# GREEN ESSEX

A STRATEGY THAT ADVOCATES FOR HIGH QUALITY GREEN SPACE AND GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE IN ESSEX



| 2019 | Consultation Summaries |
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Front page image of Green Space by Place Services.

## 13. INTRODUCTION

This report provides an overview of the public and stakeholder county-wide consultation undertaken on the draft Green Essex Strategy. Consultation on the strategy was undertaken from Friday 3 May until Friday 5 July 2019 for a nine-week period. Comments were submitted through formal representations on Essex County Council website, email, post and via the stakeholder workshop. This consultation will help inform the further development of the Green Essex Strategy and help identify priority actions for delivery, ultimately influencing the protection, improvement, creation and connectivity of our green infrastructure to a wider network across Great Essex and potentially neighbouring boundaries.

The purpose of the consultation was to invite comments from interested parties on the proposed vision, objectives and proposals for the strategy to deliver high-quality multi-functional green infrastructure. To also understand how people across Essex use green spaces for leisure, work, commuting and pleasure and equally if they don't use green spaces why not and what are the barriers in place stopping them.

The consultation methods carried out involved:

- a stakeholder workshop,
- online consultation through the Essex County Council's website,
- hard copies of the strategy and questionnaire available at the 12 strategic Libraries across Essex,
- Development of a communication plan:
  - press advertisement/news articles (in local newspapers).
  - social media (posts on Councils' Facebook and Twitter pages).
  - promoted through communication media networks out to the Local Authorities and Community Groups.
  - internal newsletters and blogs ( I.e. staff One News intranet page).
  - Online content for ECC website and affiliates sites including Place Services and Country Parks website.
- presented at a number of Internal Services and Board meetings and to external Partner Organisational and Community Groups (such as Essex Local Access Forum, Essex Planning Officer Association)

We received:

- 931 responses from residents
- 39 responses from Organisations and Community Groups
- 39 email enquiries of which 9 were more detailed written responses from Organisations.
- The Short promotion video release on Facebook received 15,000 views, 177 shares, 37 likes and 80 comments.
- 35 participants at the Stakeholder workshop.

The responses from the online consultation and workshop are summarised on the following pages and are not intended to be exhaustive. All comments received were analysed and considered when preparing an update and edits of the strategy.

Green Essex

# Green Essex Strategy: Consultation Report

## Research and Citizen Insight

Residents

July 2019

# Contents

# Introduction

Essex County Council have produced a draft Green Essex Strategy that raises the importance of developing quality green infrastructure and green spaces across Essex to accompany planned growth in the county over the next twenty years.

Green infrastructure is made up of natural and semi-natural assets and habitat types, of green and blue spaces, and of other environmental features that maintain and enhance ecosystem services. It provides multi-functional benefits integral to the health and wellbeing of our communities and to the ecology and economy of the county.

Green infrastructure for this strategy includes the following assets:

· Parks and gardens
· Natural and semi-natural open spaces
· Ancient Woodlands
· Reservoirs, lakes and ponds
· Coastal features
· Waterways (watercourses)
· Greenways (Public Rights of Way, footpaths, cycleways and tracks, byways, bridleways)
· Outdoor Sport Facilities (Sport pitches)
· Open spaces and premises (Educational premises open space and sport pitches)
· Cemeteries and churchyards
· Allotments, community gardens and city farms
· Agricultural land and meadows
· Public realm/civic spaces (urban greenning - urban and street trees, road verges, green walls, sustainable urban drainage and natural flood management)

The strategy aims to take a positive approach to enhance, protect and create an integrated network of high-quality green infrastructure in Essex. Just as importantly, it will help ensure funding opportunities are maximised in the delivery of multi-functional natural assets which will provide a range of benefits, including

· helping mitigate the impact of climate change
· improving public parks, play areas and other green spaces,
· the development of greenways (e.g. Public Rights of Way)
· enabling active travel and recreational opportunities
· contributing to the attractiveness of a place to attract new businesses to the area.

The Strategy has been prepared by an Essex County Council cross directorate Steering group and a range of key stakeholders have been engaged at various stages to inform the initial consultation version.

In order to gain the views and feedback of Essex residents about the strategy a questionnaire was developed. This questionnaire was open to all Essex residents for a period of 9 weeks.

This consultation was open to all Essex residents, Organisations, Community groups

# Key Conclusions

Of the 931 people that responded to the Green Essex survey, 705 (75.72%) people stated that they use green spaces for leisure time. 627 (67.34%) use green spaces for health reasons, whilst 397 (42.64%) use green spaces for dog walks.

There were 216 people that selected other. Of these, 108 people stated that they use green spaces for horse riding or caring for a horse.

When asked what would encourage you to use green spaces more often, 542 (58.21%) advised that easier access would increase their use. Feeling safe is an important factor in using green spaces more, with 453 (48.65%) people selecting this option.

Of the 931 respondents, 493 (52.95%) agreed with both the vision and the objectives of the Green Essex Strategy.

When asked for the 2 main pressures or threats to Green Infrastructure in Essex, 317 (34.04%) selected fragmentation of habitats due to increases in housing and transport development, 314 (33.72%) people selected deficiencies in green spaces provision as the population grows and 302 (32.43%) people selected development growth.

When asked for the most important proposal within the PROTECT objective, 248 (26.63%) people believe supporting the recognition and appropriate designation of new green infrastructure to be the best course of action.

Of the 931 respondents, 341 (36.62%) believe that better management of green infrastructure to benefit locally native species, focussing on recognised nature conservation priorities would best meet the IMPROVE objective.

When asked which proposal is most important within the CREATE objective, 267 (28.67%) believe using planning policy to secure multi-functional green spaces within and beyond development site boundaries through the application of biodiversity net gain, biodiversity off-setting and the creation of compensation habitat to be the best proposal.

Of the 931 respondents, 515 (55.31%) believe restoring and promoting the Essex promoted paths (The Forest Way, The St Peter's Way, The Essex Way, The Roach Valley Way, The Stour Valley Path, The Thames Estuary Path, The Fitch Way, The Saffron Way, Black Water Rail Trail, John Ray Walk, Emerging Coast Path) would be the best proposal to meet the CONNECTIVITY objective.

When asked which proposal is most important within the INCLUSIVITY objective, 254 (27.28%) believe exploring environmental therapies and challenges aimed at developing young people to be the most important.

Of the 931 respondents, 381 (40.92%) believe that developing and promoting Healthcare and Wellbeing through green infrastructure activities is the most important proposal within the HEALTH objective.

When asked which proposal is most important within the SUSTAINABILITY objective, 321 (34.47%) believe that creation of a Green Essex Fund for endowments, fund raising and donations would be the most important.

When asked if the overall objectives and proposals are deliverable, 378 (40.60%) people believe that they are, with 111 believing that they are not.

**27.81%**

**62.47%**

**28**

- Under 18      0.31%
- 18-29      2.45%
- 30-39      12.88%
- 40-49      20.35%
- 50-59      23.21%
- 60+      35.07%
- NA      5.73%

# Where are they From?

| Colchester | Chelmsford | Braintree | Rochford |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| 19.5% | 14.1% | 12.1% | 10.8% |

| Epping Forest | Maldon | Basildon | Castle Point |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| 9.4% | 7.5% | 7.1% | 6.4% |

| Uttlesford | Tendring | Brentwood | Harlow |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| 4.1% | 3.8% | 2.6% | 1.3% |

