

## **AGENDA ITEM 5**

**CYP/05/10**

**Committee: Children and Young People Policy & Scrutiny Committee**

**Date: 4 February 2010**

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### **Essex NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training)**

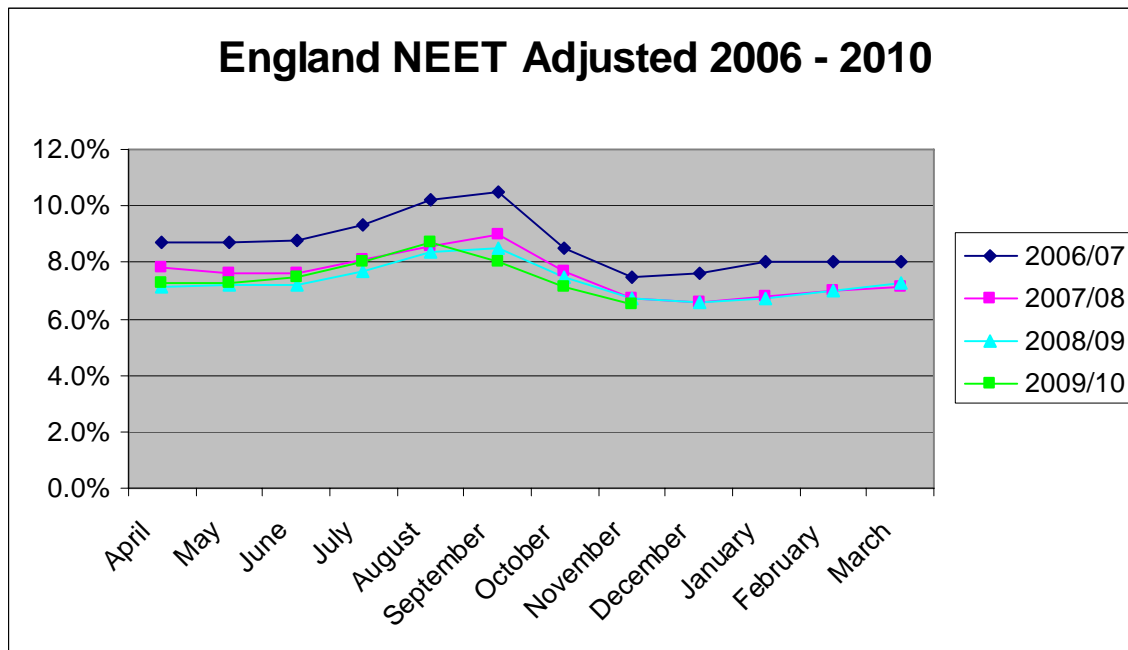
**Enquiries to: Vivien Door, Committee Officer**, 01245 430935, or ext 20935  
[viviendoor@essex.gov.uk](mailto:viviendoor@essex.gov.uk)

#### **1. Introduction**

Working with young people who are classified as NEET (Not in Education, Employment or Training) is a high priority of the current government and of Essex County Council. The Government has set a target to reduce the proportion of young people aged 16-18 who are within the NEET group by 2% by 2010, from a baseline of 10%..

The NEET cohort of young people is not a homogenous group and changes monthly depending on young people's circumstances. It is tracked monthly by the Integrated Youth Services (IYS) team and is reported by district and by type of young people. Some vulnerable young people are disproportionately represented within the NEET cohort. The districts of Basildon, Tendring, Braintree and Colchester also have a higher proportion of young people who are NEET. NEET sits as a key priority within Essex County Council under the National Indicator 117 and within the Achieving Economic Wellbeing Sub Group of the Children's Trust Board

## 2. Performance data



At the end of December 2009 the percentage of the 16-18 cohort of young people in Essex classified as NEET stood at 6.8%. This is compared to 6.5% nationally and equates to 2837 young people across Essex.

There is a marked variation across districts with the Basildon district having the highest volume of young people (559) and the Tendring district having the highest percentage of young people (13.3%).

