



# ESSEX GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE STRATEGY

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Head of Climate Adaptation & Mitigation

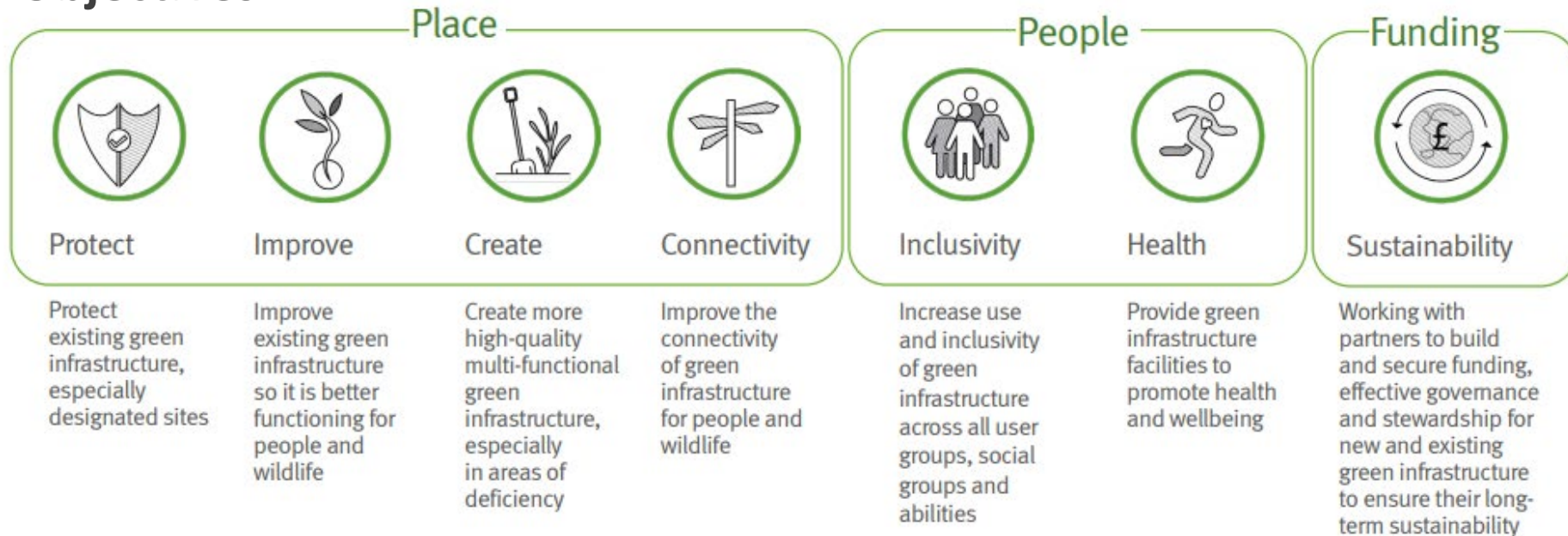
# Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy



## Our Vision

We will protect, develop and enhance a high quality connected green infrastructure network that extends from our city and town centres, and urban areas to the countryside and coast and which is self-sustaining and is designed for people and wildlife.

## Our Objectives





# Green Infrastructure Team



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graph LR; GIT[Green Infrastructure Team] --> HCAM[Head of Climate Adaptation & Mitigation]; GIT --> GIDM[Green Infrastructure and Sustainable Drainage Manager]; GIDM --> GIPO[GI Planning Officers (x2)]; GIDM --> GIDO[GI Delivery Officer]; GIDM --> EO[Environment Officers (x2 include coast)]; GIDM --> EPO[Environment Project Officer]; GIDM --> SDFRO[Senior Development & Flood Risk Officer]; SDFRO --> DFR[Development & Flood Risk Officers (x3)];
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The diagram illustrates the organizational structure of the Green Infrastructure Team. It begins with a large dark grey arrow pointing right, labeled 'Green Infrastructure Team'. This arrow points to two main roles: 'Head of Climate Adaptation & Mitigation' and 'Green Infrastructure and Sustainable Drainage Manager'. The 'Green Infrastructure and Sustainable Drainage Manager' role is further detailed with five sub-roles: 'GI Planning Officers (x2)', 'GI Delivery Officer', 'Environment Officers (x2 include coast)', 'Environment Project Officer', and 'Senior Development & Flood Risk Officer'. Finally, the 'Senior Development & Flood Risk Officer' role is linked to 'Development & Flood Risk Officers (x3)'.