10.02% or respondents did not state where they live

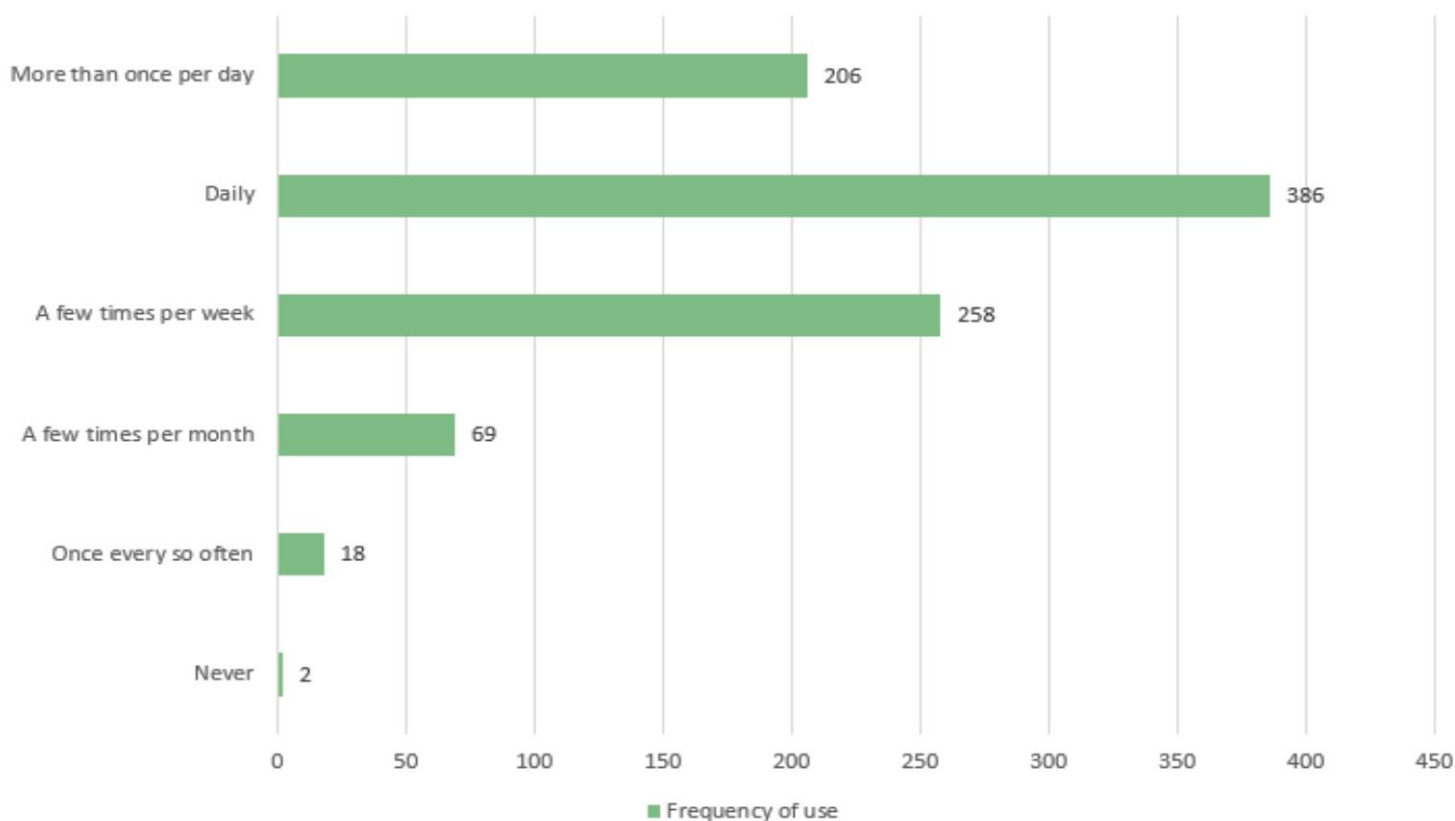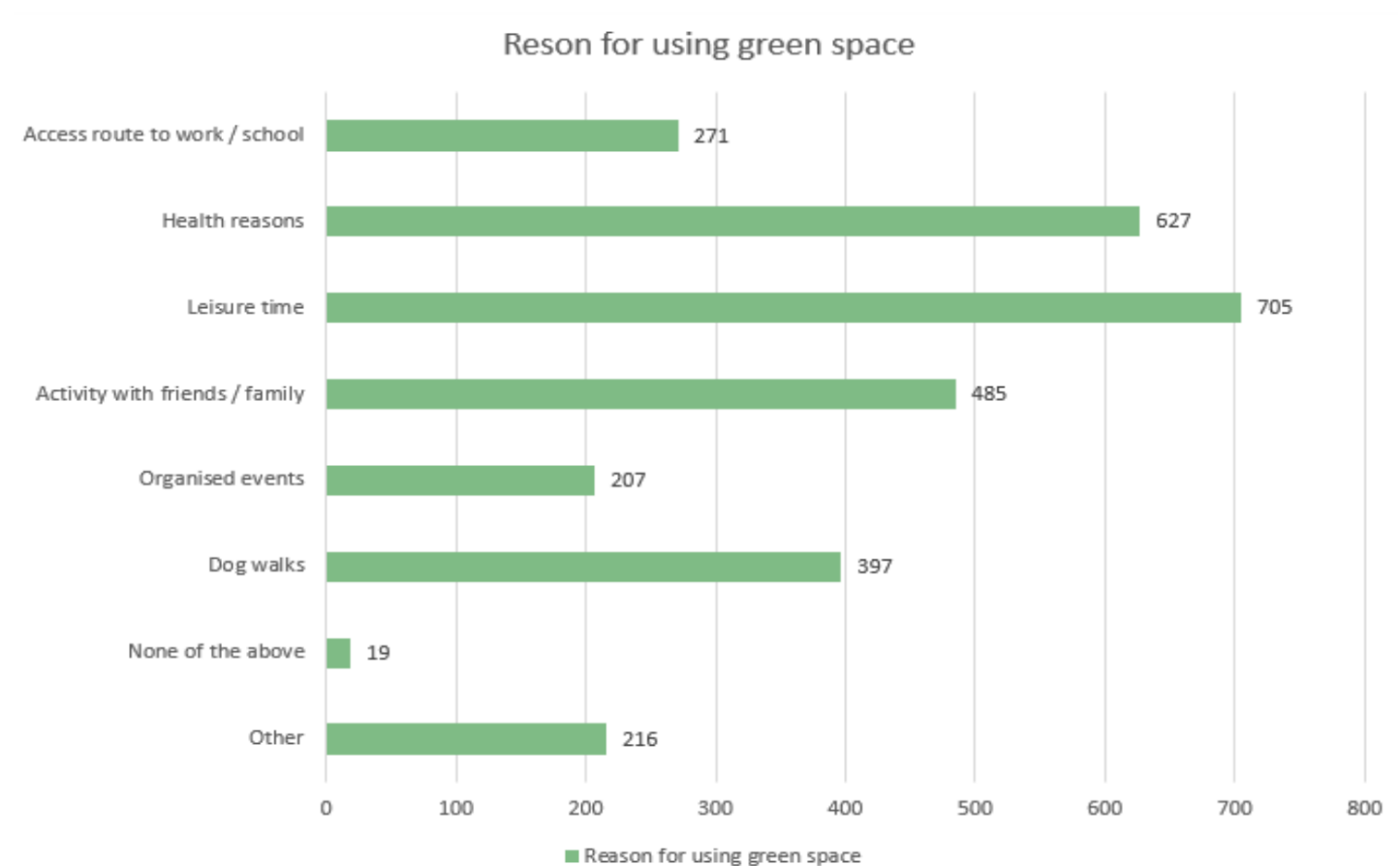| | | |
|---|---|---|
| **Residents** | **Works Here, Doesn't Live Here** | **Not Answered** |
| **97.9%** | **0.9%** | **1.3%** |

# Frequency of Use

A total of 931 people completed the Green Essex Survey, 386 of which use green spaces on a daily basis. 258 respondents use green spaces a few times per week and 206 respondents use green spaces more than once per day.

### Frequency of use

| Category | Value |
|---|---|
| More than once per day | 206 |
| Daily | 386 |
| A few times per week | 258 |
| A few times per month | 69 |
| Once every so often | 18 |
| Never | 2 |

■ Frequency of use

# Why is it Being Used?

## Reson for using green space

| Reason | Value |
|---|---|
| Access route to work / school | 271 |
| Health reasons | 627 |
| Leisure time | 705 |
| Activity with friends / family | 485 |
| Organised events | 207 |
| Dog walks | 397 |
| None of the above | 19 |
| Other | 216 |

■ Reason for using green space

When asked what are the main reasons for using green spaces, 705 respondents selected leisure time, 627 stated health reasons, 485 advised it was to spend time with friends and family and 397 use green spaces to take their dog for a walk.