NEET volumes and percentages in November and December 2009 by district:

NEET by District	Nov-09		Dec-09		Difference	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Basildon	578	12.7	559	12.6	-19	-0.1
Braintree	296	10.8	286	10.7	-10	-0.1
Brentwood	124	6.2	108	5.5	-16	-0.7
Castle Point	190	4.3	185	4.3	-15	0
Chelmsford	274	3.8	264	3.8	-10	0
Colchester	424	5.0	422	5.1	-2	+0.1
Epping	118	3.4	100	3.0	-18	-0.4
Harlow	162	5.3	148	4.9	-14	-0.4
Maldon	102	10.7	88	9.6	-14	-1.1
Rochford	142	10.3	140	10.4	-2	+0.1
Tendring	514	13.8	483	13.3	-21	-0.5
Uttlesford	57	3.6	47	3.0	-10	-0.6

In addition, there is a marked variation across age profile of young people with approximately 40% of young people within the above figures aged 18, 40% aged 17 and 20% aged 16. This reflects the current economic downturn as young people have been losing their jobs and apprenticeship places, whereas participation in education or training increased in September 2010 with many schools and colleges across Essex exceeding their recruitment targets due the higher demand for places.

As explained above vulnerable young people are more likely to enter the NEET cohort at some point between the ages of 16 and 18. Currently 14.8% of NEET young people are teenage parents; 6.2% are young offenders; 10.6% have learning difficulties / and or disabilities and 4.2% are Children Looked After. All of these cohorts pose immense challenges in terms of support and appropriate provision to re-engage them into employment or further training.

### **3. Current services / agencies working with NEET**

There are a number of key services and agencies who have responsibility for setting the strategy and working with NEET young people.

- Integrated Youth Services – have responsibility for tracking, monitoring and directly engaging with NEET young people to identify their needs and refer them into employment or courses post 16
- 14-19 Improvement team – lead on the funding and development of alternative courses at Key Stage 4, bespoke courses post 16 through LAA Performance Reward Grant Funding and the development of the new foundation Learning offer.
- Skills and International Trade – are piloting projects aimed at NEET young people including vulnerable young people through the Economic Participation Fund. Both of the above teams are creating additional provision through the development of vocational centres across Essex
- Youth Offending Service – have responsibility for securing education, employment and training for young offenders
- Leaving and After Care team – support children looked after in their transition phase at age 16
- Teenage Pregnancy co-ordinator – leads on the development of courses and support for Teenage Parents
- The Learning and Skills council – currently have responsibility for planning and funding all 16-18 provision including Entry to Employment courses and European Social Fund courses. From April 2010 this responsibility will transfer to Essex County Council.
- Schools, colleges, private providers, IYS and the voluntary sector run specifically funded courses aimed at engaging NEET young people

Through the involvement of the above teams and services there is already a significant amount of activity aimed at working with this complex cohort of young people, we remain very focussed about the continuing high volume of young people who are NEET across the county. To this end a new strategy and action plan have been developed by the Head of 14-19 Improvement, the Assistant Director of Skills and International Trade and the Head of the Integrated Youth Services aimed at increasing activity across the county and specifically across the districts of Tendring and Basildon. The strategy and actions are broken down into a NEET Prevention and NEET Reduction focus.

## **4. Actions**

### **4.1 NEET Prevention**

- Raise aspirations of young people through high quality provision of; education and training, participation in positive activities, and Information, Advice and Guidance
- Raise the employability skills of young people at key stage 4 through the roll out of the Employability for Life Charter which has been successfully piloted across the Castle Point and Rochford schools
- Evaluate and improve alternative education programmes and access to vocational programmes for young people at risk of becoming NEET. Currently approximately 1200 young people access alternative education courses during key stage 4
- Improve attendance levels and reduce permanent exclusions through the Behaviour and Attendance Partnerships
- Through the implementation of the September Guarantee, increase the volume of young people who have an offer of a post 16 learning place from 93.6% in 2009 to 95% in 2010.
- Continue to work with schools to provide additional support for young people identified as at risk of becoming NEET. In particular, the schools in Basildon have supplied data on year 11 young people they have identified as at risk of becoming NEET at the end of this academic year. Through European Social Funding we are planning to provide additional support to the schools and young people to prevent those identified becoming NEET.
- Continue the Business Champions Project run through the Essex Business Consortium whereby business mentors spend 3 hours with identified young people to raise their aspirations and plans once they leave school.