Head of Climate  
Adaptation &  
Mitigation

Green Infrastructure  
and Sustainable  
Drainage Manager

GI Planning Officers  
(x2)

GI Delivery Officer

Environment Officers  
(x2 include coast)

Environment Project  
Officer

Senior Development  
& Flood Risk Officer

Development &  
Flood Risk Officers  
(x3)

# Action Plan

- Key Project themes
  - Marketing, branding and promotion .
  - Re-designation of green infrastructure .
  - Environment net gain and offsetting .
  - Improve, repurpose and create new multi-functional green infrastructure .
  - Natural flood management techniques .
  - Connect people to green infrastructure through active travel
  - Delivering environmental therapies and activities.

## Sectors

- Planning
  - Supporting Large & Small Developments
  - Retrofitting in our Towns and Villages
  - Minerals & Waste Restoration
- Improve Highways and Greenways
  - Enhance PRow
  - Reduce pollution
- Coastal
  - Living shorelines – reclaim land for GI
  - RAMS
- Flooding
  - GI as part of SuDs
  - Natural Flood Management – i.e. leaky Dams

## Energy

- Bio-solar Farms
- Bio-Fuels

## Health and Wellbeing

- Social prescribing
- Active Essex Local Delivery Plan

## Education

- Outdoor classroom – Living laboratories
- Forest schools
- Ensure access to GO on school grounds.

## Agriculture

- Opportunities through the Agricultural Act & Environment Bill
- Environment Land Management Schemes

# Delivery

## Phase One

Delivery - Action Plan

Objective	Themes	Proposals	Actions
Protect	Re-designation of green infrastructure	Encourage and support the review of existing designations (i.e. SSSIs etc.) and local landscape designations to ensure their currency and maintain the accuracy of site information.  Support the recognition and appropriate designation of new green infrastructure, e.g. Local Wildlife Site, Local Nature Reserve.	Discuss with Local Planning Authorities, Natural England, Essex Wildlife Trust and Place Services (Environmental consultancy to lead) regarding reviewing and re-designating (as LoWS etc.) the new green infrastructure as new designations e.g. Wallasea, South Essex Marshes, Thames Chase etc. taking into consideration the Assessments and Best and Most versatile Land analysis for agricultural land.

## Phase Two

Delivery - Action Plan

Objective	Themes	Proposals	Actions
Protect	Marketing, branding & promotion	Highlight green infrastructure in Essex in terms of their multi-functionality and benefits – through rebranding Essex as Green Essex with 1,978 designations.	Working with Visit Essex, Essex Communications and partners to develop a pan Essex Marketing Strategy to create a brand for Green Essex that also promotes local identities and brands

Phase one and two action delivery in progress.

## Projects in Delivery

- Designated Sites Review
- England Coast path in Essex
  - “Path to Prosperity” in Tendring
- Natural Flood Management
  - Canvey Make Rainwater Happy
  - Increased Adoption of SuDs in all development
- Town Centre Regeneration
- Active Essex Local Delivery Plan
- Biodiversity Net Gain Approach
- GI Investment Report/ Green Essex Fund

- Green Infrastructure Garden Communities and Development consultation service and GI Standards Trials
- Green Essex Network/Local Nature Partnerships,
- Nature Recovery Strategy
- Essex Forest Initiative

# Green Infrastructure Planning Consultation Service



## Essex Trial Project

**Aim:** To mainstream GI into the Essex planning system and decision making through a more robust planning review process that endorses stronger policy wording and coverage of high-quality and multi-functional GI within the Local Plans and other planning documents and the development of Local GI standards to set conditions for future planning applications. These to be agreed by all Planning Authorities across Essex