Of the 931 total respondents, 216 selected other. This provided a free type box to capture further detail. Of the comments received, 80 were split across the above categories. 130 comments were split into the categories below:
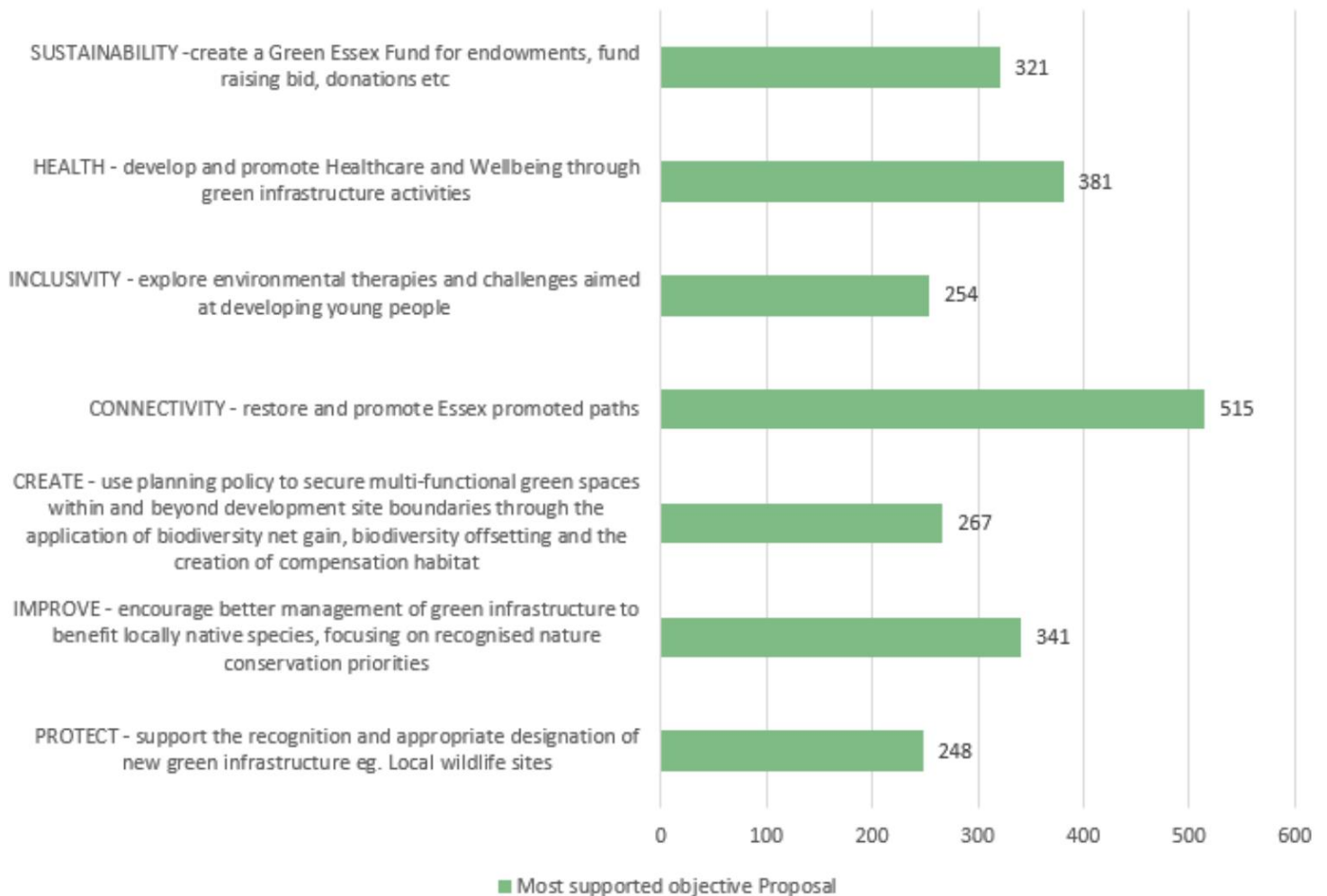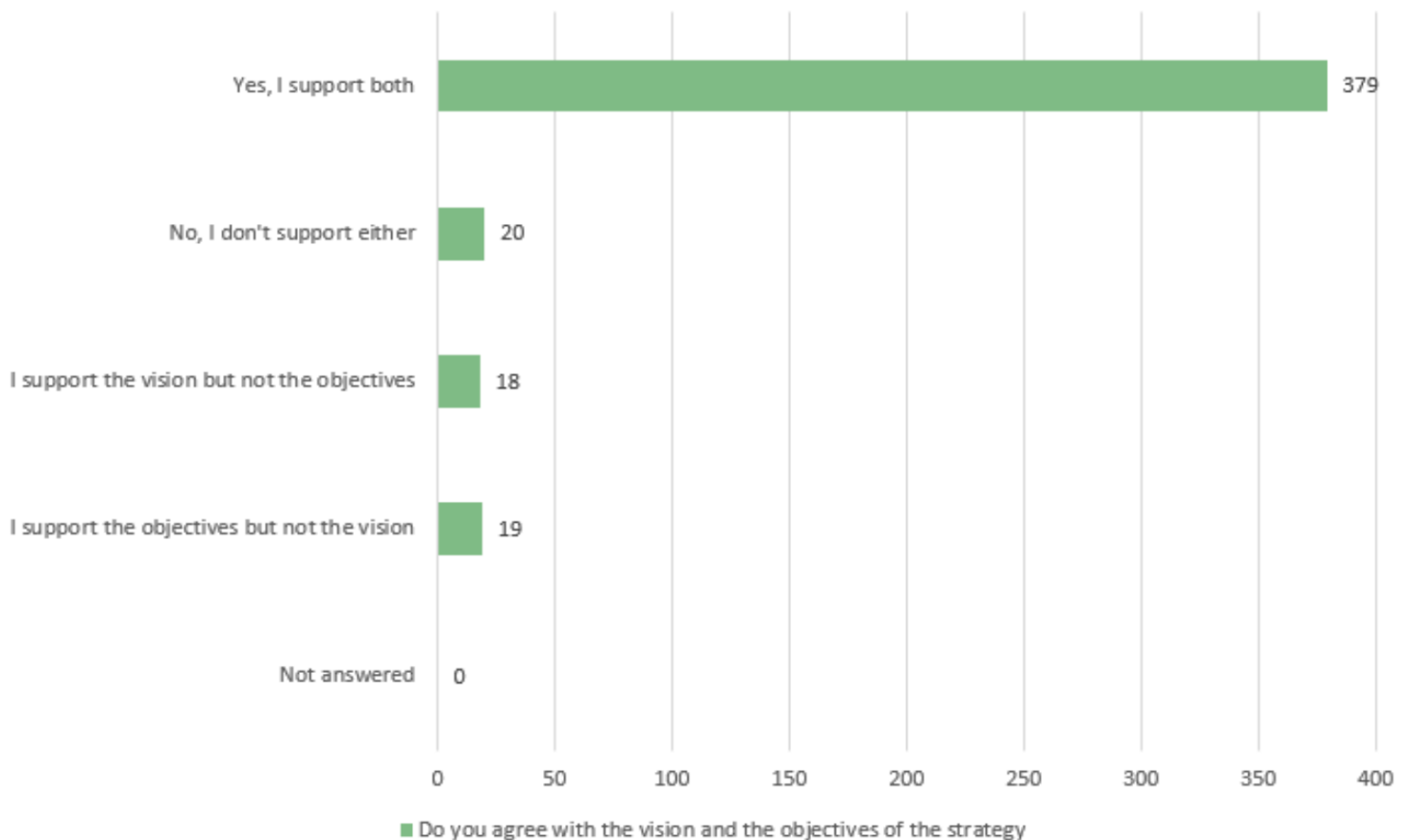
| Equestrian | Wildlife | Work |
|---|---|---|
| 108 | 28 | 23 |

# Most Popular Objective Proposal

SUSTAINABILITY -create a Green Essex Fund for endowments, fund raising bid, donations etc — 321

HEALTH - develop and promote Healthcare and Wellbeing through green infrastructure activities — 381

INCLUSIVITY - explore environmental therapies and challenges aimed at developing young people — 254

CONNECTIVITY - restore and promote Essex promoted paths — 515

CREATE - use planning policy to secure multi-functional green spaces within and beyond development site boundaries through the application of biodiversity net gain, biodiversity offsetting and the creation of compensation habitat — 267

IMPROVE - encourage better management of green infrastructure to benefit locally native species, focusing on recognised nature conservation priorities — 341

PROTECT - support the recognition and appropriate designation of new green infrastructure eg. Local wildlife sites — 248

0    100    200    300    400    500    600

■ Most supported objective Proposal

# Objectives & Vision



Whilst 379 respondents agreed with both the vision and the objectives of the Green Essex Strategy, 18 disagreed with the objectives, 19 disagreed with the vision and 20 respondents disagreed with both.

Respondents were able to provide a comment for why they did not agree with either the vision or the strategy.

Comments could be grouped into the following categories:

- Jargon / unclear
- Resource (including money)
- New building
- Wildlife

Comments included:

"No mention on how self-sustainability is achieved with no further comments on that".

"I think both statements are rather jargon heavy".

"the objectives should include identifiable outcomes (metrics) to ensure they are capable of monitoring".

# Objectives & Vision

"No mention on how Self-Sustainability is achieved with no further comments on that - I could envisage the council adding in charges to access these areas which contravenes the main reason why people use them."

"Vision strategy could end up funding small strips of green land, that are in less than ideal places and may see little use, but will cause funds to be diverted from enjoyable green spaces."

"The Objectives should include identifiable outcomes (metrics) to ensure they are capable of monitoring. For example the Strategy should set a target for the number of trees planted throughout the County - people remember these things more than anything else. For example if the Objectives said "we will oversee the planting of one million trees in Essex by 2025" that would capture people's attention.

Essentially there needs to be headline deliverables rather than just "improve, protect, connect" which are noble objectives but also very forgettable."

"I think both statements are rather jargon heavy but the objective do not address the serious need to curb the amount of house building which is ruining and seriouly undermining the future for our county. You need to include limiting building to brown field sites only, then they might be more effective."

# Opportunities

"Green roofs on new builds and incentives for existing buildings, green roof incentives on existing beach huts and eco walls on pubic buildings such as libraries, factories, office blocks, etc. which, with fast growing creepers, would soon form good habitat for insects, and birds.

Planning restrictions on all development to ensure gardens are not covered in non-permeable materials; i.e. paving slabs, as this reduces available water ( runs off to drains instead of seeping into the water table) and reduces habitat, thus insects, birds, plants."

"By connecting PROW's and maintaining the paths on a more regular basis than currently done. Ensuring waymarkers, footbridges and finger posts are replaced when required not on a 5 year maintenance programme.

Fingerposts to contain more information ie Distance to next village. Many people do not read maps so have no idea where they might end up by following a sign that just says Public Footpath. This is especially helpful for visitors to the area and would encourage people to explore a wider area."

"Bridleways being reinstated or improved. Essex has the highest population of horses than any other county yet riders are not supported, either because of misconceptions about horse owners or the greater voice of other user groups.

Bridleways benefit walkers, cyclists and riders and with fantastic organisations such as Essex Bridleways would know precisely where opportunities are. The coast path is an amazing idea and as a path serves alll groups, this would be such a fantastic boost for locals and tourists."

# Opportunities

"Green Spaces need to have good access and parking available, we don't mind paying."

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"Encourage guardianship and maintenance of hedgerows, gardening for wildlife, work with voluntary groups/charities plus parish councils and schools on looking for local gaps in the footpath network, creating pocket parks, allotments etc . As well as the biggies like the coast path"

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"Every local authority's Local Plan should identify and promote these opportunities throughout the county, following an agreed strategic plan co-ordinated by the County Council."

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"Instead of creating expensive new areas, smaller measures everywhere and all the time would make a big difference for wildlife:

· All new buildings should have green roofs, solar power etc
· Business parks and industrial areas could easily be greened up
· Plant more trees. Everywhere. And make it more difficult for mature trees and hedges to be felled
· Create ponds
· Create wildlife corridors and bridges to avoid the current road casualties
· Clear litter
· Stop mowing verges and hedges so brutally. Be aware of the needs of wildlife in terms of food, shelter etc
· Embed wildlife friendly principles in all planning decisions"

# Contact Us

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Essex County Council

# Green Essex Strategy: Consultation Report

## Research and Citizen Insight

Organisations & Community Groups

July 2019

# Contents

# Introduction

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Green infrastructure is made up of natural and semi-natural assets and habitat types, of green and blue spaces, and of other environmental features that maintain and enhance ecosystem services. It provides multi-functional benefits integral to the health and wellbeing of our communities and to the ecology and economy of the county.

Green infrastructure for this strategy includes the following assets:

· Parks and gardens
· Natural and semi-natural open spaces
· Ancient Woodlands
· Reservoirs, lakes and ponds
· Coastal features
· Waterways (watercourses)
· Greenways (Public Rights of Way, footpaths, cycleways and tracks, byways, bridleways)
· Outdoor Sport Facilities (Sport pitches)
· Open spaces and premises (Educational premises open space and sport pitches)
· Cemeteries and churchyards
· Allotments, community gardens and city farms
· Agricultural land and meadows
· Public realm/civic spaces (urban greenning - urban and street trees, road verges, green walls, sustainable urban drainage and natural flood management)

The strategy aims to take a positive approach to enhance, protect and create an integrated network of high-quality green infrastructure in Essex. Just as importantly, it will help ensure funding opportunities are maximised in the delivery of multi-functional natural assets which will provide a range of benefits, including

· helping mitigate the impact of climate change
· improving public parks, play areas and other green spaces,
· the development of greenways (e.g. Public Rights of Way)
· enabling active travel and recreational opportunities
· contributing to the attractiveness of a place to attract new businesses to the area.