## 4.2 NEET Reduction

- We have recently piloted an in house programme entitled RONIE (Reducing NEETs in Essex) specifically aimed at NEET young people who are looked after. This is a pre apprenticeship programme and currently 13 young people are on work experience placements. A second cohort is planned for February 2010.
- Utilising the Olympics as a theme we are delivering the Personal Best level 1 programme using event volunteering as a way of engaging 80 NEETs prior to a possible apprenticeship. The first cohort starts in February 2010 in Basildon & Colchester. There will be a further cohort run in April/May across Basildon, Colchester and Braintree
- LAA Performance Reward grant has procured an additional 100 level 1 places across Tendring, Basildon and Braintree aimed at engaging NEET young people across these districts.
- Through Total Place we are undertaking a deep dive into the causes of NEET across the Tendring district. All stakeholders within the area have been interviewed and within the next month we will be interviewing NEET young people within the district. The project will be completed by the end of March and will provide both short term and long term solutions to reducing NEET across the district.
- Through the January Guarantee we are bidding to offer an additional 350 Entry to Employment places across the county on top of the 1000 places delivered as part of mainstream 16-18 provision.
- The Integrated Youth Services have developed a small Employer Liaison Team to track job vacancies across the county and match NEET young people to those vacancies. Since April 164 vacancies have been sourced and 193 young people supported to move from NEET to EET.
- Continue to support the Youth build programme aimed at working with NEET young offenders across mid Essex. The programme offers construction courses at level 1 with progression for some young people into employment opportunities
- Within Basildon, as well as the early identification pilot discussed under item 4.1 we will be undertaking an individual case review of all young offenders who are NEET within the Basildon district to better inform the planning and purchasing of provision for this complex cohort – this is approved by the Youth Offending Management Board and will take place in late February / early March 2010. In addition, we are planning to offer

120 apprenticeship places within construction in partnership with Prospects College. Finally, the local Integrated Youth Services team have telephoned all NEET young people in Basildon and will be piloting additional contact through knocking on doors of NEET young people across the district, to offer additional support and guidance.

- Increasing further education provision through the agreed mergers of South East Essex College with Thurrock and Basildon College and Colchester Institute with Braintree College.
- We are also running and developing an innovative programme to develop an additional 1000 apprenticeship places across Essex. This programme includes:
  - 120 in Engineering & Manufacturing, commenced in September 2009 across Basildon, Harlow and Colchester.
  - 11 young carers and care leavers in Sports Coaching in a joint venture with Chelsea Football Club, commenced November 2009
  - 300 in other key sectors of the economy currently un-served by the existing scheme (e.g. heating & ventilation, logistics, marine, IT, creative industries, environmental technologies), now being developed.
  - 400 within ECC both to meet natural turnover of staff and to offer time limited training/work opportunity to gain an apprenticeship (eg in business admin, youth work, outdoor education, finance, schools, IT), now being rolled out.
  - 80 within other public sector organisations (e.g. districts, unitary authorities, police, health service, fire etc.) now being rolled out.
  - 90 targeted towards care leavers, young carers, young offenders, teenage parents

#### **4.3 Vocational centres**

- We are in the final stages of developing vocational centres in Maldon and Canvey Island that are now being wholly funded by Essex County Council due to the withdrawal of capital funding by the Learning and Skills Council. These will provide access to much needed vocational provision at both key stage 4 and post 16 within these localities to broaden the offer and choice for young people, many of whom become NEET due the lack of provision. Two further centres are in the early stages of development in Chelmsford and Colchester.
- Further capital support is being identified to expand the Youth Build Offer into the Clacton area and to develop a horticulture version of the programme in Marks Tey.