### Green Essex GI GIS Online Storymap

- Interactive Layer maps



### Essex GI Principles



Mainstreaming and integration



Evidence-led



Multifunctional outcomes



Early collaboration and engagement



Managing different expectations



Health, Wellbeing and Social Equity



Increased connectivity



Commitment to delivery (via strong policy wording)



Stewardship and maintenance

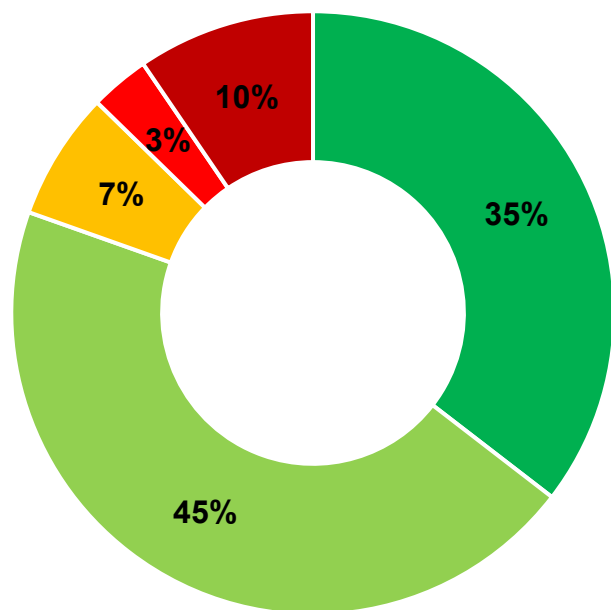




# WHERE WE ARE NOW ON THE CONSULTANCY SERVICE

## Consultation:

Do you support the 9 principles and standards?



Strongly Agree



Agree



Neither Agree nor Disagree



Disagree



Strongly Disagree

## Essex GI Standards Guidance

- Consultation Feedback report Finalised.
- Edit the GI Standards guidance with aim to finalise and publish in 2022.
- Produce Non-technical summary

## Essex GI Planning Service

- New GI & SuDs Team
  - 2 New GI Planning Officers
  - 1 New GI Delivery Officer
- Drafted Planning response templates and Checklist
- Testing approach with an LPA and a Developer.
- Develop training
- Continue refinement.
- Aiming official launch 2022.

# Essex Local Nature Partnership (LNP)

## Purpose

To coordinate a positive change in the natural environment across Greater Essex.

To take a strategic view of the challenges and opportunities from climate change, ecological and health and wellbeing emergencies. As well as the green growth agenda .

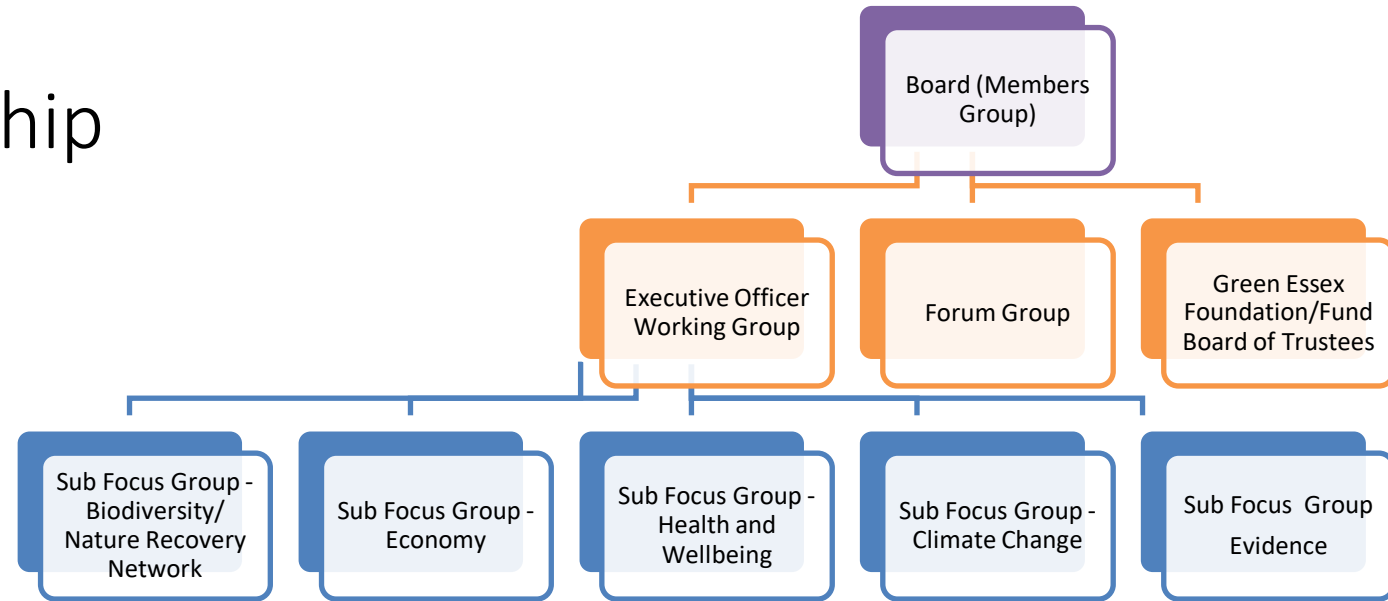
To improve, create and manage our natural environment through the delivery of multifunctional green infrastructure, biodiversity net gain and Nature Recovery Networks and strategies to deliver environmental, social and economic benefits.