The Strategy has been prepared by an Essex County Council cross directorate Steering group and a range of key stakeholders have been engaged at various stages to inform the initial consultation version.

In order to gain the views and feedback of Essex residents about the strategy a questionnaire was developed. This questionnaire was open to all Essex residents for a period of 9 weeks.

The consultation was open to all Essex residents, Organisations, Community groups and users of green spaces within Essex. This report considers the responses from organisations and community groups.

# Key Conclusions

Of the 39 organisations and community groups that responded to the Green Essex survey, 28 (71.79%) advised that easier access would increase green space use. Feeling safe is an important factor in using green spaces more, with 20 (51.28%) organisations and community groups selecting this option.

Of the 39 respondents, 35 (89.74%) agreed with both the vision and the objectives of the Green Essex Strategy.

When asked for the 2 main pressures or threats to Green Infrastructure in Essex, 23 (58.97%) selected fragmentation of habitats due to increases in housing and transport development and 22 (56.41%) selected development growth.

When asked for the most important proposal within the PROTECT objective, 12 (30.76%) people believe supporting the recognition and appropriate designation of new green infrastructure to be the best course of action.

Of the 39 respondents, 15 (38.46%) believe that better management of green infrastructure to benefit locally native species, focussing on recognised nature conservation priorities would best meet the IMPROVE objective.

When asked which proposal is most important within the CREATE objective, 14 (35.89%) believe using planning policy to secure multi-functional green spaces within and beyond development site boundaries through the application of biodiversity net gain, biodiversity off-setting and the creation of compensation habitat to be the best proposal.

Of the 39 respondents, 18 (46.15%) believe restoring and promoting the Essex promoted paths (The Forest Way, The St Peter's Way, The Essex Way, The Roach Valley Way, The Stour Valley Path, The Thames Estuary Path, The Fitch Way, The Saffron Way, Black Water Rail Trail, John Ray Walk, Emerging Coast Path) would be the best proposal to meet the CONNECTIVITY objective.

When asked which proposal is most important within the INCLUSIVITY objective, 18 (46.15%) believe exploring environmental therapies and challenges aimed at developing young people to be the most important.
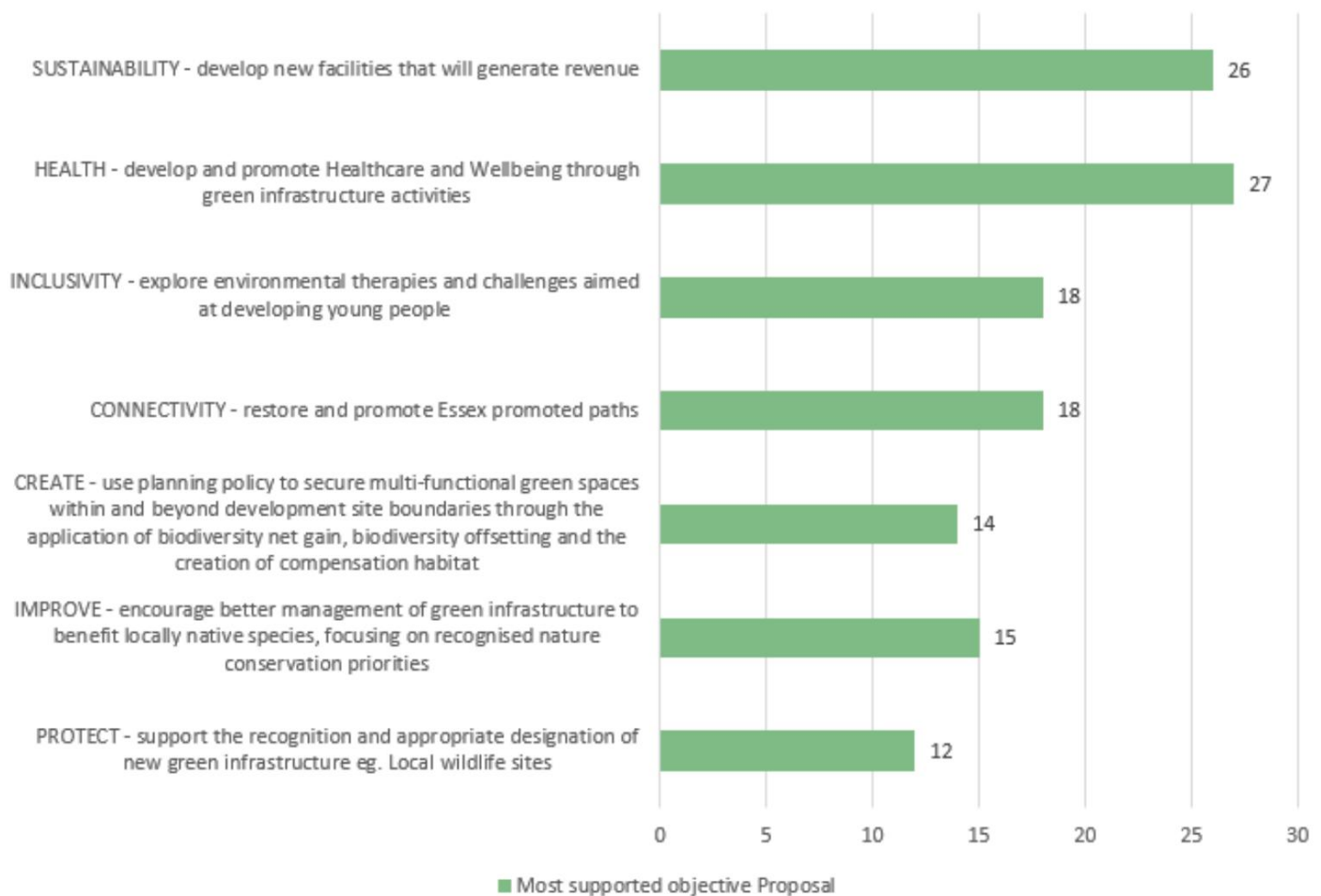
Of the 39 respondents, 27 (69.23%) believe that developing and promoting Healthcare and Wellbeing through green infrastructure activities is the most important proposal within the HEALTH objective.

When asked which proposal is most important within the SUSTAINABILITY objective, 26 (66.66%) believe that the development of new facilities to generate income would be the most important.
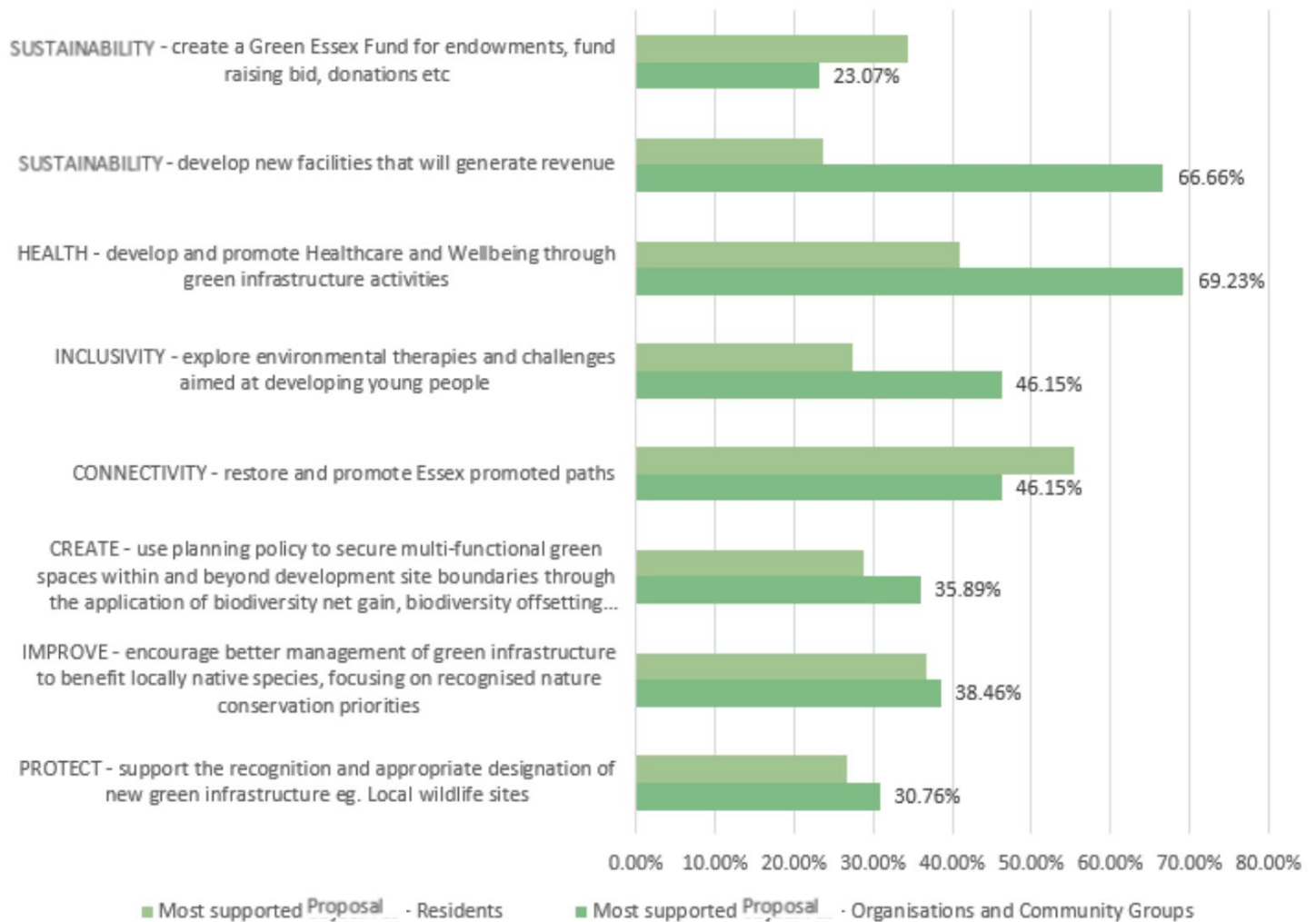
When asked if the overall objectives and proposals are deliverable, 28 (71.79%) organisations and community groups believe that they are.