## **5. Further challenges**

All of these initiatives and actions will be closely managed by a small executive team within the authority and the impact on the NEET data closely monitored during this academic year and across the new academic year. However there will continue to be further challenges and barriers for the authority to enable us to make a sustained reduction in the volume of young people who are NEET.

These include:

- Impact of the withdrawal of LSC FE capital funding will impact on the quality of facilities and the FE infrastructure the FE sector in Essex and the ability of the sector to grow – most FE colleges are at capacity 16-18.
- Tight funding envelopes for 16-18 provision and places
- More entry, level 1 and level 2 provision is needed across Essex
- The need for preparatory programmes to “ready” a number of our young people for the challenge of an apprenticeship, therefore we are rolling out a series of pre-apprenticeship programmes, and pastoral care/mentoring support to run alongside the apprenticeships.
- Improving the ‘employability’ levels of young people in order that they are ready to access the job market post the recession

## **6. Transfer of 16-18 funding and the Raising of the Participation Age**

From April 2010 the responsibility for planning and funding 16-18 provision will transfer from the Learning and Skills Council (LSC) to local authorities as part of better aligning pre 16 and post 16 provision across the Children’s Trust. Overtime this will create a more flexible funding model to enable local authorities to plan and fund more local solutions than the current national system allows. We are well prepared to take on these new responsibilities as well as the transfer of 11 staff from the LSC into the authority. During the summer 2010 we will be producing a 16-18 commissioning plan for the 2011/12 academic year outlining the volume of 16-18 places and types of provision we wish to commission from the 16-18 provider base including further education provision and apprenticeship provision.

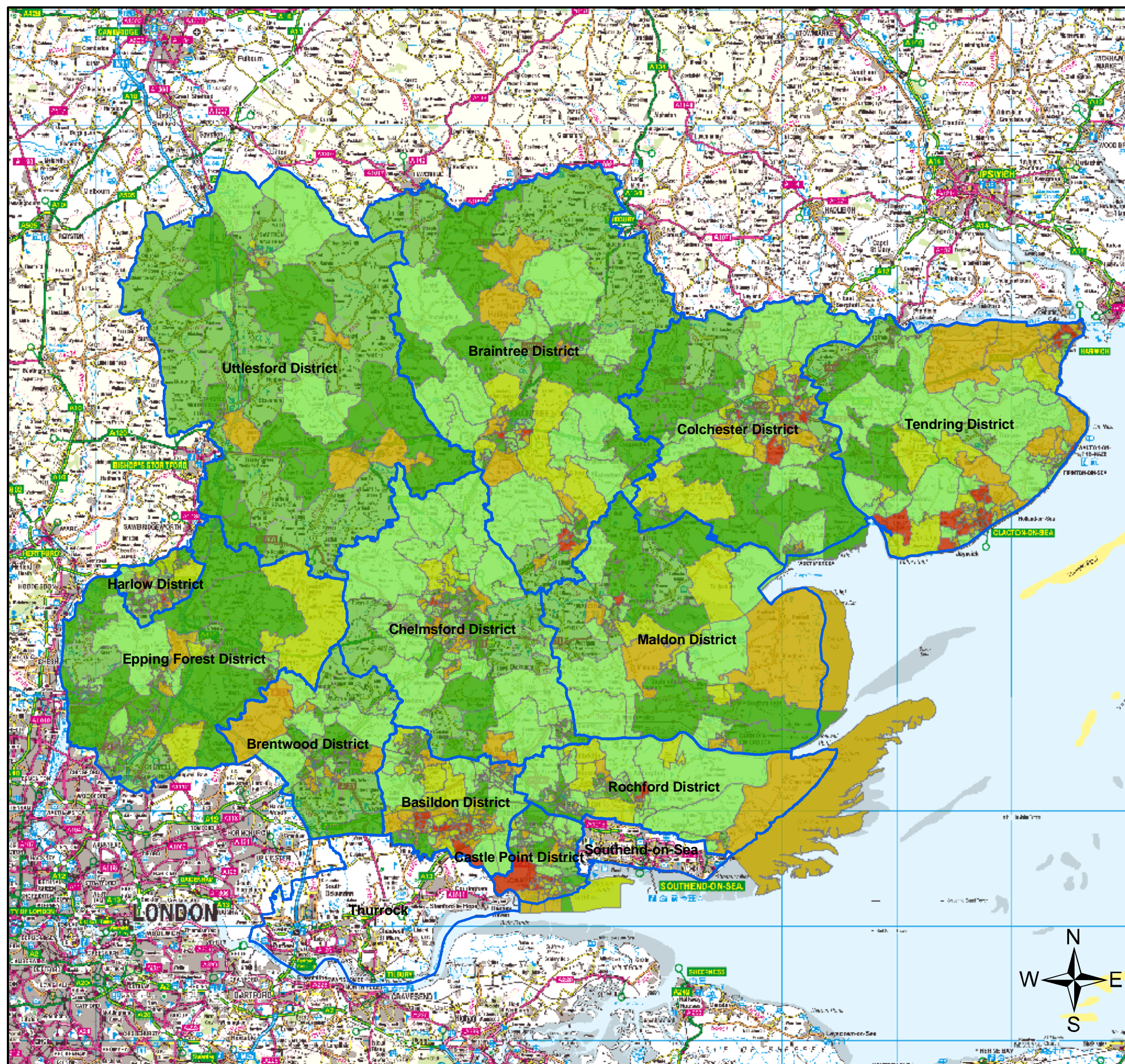
In addition, through recent legislation the government are intending to raise the statutory age for young people staying on in some form of education, training or employment with training to the age of 17 in 2013 and age 18 in 2015. As part of the above responsibilities we will need to better plan the offer and provision for 16-18 to enable all young people to have access to appropriate pathways throughout their education experience.