To ensure that the outputs of the DEFRA 25 Year Plan, Agricultural Act and Environment Bill deliver the best outcomes for nature in Essex (e.g. LNRS, BNG, Environment Land Management, tree planting).

Our ambition is to enable a diverse range of organisations and communities to work together in partnership and to make the best use of our available resources in order to achieve significant gains to meet these challenges and opportunities benefiting biodiversity, people and the local economy.



# Local Nature Partnership Proposed Structure



The Partnership is led by an Executive Level Board chaired by [Councillor].

- The role of the Board is to provide political and strategic direction for the partnership and act as a champion and advocate, securing support for the partnership's work and engagement across all sectors

The work of Board is supported by the Officers Working Group.

- The role of the Officer Working Group is to provide the technical and sectoral advice required to realise the strategic vision of the Green Essex Partnership and act as sector representatives, gaining input to the partnership's work from all relevant partners. The Working Group will deliver a programme of work as agreed by the Board.

The partnership also has a range of sub focus (Task and Finish) groups working on priority areas and projects.

- These will be a task and finish groups to deliver the projects on the ground.
- Potential themes – BNG, NRN, Climate Change, Health and Wellbeing.

Forum

- Keeping in touch/ knowledge exchange platform for members and non-members put interested parties



## Local Nature Recovery Strategies: how to prepare and what to include

### Overview

**Closes 2 Nov 2021**

Opened 10 Aug 2021

<https://consult.defra.gov.uk/land-use/local-nature-recovery-strategies/>

# Local Nature Recovery Strategy

- Environment Act - Nature Recovery Network
- Coverage: Greater Essex
- The LNRS will be co-owned and co-created by stakeholders.
- Stakeholder Engagement
- Opportunity Mapping
- DEFRA guidance available in the first quarter of 2022

# Local Nature Recovery Strategy For Essex

- A clear strategy document
- identifies areas for biodiversity, and areas of recovery/enhancement
- Deliver wider environment goals

This will include:

- Set of Local Nature Recovery Network (LNRN) Principles and clear priorities for Essex.
- Guide other important local and national policy initiatives, such as Biodiversity net gain and credits
- Help to attract future funding for environmental growth
- LNRN opportunity map that is accessible and updated