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| Community Groups | Councillors | Businesses |
| 48.71% | 43.58% | 7.69% |

# Most Popular Objective Proposal

SUSTAINABILITY - develop new facilities that will generate revenue — 26

HEALTH - develop and promote Healthcare and Wellbeing through green infrastructure activities — 27

INCLUSIVITY - explore environmental therapies and challenges aimed at developing young people — 18

CONNECTIVITY - restore and promote Essex promoted paths — 18

CREATE - use planning policy to secure multi-functional green spaces within and beyond development site boundaries through the application of biodiversity net gain, biodiversity offsetting and the creation of compensation habitat — 14

IMPROVE - encourage better management of green infrastructure to benefit locally native species, focusing on recognised nature conservation priorities — 15

PROTECT - support the recognition and appropriate designation of new green infrastructure eg. Local wildlife sites — 12

■ Most supported objective Proposal

When asked which of the proposals for each of the seven objectives were most suitable, the responses from organisations and community groups almost mirrored the proposals selected by residents, as seen below:

SUSTAINABILITY - create a Green Essex Fund for endowments, fund raising bid, donations etc — 23.07%

SUSTAINABILITY - develop new facilities that will generate revenue — 66.66%

HEALTH - develop and promote Healthcare and Wellbeing through green infrastructure activities — 69.23%

INCLUSIVITY - explore environmental therapies and challenges aimed at developing young people — 46.15%

CONNECTIVITY - restore and promote Essex promoted paths — 46.15%

CREATE - use planning policy to secure multi-functional green spaces within and beyond development site boundaries through the application of biodiversity net gain, biodiversity offsetting... — 35.89%

IMPROVE - encourage better management of green infrastructure to benefit locally native species, focusing on recognised nature conservation priorities — 38.46%

PROTECT - support the recognition and appropriate designation of new green infrastructure eg. Local wildlife sites — 30.76%

0.00%  10.00%  20.00%  30.00%  40.00%  50.00%  60.00%  70.00%  80.00%

■ Most supported Proposal - Residents     ■ Most supported Proposal - Organisations and Community Groups

Residents felt that setting up a Green Essex Fund would be the preferred proposal under "Sustainability", Organisations and Community Groups were more in favour of developing new facilities to generate revenue.

# Objectives & Vision

## Do you support the vision and the objectives of the strategy
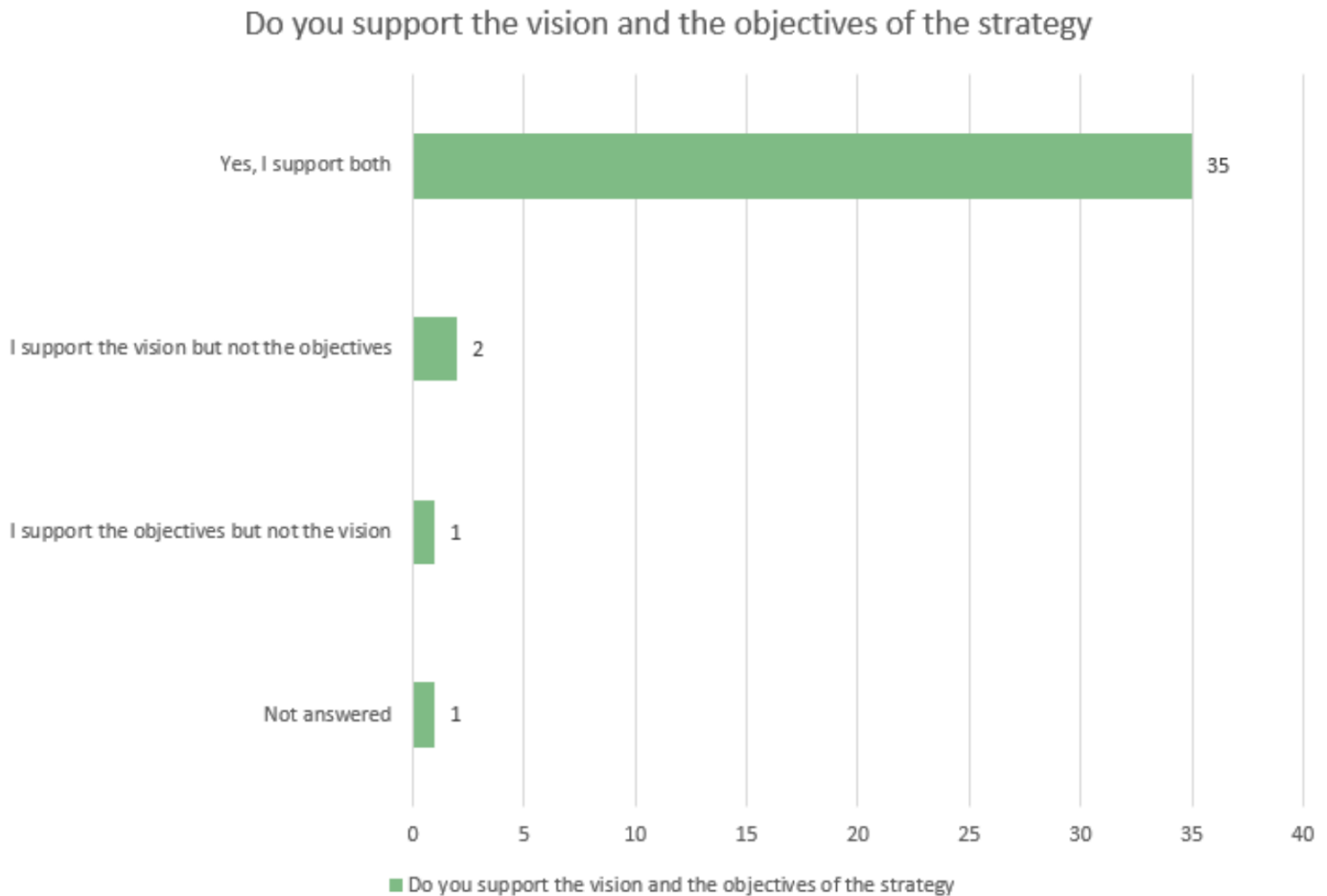


Whilst 35 respondents agreed with both the vision and the objectives of the Green Essex Strategy, 2 disagreed with objectives and 1 disagreed with the vision. 1 Respondent did not answer the question.

Respondents were able to provide a comment for why they did not agree with either the vision or the objectives, with 9 of the groups / organisations sending detailed feedback.

This feedback covered areas such as terminology used within the strategy, improvements to the strategy, general concerns and additions.

# Vision

*"It's not that I don't support it or I'm against it but development is inevitable and I would much rather city's are developed and existing green space of towns and villages are retained with more rigour as that is why people chose to live in them."*

# Objectives

*"Without knowing specifics of what things like 'Improve the connectivity of green infrastructure' its hard to say I support the objectives. A lot of things could be achieved in the overarching view of the objectives which would be ultimately detrimental to other aspects of life."*

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*"I would like to see the 'wildlife' section of the vision more explicitly reflected in the objectives so that activities and outputs will flow from this.*
*Specifically to reflect considerations around green spaces often being shared spaces for people and wildlife so that thought is given to:*

*1. use of pesticides*

*2. leaving grass and verges to grow to promote wildflowers/insects/pollinators*

*3. leaving hedgerows for nesting birds*

*4. protecting sites where badgers/foxes and other mammals live.*

*5. educating the public about these initiatives in parks and other public spaces with information signage etc"*

# Comments

"It is important to make sure that the Strategy complements and adds value to Chelmsford's and any other district's GI Strategies, such as Maldon as these strategies should not been seen in isolation. Currently it is not clear how or whether such strategies have helped inform this Strategy."

"Chapter 11 refers to a 'future action plan' but it also includes an action plan on the subsequent pages. This could maybe be reworked a bit. There needs to be target dates and indications of how the actions will be prioritised. Further implementation plans are also needed. This will make the aspirations more realistic. It is also not clear whether the Strategy covers a particular time period. A longer-term strategy, up to 50 years, with interim target dates is preferable."

"It may be helpful for the Strategy to consider links to neighbouring authorities to consider what happens at the borders and whether there are opportunities to link up with neighbouring GI plans or projects. This should include those beyond Essex."

"The monitoring of the Strategy requires further work and should include some metrics to measure the success of the GI Strategy in delivering all of the key actions and has achieved the stated objectives."

"All habitats created or enhanced as compensation measures should be protected from future development and managed in perpetuity. Only this will help secure net gain, value for money and public trust. A lesser duration risks the later loss of biodiversity gain."

"It is important to note that some newly created habitats will take many decades to develop and cannot be considered at full value before this time. Furthermore, many habitats rely on regular management to retain status and target condition e.g. species rich semi-improved neutral grassland. Therefore, long-term management for any net gain site must be secured if the net gain is to be retained."

"In the first paragraph the Strategy 'sets the scene' as it were and advocates to '...enhance, protect and create an inclusive and integrated network of high-quality green infrastructure...' With this we agree, although it is very evident from the detail contained within the document that its aims are far from inclusive to all user groups. Equestrians are not mentioned at all, and the document only contains a scant number of references to bridleways."

"The objective should be re-named 'Funding', as the aim to secure funding for Green Infrastructure (GI) is not related to 'economy' as a topic.

An additional objective related to the title 'Economy' should be considered, to recognise the importance of GI to the wider economy (eg tourism)."

"The RSPB recognises the important role GI can play for health & wellbeing and for supporting a thriving, sustainable economy, but as an environmental strategy first and foremost, it is important that this is given more prominence in the Foreword."

"Clarity is needed between the terms 'green infrastructure' 'greenspace' and 'open space'. All of these have developed established meanings through long use, including in the planning system, and diversion from established practice or tradition will likely cause confusion and error when the document comes into use. Within the strategy document there appears to be occasions when greenspace and GI are used interchangeably even though they have been defined in slightly different ways elsewhere."