## **7. Next stages**

The next stages of the above action plan is for us to more effectively co-ordinate and join up all activity and to link it to the skills requirements of industry and the Essex economy, both now and in the future. This will ensure a greater alignment of the roll out of the new Diplomas qualifications, work experience, information, advice and guidance, pre-apprenticeship programmes, further education provision, apprenticeships, advanced apprenticeships, industry engagement and funding.

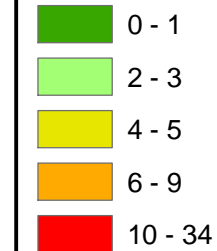


# The number of young people aged 16 - 18 who were NEET as at 08 12 09



Districts and Boroughs

## Number of NEET per LSOA



## Commentary

There were 3036 young people aged 16 - 18 who were NEET as taken from the Connexions Profile system on 08 12 09.

The map plots the whereabouts of young people who were NEET as at 08 12 09, according to their home postcode. These have been aggregated up to Lower Super Output Area (LSOA) level.

Whilst this aggregation does not give a strict rate per population, bearing in mind that LSOAs are all of a comparable size in terms of population numbers, the map provides a good picture of where the 'hotspots' are within the county.

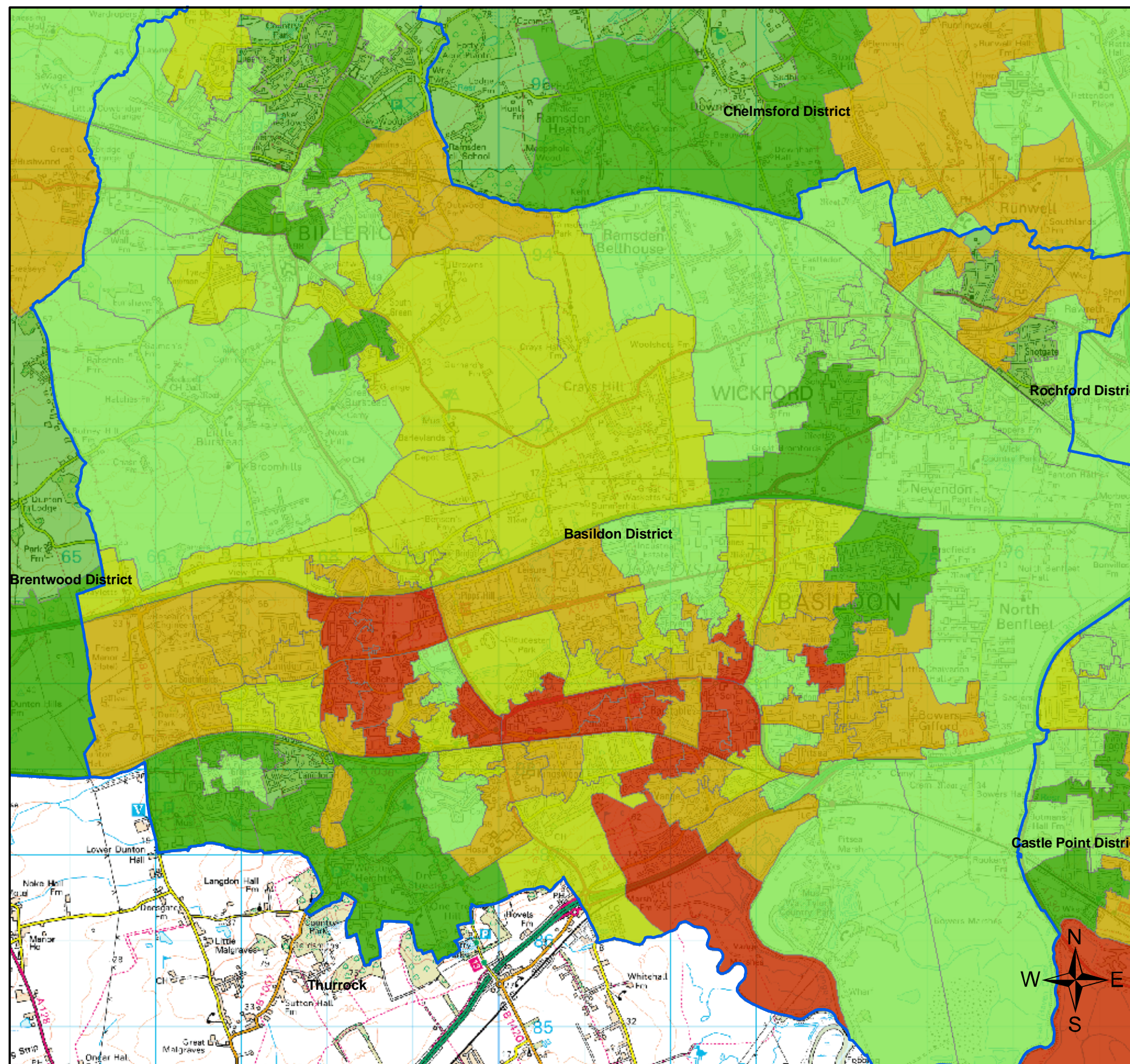
The table below shows the last formal end of month calculated figures - as at 30 11 09.

District	Number NEET	% of cohort
Basildon	578	12.7%
Braintree	296	10.8%
Brentwood	124	6.2%
Castle Point	190	4.3%
Chelmsford	274	3.8%
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Rochford	142	10.3%
Tendring	514	13.8%
Uttlesford	57	3.6%
Essex	2981	7.0%

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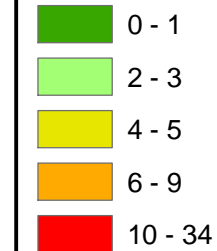