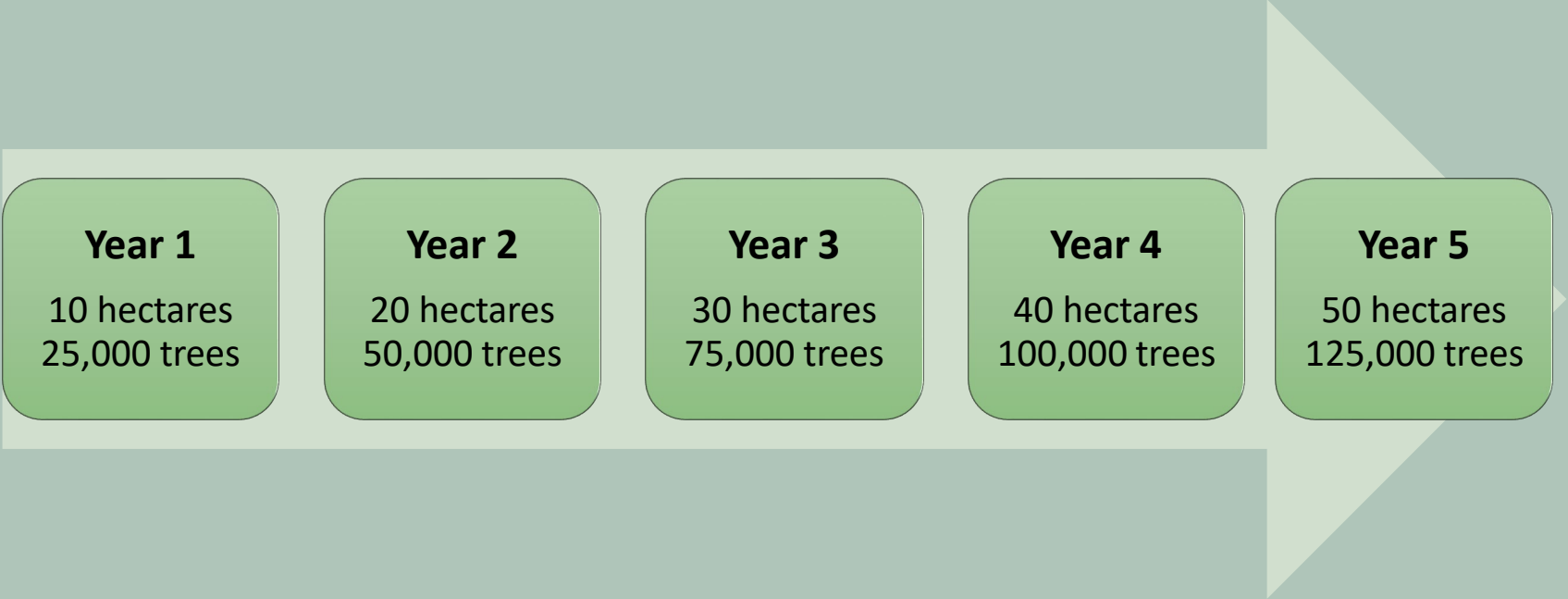
# Essex Forest Initiative



Essex County Council



# EFI Tree Planting Targets



Total	150 hectares	375,000 trees
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# EFI Tree Planting 2020/21 Year 1 Achievements



	<b>Trees</b>
Chelmer Valley	14,110
Country Parks	5,588
Codham Hall Woods	20
Boyles Court	75
Maldon	77
Uttlesford DC	211
Steeple PC	1,504
Private Landowner	800
TWIG 3	10,000
BBC/Thames Chase	6,230

<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>38,615</b>
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**154% above 25,000 tree target**

# EFI Tree Planting 2021/22 Year 2 Targets

	<b>Trees</b>
Ramsey	14,333
Country Parks	3,305
Basildon DC	12,700
Castle Point BC	6,000
Colchester BC	10,000
Epping Forest DC	15,000
Harlow	2,340
Parish Councils	2,334
Landowners	5,000
Schools	2,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>73,012</b>
<b>146% above the 50,000 tree target</b>	

# Year 2 – First Pre Xmas plantings

- Ramsey – 14,333 trees - planted
- Hatfield Peverel Parish Council – 1,000 trees – planted
- Boreham Parish Council – 1000 trees - planted
- Cressing Temple – 1005 trees - planted
- Cold Norton Parish Council – 300 trees – planted
- Saffron Walden Parish Council – 500 trees - planted
- Smallholdings in Rettendon and Cold Norton – 2500 trees – planted
- Basildon Council – 6000 trees – planted
- TBGI – 10,000 trees – planted
- **TOTAL 36,632 trees**