# Contact Us

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# GREEN|ESSEX
# ESSEX|WALKING



| 16 May 2019 | Green Essex and Essex Walking Strategies Workshop summary |

Summary of the findings from the Green Essex and Essex Walking Strategies Consultation Stakeholder Workshop.

## CONSULTATION SUMMARIES

# CONTENTS

# 1. ABOUT THE WORKSHOP

A half day workshop was held on 16 May 2019 at Anglia Ruskin University, Chelmsford to gather stakeholder views on the Green Essex Strategy and Walking Strategy, building upon the online consultations.

The purpose of the workshop was to introduce both the strategies' objectives and proposals and the work undertaken by University of East Anglia on developing a Green Infrastructure (GI) Geographic Information System (GIS) Mapping Model. It provided stakeholders the opportunity:

- to review the 7 Green Essex objectives, 3 of the Essex Walking Strategy objectives and their proposals,
- to discuss any existing schemes/projects,
- explore the challenges and opportunities and priorities, and
- identify potential collaborations and partnership working in taking forward the proposals within the strategies.

# 2. SPEAKERS PRESENTATIONS

## 2.1 Opening and Welcome – Councillor Simon Walsh, Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste, Essex County Council (ECC)

Simon opened and welcomed everyone to the workshop. He commented on the importance of sharing knowledge and expertise across a wide range of organisations, sectors and services, especially since the environmental agenda is gaining ever increasing traction; in part driven by young environmental activists such as Greta Thunberg but also backed up by hard facts and figures from reports such as the UN Environmental Annual and the recent UN Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC).The Government's 25 year Environment Plan, Department for Transport's Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy and the updated National Planning Policy Framework are showing renewed commitment to developing the policies, plans and strategies that address health inequalities, meet climate change and other environmental challenges locally and nationally, especially in the face of growing population and development across Essex and neighbouring counties.

Councillor Walsh stated that we must manage our environment in a more integrated way and capture the benefits for people. We must empower people to take ownership of their environment. Nevertheless, there are areas where there just isn't enough green space to face the challenges of increased flooding and overheating. And it will be of no surprise that, our most deprived areas are often also those with the worst quality or access to the natural environment. Research shows that people in the most disadvantaged groups in society are the least likely to travel to access the natural environment - so there is even more need to make sure we improve the quality of the environment where they are. Parks, green spaces and coastal and rural paths should be accessible and welcoming to everyone.

The Green Essex Strategy and Essex Walking Strategy are an important step in the right direction. There is a significant amount of overlap in the ambitions to both strategies to protect, enhance and promote GI and to encourage more people to be physically active through walking. While we want to increase walking for shorter trips as a mode of travel, we also want to encourage more people to walk for leisure and enjoy the benefits of green spaces which can have significant benefits for both mental and physical health. Therefore, it is also important to recognise that walking should be considered and encouraged as part of accessing GI.

Councillor Walsh ended by thanking the speakers, organisers and stakeholders.

## 2.2   The Green Essex Strategy - John Meehan, Head of Sustainability and Resilience

John chaired the day and gave a background summary of the Green Essex Strategy. The Green Essex Strategy describes the need for GI in the county and sets a vision taking into consideration the priorities from the District, City and Borough authorities. From this vision 7 objectives were identified and their key focus for each objective can be summarised as:

- Protect
- Improve
- Create
- Connectivity
- Inclusivity
- Health
- Sustainability

This strategy provides a plan to guide the future planning and delivery of green infrastructure in Essex in light of the growth in development, population, health inequalities and the challenges from climate change. There is significant evidence to demonstrate the benefits of GI, including the GI GIS mapping model that has been developed by University of East Anglia (UEA). At its best GI can be designed to get the most benefit out of what nature provides us for free and provide multi benefits, such as health economic growth and investment, land regeneration, climate change mitigation and adaptation, ecology, education, tourism, recreation and stronger resilient communities.

There are approximately 25 proposals that have been identified against the objectives in which there are a set of actions, that will formulate an action plan. It will require partnership working across a number of sectors, such as Planning, Highways, Transport, Energy, Health and Education through a multi-disciplinary approach, as well as exploring a variety of funding sources to successfully delivery the proposals from the strategy.

John mentioned that a Green Essex Network will be established to meet quarterly and asked if anyone was interested to join to sign and let us know – environment@essex.gov.uk

Green Essex Strategy Consultation closes 14 June 2019 - https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/rci/green-essex-strategy

## 2.3   Essex Walking Strategy- Julian Sanchez, Active Travel Manager, ECC

Julian explained the Essex Walking Strategy is a refresh of the 2001 strategy and is a plan for pedestrians, to get more of us walking on our network of footways and paths in our rural areas, towns, cities and neighbourhoods. Julian highlighted the challenges such as 44% of car trips are under 2km, a quarter of people not walking across Essex, and that 1 in 5 car trips are to school. There is a significant opportunity for school walking. He mentioned the strong cycling networks and the need to replace driving  for walking.

A vision was identified with an aim to normalise walking in everyday life and encourage walking champions like Jane Jacobs, an American-Canadian journalist from 1960's. Nine objectives and themes were developed from the vision which will translate into actions within an action plan.

The Essex Walking Strategy links to the Green Essex Strategy, since a lot of the walking infrastructure is also GI. It's important to consider the character of the place not just the materials used, but to think about the furniture, lighting, attractiveness and connection to the natural environment.

The Essex Walking Strategy consultation: https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/rci/walking-strategy

**Q&A**

Q1. Does the strategy link to the Local Transport Plan (LTP)?

A. The strategy does recognise the pedestrian/transport hierarchy. The LTP version 3 has been refreshed to give certainty to the Local Plans, however the Essex Walking Strategy will feed into the LTP4.

Q2. Need to make walking and cycling a priority to make fundamental change

A. The aim is to capture the challenges with the consultation, so it can be presented to cabinet for more of an influence. One of the actions is identify walking champions as ambassadors.

Q3. How does this strategy link to Highways England?

A. Highways England sit on the Active Travel Steering Group. We are starting to have that conversation on how to improve the highway network to encourage walking to work etc. If anyone is interested to join the Active Steering Group to let Julian know - Julian.Sanchez@essex.gov.uk

Q4. Developers try to improve paths etc out of the red line – how are you going to achieve?

A. At this stage the issues are to link to places of interests. We will have to explore opportunities to develop a project to look at ways to solve this issue.

Other comments

• A need to engage health practices to flagship key schemes to help GPs prescribe walking to people.
• Create a website with walking maps for their district – a central point for information.
• Cycle County/Active County Conference is being held on 5-6 September 2019 at Anglian Ruskin University now open for registration http://landor.co.uk/cyclecounty/home.php

## 2.4 Mapping Green Infrastructure - Professor Andrew Lovett, Professor of Geography, School of Environmental Sciences, University of East Anglia

Andrew gave an overview of the approach taken to develop a Green Infrastructure layer for Essex, in partnership with Business & Local Government Data Research Centre and ECC. The aim was to look at different publicly available datasets (such as OpenStreetMap land cover) and use them to support local government in creating a GI layer at a regional level.

The challenge is there is not a clear definition of what is GI and can be interpreted differently. The data available are in different formats, that needs to be formatted and use different categories for the types of GI. OpenStreetMap land cover database was used as a baseline, which was then overlaid with data on other GI assets and then these GI assets were classified into the UK Habitat categories (the new national classification). A broad definition of GI was used, which means that not all GI is necessarily accessible.

Andrew gave examples of the analysis undertaken and the GIS layers that have been produced showing:

- The number of GI functions and benefits they provide (showing how multi-functional and multi beneficial GI is)
- The proposed development sites from the local development plans,
- Evaluation of the current GI provision using:
  - the Natural England's Accessible Natural Greenspace Standards (ANGSt) regarding proximity to GI, and
  - distribution of social economic variation (e.g. population, Lower Supper Output Areas and Index of Multiple Deprivation),
- Public Rights of Way and cycle network,
- A separate layer for graded agricultural land and other productive spaces such as meadows.

Andrew gave examples of the type of question that could be asked, for example:

- What is the percentage areas of each local authority defined as GI compared to productive spaces (agricultural land and meadows)?
  - There is a lower percent of GI, but higher percentage of productive spaces in the north
    - 21% of Essex is GI of which:
    - 40% is natural and semi-natural spaces
    - 13% is coastal features
    - In urban areas parks and gardens and sport facilities are important.
- What is the proximity of homes to GI using ANGSt[1]? The analyses show that:
  - 50% of homes meet at least 3 or more of the 4 benchmarks[2]
  - A third meet at least 2 of the benchmarks
  - 2% meet none of the benchmarks
  - Similarly, this can be applied to new developments for instance, it highlights whether the potential developments sites larger than 50 hectares meet any of the benchmarks.
- What is percentage of GI in Low Super Output Areas categorised by deprivation score and population density?
  - The analysis showed that there is no strong linear association between deprivation score, population density and percentage of GI, for example:
  - Higher the population density and greater the affluence the less percentage of GI is in that area.
  - While moderate population density and higher deprivation has high percentage of GI is in that area (this does not mean that that GI is accessible).

## Q&A

Q1. What is the reason arable land was not included in the GI layer?

---

[1] Tool developed by Natural England based on the minimum distances people would travel to green spaces.

[2]
- No person should live more than 300 metres from their nearest area of natural green space of at least 2 hectares (0.02km2) in size.
- There should be at least one accessible 20-hectare (0.20km2) green space site within 2 kilometres from home.
- There should be one accessible 100-hectare (1km2) green space site within 5 kilometres.
- There should be one accessible 500-hectare (5km2) green space site within 10 kilometres.
- At least 1 hectare (0.01km2) of Local Nature Reserve should be provided per 1,000 population

A. The inclusion of arable land would dominate the results, so a separate layer was produced as it is recognised that arable land is an important land cover. Consideration was taken regarding publicising private land. A section on agriculture has been included within chapter 9 of the strategy.