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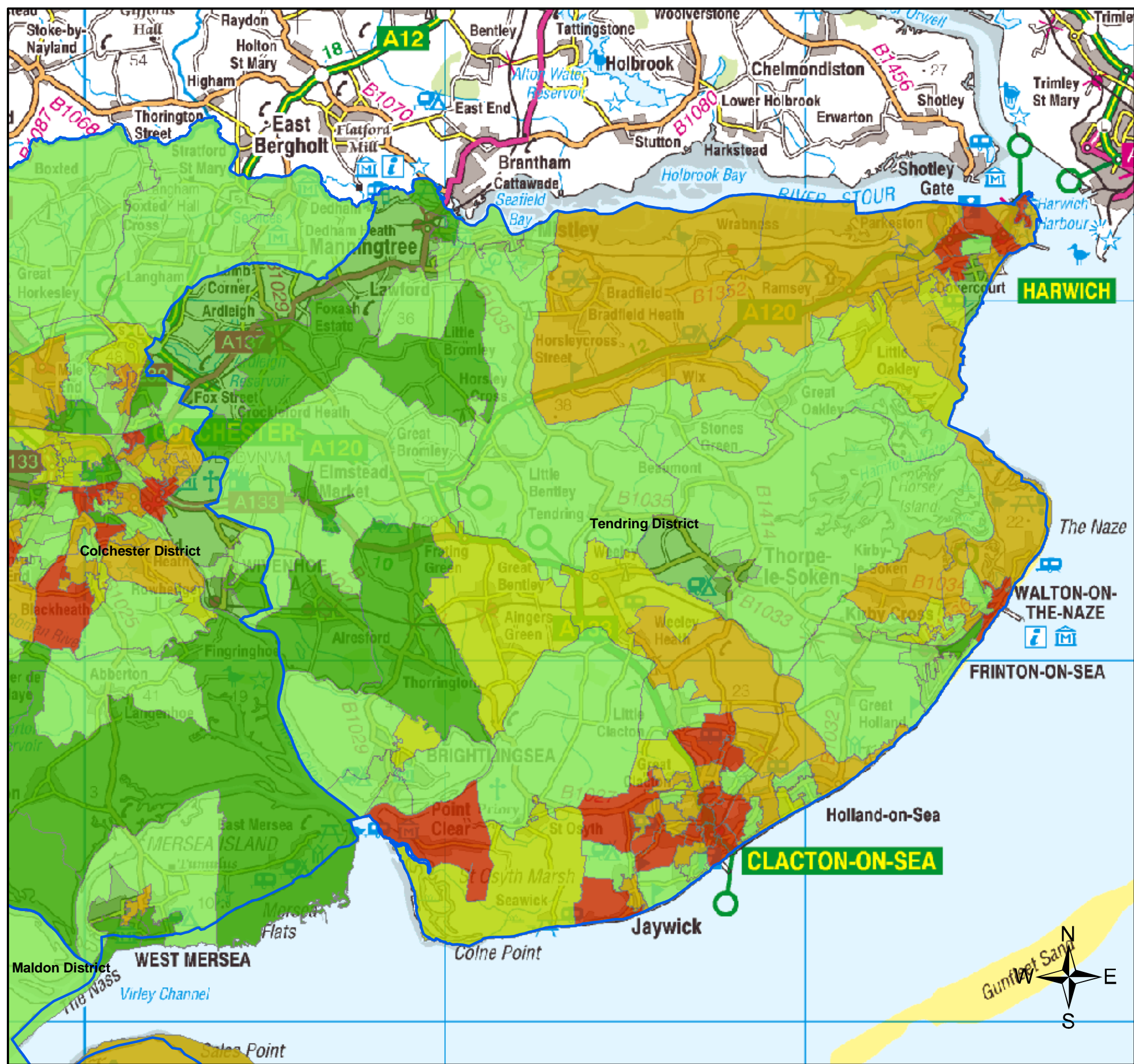
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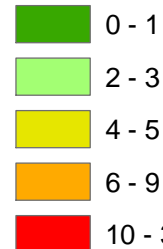


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