# The Conservation Volunteers

- TCV - National Volunteer charity
- Offer of free trees - We're currently taking 57,400 trees.
- Offer of Corporate planting teams to plant trees
- Offer of full time Community EFI planting officer: 60% funded for 4 years

# Woodland Trust MOREwoods

- Partnership funding to support tree planting – Woodland Trust cover 75% on the cost of trees, ECC cover 15% and the landowner covers 10%
- Makes planting more affordable to the landowner and brings in expertise to advise on the project
- Collaborating on a number of sites across the county.



# Forestry Commission Grants

- **Woodland Creation and Maintenance (WCM) part of Countryside Stewardship**
  - capital payment to create a woodland followed by, if eligible, an annual maintenance payment to maintain the new woodland for a period of 10 years
  - capped at an average of **£6,800 per hectare** for capital items that cover both planting and tree protection
  - maintenance element of grant will offer a payment of **£200 per hectare** each year for 10 years
  - **3 hectares minimum** area with minimum 0.5 hectare blocks of  $\geq 20\text{m}$  width
- **England Woodland Creation Offer (EWCO)**
  - flagship new grant scheme to encourage investment in woodland creation
  - help mitigate climate change and deliver nature recovery providing wider environmental and social benefits
  - up to a cap of **£8,500 per hectare** and annual maintenance payments of **£200 per hectare** for 10 years
  - additional Contributions per hectare for: nature recovery: £1,100 to £2,800; water quality: £400; reduced flood risk: £500; riparian buffers: £1,600; close to settlements: £500; public access: £2,200
  - Total Grant £66,540 for the ECC Ramsey site with maintenance contributions of £13,700

# Forestry Commission Capital Successful Applications

- **Local Authority Treescape Fund (LATF)**

- capital only grant and covers costs of tree planting or natural and the cost of maintenance activities for years 2 - 4.
- We have successfully secured £300,000 from the Forestry Commission
- £5,972 match funding
- 5,595 trees for Colchester, Harlow, Epping Forest and Cressing Temple Barns

- **Urban Tree Challenge Fund**

- provides 50% funding of standard costs for planting large trees and their establishment costs for 3 years following planting.
- supports the cost of buying a tree, planting in grass, the cost of basic protection and the labour required to plant it.
- Establishment payments support the cost of weeding, watering and checking trees during multiple visits over a 3 year period
- The Urban Tree Challenge Fund, provided by the Forestry Commission, offers up to £30,000 funding per bid. Our bid totals £29,311.00.



# Tree Protection and Maintenance

- **Mulching t**

- Mulch is an effective alternative to using herbicides and works by covering the soil around the trees which helps retain moisture and reduce competition from weeds and grasses. Essex Green waste from Birch is a great example of the circular economy, despite costing more.

- **Tubes**

- Tubes and guard provide protection against rabbits and deer. We try to source the most sustainable materials and remove plastic tubes when not necessary for recycling. We have now moved to cardboard and corn-based tubes, also more expensive

- **Fencing**

- If possible, fencing eliminates the need for tubes and guards by keeping rabbits and deer out of the planting sites.



# Essex Forest Initiative Challenges

- **Capacity**, one officer is not enough, hence we have secured a 2<sup>nd</sup> Officer for 4 years from a revenue bid
- **Land** is the big restrictor for tree planting hence our partnership approach with public and private sector land owners
- **Maintenance**: Forestry Commission grants are up to 10 years, others are only 3 years. We are investigating long term incomes:
  - Biodiversity Net Gain
  - Carbon income (ECC plantings are all in the Carbon Code scheme)
  - Water Company water quality credits
  - Highways Green Infrastructure Reserve agreed for £1.925 million
  - Corporate Social Responsibility
  - Timber products (construction, bioenergy etc)
  - Recreation incomes (visitor centres, glamping etc)



# Questions



Amazing Black Poplar growth 10 months after planting on ECC Chelmer Valley site



Essex County Council