Q2. Is it possible to separate accessible and non-accessible GI?

A. The issue is the confidence in the accuracy of the data available and the challenge of identifying ownership for instance, some natural and semi-natural spaces are owned by the National Trust while other are privately owned. If we were confident in the data then it would be possible, but time consuming.

Q3. Have hedgerows been captured?

A. No as there is no consistent data available, however data capture is coming for hedgerows.

Q4. How will this be update? Is there any commitment?

A. Nothing in place, however a clear method has been applied with accessible data sources, so there is nothing to stop any local authority to access and update.

## 3. REGISTRATION ACTIVITY: PRIOITISING OBJECTIVIES

Participants were asked upon registration to identify three objective's they feel were a priority. They placed the following dots against the Strategies objectives in order of priority:

🔴 Red dot - one          🟡 Yellow dot – two          🟢 Green dot – three

| Objective | Priority 1 (red) | Priority 2 (yellow) | Priority 3 (Green) |
|---|---|---|---|
| **Green Essex Strategy** | | | |
| Create more high-quality green infrastructure, especially in areas of deficiency | 8 | 1 | 1 |
| Improve the connectivity of green infrastructure for people and wildlife | 5 | 12 | 2 |
| Secure funding for new and existing green infrastructure to ensure their sustainability | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| Protect existing green infrastructure, especially the most valuable | 3 | 2 | 0 |
| Improve existing green infrastructure so it is better functioning | 1 | 1 | 4 |
| Provide green infrastructure facilities to promote health and wellbeing | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| Increase use and inclusivity of green infrastructure across all social groups and abilities | 0 | 2 | 0 |
| **Essex Walking Strategy** | | | |
| Enhance walking in neighbourhoods & prioritise walking in new Communities | 2 | 0 | 5 |
| Enabling physical activity & walking for health | 1 | 1 | 1 |
| Promote walking for leisure | 0 | 0 | 1 |

In summary the top three priorities were:

Priority 1: Create more high-quality green infrastructure, especially in areas of deficiency

Priority 2: Improve the connectivity of green infrastructure for people and wildlife

Joint Priority 3: Secure funding for new and existing green infrastructure to ensure their sustainability

Joint Priority 3: Enhance walking in neighbourhoods & prioritise walking in new Communities

## 4. WORKSHOP DISCUSSIONS

John introduced the discussion section of the workshop, which consisted of 2 activities. The purpose for the discussions was to gathering participants' thoughts on the objectives and their proposals from both strategies.

The activities included:

**Activity 1: S.W.O.T**

Participants were asked 'Are the objectives the right objectives and are they feasible?' They were asked to consider the proposed objective(s) on their table from all angles and use their experience and knowledge as stakeholders to help to review the objectives using the S.W.O.T (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) assessment.

**Activity 2:  Word Banking, Joining and SMART**

The participants were asked 'Are these the right proposals or has anything been missed?' This activity was divided into three parts:

Part A: Word Banking

Participants were asked to independently complete a word banking exercise. This is another form of word association where participants were asked to write down words, phrases, sentences and opinions or projects (existing or ideas) on post-it's that they associate with this objective.

## Part B: Joining

The next part of this activity was a joining exercise to group together the word associations from Part A, by grouping together banked words that have a similar theme or focal point. Once the banked words were grouped together, participants explored how they can be developed into making sentences and proposals that are SMART (Specific , Measurable, Agreed upon and attainable, Realistic and Trackable/ tangible).

## Part C: Comparing

Finally, participants were asked to review how their proposal compared with the objectives proposal within the strategies and to make any edits, amendments and add their new proposals identify in Part B.

## 4.1   General Feedback on Activity 1: S.W.O.T on the Green Essex and Walking Strategies

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|---|---|
| • Multi benefits and cumulative benefits.<br>• Good existing PROW, cycle networks.<br>• Lots already happening regarding health and wellbeing related activities.<br>• Improved health and wellbeing and social cohesion. | • Quality of GI.<br>• How define quality of GI.<br>• Lack of signposting – legibility on where routes go etc.<br>• Poor communication.<br>• Retrofitting to existing.<br>• Maintenance issues. |
| **Opportunities** | **Threats** |
| • Create local walking maps to be available online.<br>• Improve destinations. | • Development pressures – sanitisation of green space/ increasing footfalls and external pressure.<br>• Developers - many developers not committed.<br>• How to make walking a priority – element of social exclusion. |

The key feedback points for Activity 2 have been summarised in the next section.

Section 4.2 summaries the group discussion from both activities for each objective for both strategies.

## 4.2 Green Essex Strategy Objectives review

### 4.2.1 Protect existing green infrastructure, especially the most vulnerable

**Activity 1: S.W.O.T**

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|---|---|
| • Multi benefits and cumulative benefits– biodiversity, natural capital, amenity.<br>• Mental health resilience.<br>• Large open areas – wilderness.<br>• Connectivity of habitats.<br>• Protected/ forever for everyone.<br>• Jewels in the crown for GI. | • Lack of knowledge/ value.<br>• Possible anti-social behaviour.<br>• Lack of connectivity.<br>• Lack of funding.<br>• Competition between NGO's. |
| **Opportunities** | **Threats** |
| • Developmental funding – RAMS.<br>• Education to aid value/ increase knowledge.<br>• Community involvement – volunteer schemes.<br>• Public money for public services. | • Housing development – sanitising of green space/ Demand for housing – increasing pressure.<br>• Lack of funding (creation, management long-term)/ inability to protect.<br>• Poor green infrastructure – bad choices.<br>• Changes to subsidiary funding.<br>• Tree diseases/Inns (invasive species). |

**Activity 2: Word banking and Proposals Review**

This activity was not completed for this objective.

### 4.2.2    Improve existing green infrastructure so it is better functioning

Activity 1 and Activity 2 was not completed for this objective.

### 4.2.3    Create more high-quality green infrastructure, especially in areas of deficiency

**Activity 1: S.W.O.T**

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|---|---|
| • Data is available showing GI.<br>• Essex has a high number of GI, PROW and coastal path.<br>• Community focus. | • Not sure of the quality of GI ( definition of quality and how to quantify).<br>• Information exists but at district or local scale.<br>• What is 'quality' and what is deficiency?<br>• Different areas require different GI. |
| Opportunities | Threats |
| • Creation of the Garden Village communities.<br>• Maximise connectivity of existing sites e.g. Thames Chase Community Forest.<br>• Consider how larger green open spaces can connect with smaller and how PROW/cycle paths connect up.<br>• Improved signage for PROW/cycle paths.<br>• Use pubs/ community resources to signpost to PROW/ cycle path.<br>• Maximises routes from coast path inwards. | • Develops not co-operating.<br>• Lack of funding.<br>• On-going maintenance .<br>• All above relate to money. |

## Activity 2: Word banking and Proposals Review

Part A and B: Word Banking and Joining

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| • Improve air quality<br>• Tree Planting (include urban tree planting)<br>• New hedging (planting new hedges in rural areas).<br>• New Parks<br>• Biodiversity (improving biodiversity in parks) | • Parks and amenity areas in residential areas/ Housing estates (this is what people would think GI is)<br>• Look for opportunities in existing areas with a deficit<br>• Trees<br>• Biodiversity | • Money to create new improved quality of existing GI and maintain<br>• New connecting green corridors (active travel corridors)<br>• Access work and leisure<br>• Lack of money – not able to maintain what we have now |
| • Unknown deficiency<br>• New footpaths/cycleways<br>• What is not accessible?<br>• Public access | • What does the community actually want? Has anyone asked them? | • Which areas are deficient – GIs cannot differentiate between areas with public access and those without. |

Part C: Proposals Review

| Current Proposals | Your Proposed Alterations |
|---|---|
| Develop the coast path in Essex. | |
| Increased access to the Outdoor Pursuits Centres. | |
| Create green infrastructure in new developments such as Garden Communities, with best practice guidance on its design and management for multiple benefits. | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Develop green infrastructure as part of Minerals and Waste restorations with reference to nature conservation priorities e.g. Pitsea Landfill. | |
| Create town or village circular routes especially in areas of green infrastructure deficiency. | |
| Strategically identify priority areas for the creation or improvement of green infrastructure that could provide most benefit for locally native species of recognised nature conservation priority. | |
| Use planning policy to secure multi-functional green spaces within and beyond development site boundaries through the application of biodiversity net gain, biodiversity off-setting and the creation of compensation habitat. | |
| Where possible, use new green infrastructure provision to buffer or extend existing designated sites. | |

**New Proposals**

Plant trees along new footpaths/cycle path routes to make them more attractive.

ECC Highways to allow footpaths greater than 2 metres wide where there are trees/hedges , to enable the paths to remain useable when the hedges grow. Also, to stop unwelcoming "canyon" effect.

