor scheme

Raise aspiration and expectation amongst young people, while creating stronger links between schools and businesses.



3

Ⓣ Invest in healthy infrastructure

Carbon positive Essex

Create a carbon positive fund to invite inwards investment into Essex. Prioritise low-carbon and renewable energy businesses.



5

Ⓣ Create space to grow

Build speculative growth space

Provide accommodation for businesses which allows them to grow seamlessly.



Ⓣ Improve connectivity

ECC run Thames shuttle

Create a frequent bus route through the lower Thames crossing.



6

Ⓣ Improve connectivity

Tendring port bus

Connecting previously isolated spaces, simplifying movement for employment.



6

Ⓟ Inspire future generations

Develop the creative industries

Establish Essex as the business home for emerging creative and innovative technology.

③

Ⓟ Inspire future generations

Create a new stereotype

Show Essex as dynamic, entrepreneurial and successful.

①

Ⓟ Prioritise future skills

21st century night school

Enable people to retrain with future skills.

③

Ⓟ Invest in new technology

Public investment in science

Create a centre of excellence in science, updating the supply chain, raising aspiration and developing Essex as a national hub for research.

③

Ⓟ Invest in new technology

Invest in automotive industry

Help South Essex businesses move into green and sustainable automotive manufacturing.

③

Ⓟ Invest in new technology

South and West Essex University

Develop a campus for other universities to be housed in areas of Essex currently without an academic provision.

③

Ⓟ Prioritise future skills

Skills escalator

Provide a seamless escalation connecting schools, FE, HE and apprenticeships.

③

Ⓟ Understanding assets

Sector analysis

Detailed analysis of suppliers, skills, marketplace and the role of public institutions in academia and science.

③

This ideas book would never have happened without the time, attention and creativity of Essex’s brightest minds. Thank you.

Adult’s Safeguarding Board

Anglia Ruskin Health Partnership

Anglia Ruskin University

Barnados

Basildon & Thurrock University Hospital Foundation Trust

Braintree District Council

Campaign to Protect Rural England (Essex)

Chelmsford City Council

Chelmsford Community Voluntary Service

Children’s Safeguarding Board

Colchester Arts Centre

Colchester Borough Council

Colchester Hospital University Foundation Trust

Community 360

Essex Association of Local Councils

Essex Community Foundation

Essex Compact

Essex County Council

Essex Cultural Diversity Project

Essex Music Education Hub

Essex Police

Essex Skills and Employment Board

Essex VCS Alliance

Farleigh Hospice

Fire and Rescue Service

Haven Gateway Partnership

Health and Wellbeing Board

Invest Essex

London-Stansted-Cambridge Consortium

Maldon CVS

Maldon District Council

Mercury Theatre

Mother Hub

North and East London CSU

Police and Crime Commissioner for Essex

Raytheon

Ringway Jacobs

Rochford District Council

Royal Opera House Bridge

Rural Community Council of Essex

South East Local Enterprise Partnership

South Essex College

Tendring District Council

University of Essex

Uttlesford District Council

Virgin Care

Visit Essex

Volunteer Essex

West Essex Clinical Commissioning Group

40