### 4.2.4 Improve the connectivity of green infrastructure for people and wildlife

**Activity 1: S.W.O.T**

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|---|---|
| <ul><li>Existing network to build on.</li><li>Multiple benefit to society and wildlife.</li><li>Thousands of kilometres of PROW in Essex.</li><li>Wide network of GI assets.</li><li>Coast Path.</li></ul> | <ul><li>PROW given low priority by developers and decision makers – results in realignment of existing routes etc.</li><li>Not safe to walk, ride, cycle on roads (especially rural roads.</li><li>Routes should be accessible to all user groups – walkers, cyclists, equestrians and disables.</li><li>Equestrians are left out in the strategy.</li><li>Local people do not always use the green spaces they live near.</li><li>Cost of maintenance of new infrastructure.</li><li>Poor quality of some of the existing infrastructure.</li></ul> |
| **Opportunities**<ul><li>Intergrade existing PRoWs within developments.</li><li>Increase awareness make GI attractive to people and educate on benefits and options.</li><li>New crossings.</li><li>New PROW.</li><li>Change behaviour and attitudes.</li><li>Create local walking maps with key destinations, key routes and walking times.</li><li>Create circular routes linking to coast path.</li><li>Linking habitats together to aid movement of wildlife.</li><li>Improve walking network and signposting.</li><li>Increase number of safe off-road routes for all users (walk, ride and cycle) .</li></ul> | **Threats**<ul><li>Balance between usage verses biodiversity/ecology.</li><li>Increasing connectivity could negatively impact on wildlife (e.g. increase recreational pressures on coastal SACs/ SPAs from England Coast Path.</li><li>Developer wanting to re-align historic footpaths on development sites to unlock development potential but reducing functionality of footpath network.</li></ul> |

**Activity 2: Word banking and Proposals Review**

Part A & B: Word Banking and Joining

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| • Barrier optimisation | • Dynamic<br>• Biodiversity<br>• Space for people and wildlife<br>• Green corridors<br>• Resilient<br>• Walls | • Maintenance<br>• Design<br>• Legibility<br>• Linking large open spaces with pocket parks |
| • Access | • Communication<br>• Education<br>• Information<br>• Communities | • Strategies and plans<br>• Planning<br>• Existing initiatives e.g. Thames Chase Community Forest<br>• Cross- boundary working |

Part C: Proposals Review

| Current Proposals | Your Proposed Alterations |
|---|---|
| Develop the coast path in Essex. | Ensure access in a sustainable manner. |
| Develop inter connecting paths between green infrastructure. | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Restore and Promote Essex promoted paths.<br><br>    ▪ The Forest Way<br>    ▪ The St Peter's Way<br>    ▪ The Essex Way<br>    ▪ The Roach Valley Way<br>    ▪ The coast path (once designated as National Trail)<br><br>    ▪ The Stour Valley Path<br>    ▪ The Thames Estuary Path,<br>    ▪ The Flitch Way<br>    ▪ The Saffron Way<br>    ▪ Black Water Rail Trail<br>    ▪ John Ray Walk | |

**New Proposals**

Map existing GI/paths to identify gaps to be prioritised (consider for wildlife and people separately).

Ensure design is resilient and sustainable and provides optimum habitat for wildlife and people.

Build in least restrictive access principle throughout.

### 4.2.5 Increase use and inclusivity of green infrastructure across all social groups and abilities

**Activity 1: S.W.O.T**

This activity was not completed for this objective.

## Activity 2: Word banking and Proposals Review

Part A and B: Word Banking and Joining

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| • Deprivation<br>• Inclusivity is fundamental to enhancing walking etc. | • Accessible to all | • Special places for kids |

Part C: Proposals Review

| Current Proposals | Your Proposed Alterations |
|---|---|
| Explore environmental therapies and challenges aimed at developing young people. | No old people, disabled, only young? |
| Promote youth orientated activities in green spaces e.g. mountain biking, Go Ape, Geocaching, etc. | As above |

### New Proposals

Raise awareness of GI and its benefits across all social groups.

Support to groups (social inclusion).

Ensure all support groups (e.g. Older people, disabled, young, ethnic minorities, families) are represented.

### 4.2.6    Provide green infrastructure facilities to promote health and wellbeing

**Activity 1: S.W.O.T**

**Strengths**
- Wide range of users – dog walking/ horse riding/ cycling – family events.
- Good atmosphere
  - family events
  - Improved health (physical and mental).
- Reducing loneliness – becomes a strength once people are better connected.
- Use of technology – Apps etc.
- Wide range of age groups using GI
- Free!
- Good web resources – Walking for Health.
- Initiatives such as 'Couch to 5k'.

**Weaknesses**
- Publicity/ lack of awareness.
  - Lack of information for users/ communication.
- Groups having to fund themselves.
  - ECC Support?
  - Access to resources?
- Reducing loneliness – becomes a strength once people are better connected.
- Time to deliver improvements.

**Opportunities**
- Improve crime perception.
- Behavioural changes.
- Promotion as part of tourism?
- Informing people of benefits, rules etc. of countryside access.
- Facilities (cafes, toilets) at destinations.
  - Converted disused railway facilities etc.
- Circular route – somewhere to start and finish.
- Safe road crossings.
- Health and wellbeing/ GI policies in Local Plans.
- Positive working with developers (S106 etc) – improves by connecting developments with GI.
- Increase journeys to school.

**Threats**
- Developers:
  - Landscape is important e.g. greenways
  - Loss of landscape/other GI.
- Access to car parking – more deprived areas having access to the GI?
- Lack of joined-up thinking.
- Reduction of finding.

- Garden Communities/Villages.

## Activity 2: Word banking and Proposals Review

Part A and B: Word Banking and Joining

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| • Inclusivity:<br>• Appreciation of GI benefits.<br>• Calm<br>• Mental Health<br>• Social (non-threatening) interactions.<br>• Feeling part of bigger picture.<br>• Active interests in small things.<br>• A lot of people will need encouragement/initiating especially that first time.<br>• Fully accessible to as many user groups as possible.<br>• Promote inclusivity.<br>• Be mindful of need to address inequalities in health. | • Health & Wellbeing:<br>• This is very timely – social prescribing.<br>• Need to convince e.g. developers, landowners of the value of them.<br>• Savings<br>• Being active. | • Air Quality improvements:<br>• Fresh air<br>• Clean air<br>• Should be easier to include in new development than in existing areas.<br>• Particulate matter uptake.<br>• Safe and traffic free.<br>• Less treated water. |

Part C: Proposals Review

| Current Proposals | Your Proposed Alterations |
|---|---|
| Explore environmental therapies delivered through mental health services. | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Develop and promote Healthcare and wellbeing through green infrastructure activities. | |

### New Proposals

Improve attractiveness of facilities by:
    a. Improved signage e.g. destinations information etc.
    b. Amenities – seats, toilets.
    c. Making them usable for less mobile people.

Increase marketing of the facilities – advertise locally, on the internet.

## 4.2.7 Secure funding for new and existing green infrastructure to ensure their sustainability

**Activity 1: S.W.O.T**

This activity was not completed for this objective.

**Activity 2: Word banking and Proposals Review**

Part A and B: Word Banking and Joining

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| • Maintenance & Management:<br>• Sustainability<br>• Wider community benefit (add value to developers).<br>• Value<br>• In-perpetuity – need funding for long-term, not just short-term maintenance.<br>• Ownership/responsibility<br>• Stewardship<br>• Increasing "ask" on the same people in local community who might be asked to undertake maintenance. | • Funding Plan:<br>• Development process and government funding.<br>• Viability<br>• Be clear on projects for funding prioritise!<br>• Limited opportunities to access EU funding streams – reduced pots of funding and increasing competition.<br>• Identify funding sources – multiple sources. | • Collaboration:<br>• Consider from outset Local Plans, planning applications.<br>• Out of the box<br>• Independent<br>• Maximise benefits from multiple sectors/ partners and long-term commitment to fund/ contribute to ongoing maintenance. |

Part C: Proposals Review

| Current Proposals | Your Proposed Alterations |
|---|---|
| Develop new facilities that will generate revenues. | Include existing |

| | |
|---|---|
| Create a Green Essex Fund for endowments, fund raising bids, donations etc | |

**New Proposals**

Partnering to provide/maintain green infrastructure.

Funding to manage volunteers/maintenance.

Create a distinct identify to get strong community engagement.

## 4.3 Essex Walking Strategy Objectives review

### 4.3.1 Promote walking for leisure

**Activity 1: S.W.O.T**

| **Strengths** | **Weaknesses** |
| --- | --- |
| <ul><li>It's free!</li><li>Improve health.</li><li>Existing PROW network.</li><li>Essex path to prosperity project – Visit Essex campaign in 2020.</li><li>No car parking costs.</li></ul> | <ul><li>Peoples anxiety about walking in areas with poor signage (e.g. rural footpaths across farm land) e.g. will I get lost? Am I allowed here? How do I get back? What if I have an accident?</li><li>Signposting – lack of legibility – don't know where paths lead to/sight-lines.</li><li>Walking for leisure.</li><li>Time needed to walk to places.</li><li>Poor lighting on town paths/ routes especially in cut throughs/shortcuts – people don't feel safe.</li><li>Not enough information about areas to walk/routes</li><li>Traffic danger on roads especially in rural areas.</li><li>"Health walks" usually run during the week, not at weekends/ evenings so working people can't participate.</li></ul> |
| **Opportunities** | **Threats** |
| <ul><li>Linking walking to destinations – such as country parks etc (county assets) or town centres etc.</li><li>Include walking information/maps in residential travel packs.</li><li>Create local walking maps and signposting.</li><li>Encourage people to walk for leisure who might then consider walking for transport.</li></ul> | <ul><li>Balance between usage verses biodiversity/ ecology.</li><li>Parking too close to locations/ destinations.</li><li>Safety/ perceptions/ fear.</li><li>Increase in a number of cars on the roads make walking/cycling/ riding more dangerous.</li></ul> |

- Organised social walks – i.e. Parish Council's weekend routes in their area.
- Increase awareness of benefits and what is available.

## Activity 2: Word banking and Proposals Review

Part A & B: Word Banking and Joining

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| • Health<br>• Fitness | • Outdoors<br>• PROW | • Sociable<br>• Communities (existing and new)<br>• Fun<br>• Visualise |
| • Apps<br>• Maps and signage<br>• Information opportunity<br>• Communications – Apps/Social Media | • Incentivise<br>• Barrier 'Optimisation' | • |

Part C: Proposals Review

| Current Proposals | Your Proposed Alterations |
|---|---|
| Encourage social walks in Greenspace to link people to groups and reduce isolation | |
| Promote use of PROW, Coastal Path and Country Parks including links to Rail and Bus Operators | |

**New Proposals**

Provision of good updated information (Apps, maps and signage).

Incentivise walking.

Developing walks of specified lengths.

### 4.3.2 Enabling physical activity and walking for health

**Activity 1: S.W.O.T**

This was completed jointly with the Green Essex Objective see 4.2.6: Provide green infrastructure facilities to promote health and wellbeing**.**

**Activity 2: Word banking and Proposals Review**

Part A: Word Banking

This was completed jointly with the Green Essex Objective see 4.2.6: Provide green infrastructure facilities to promote health and wellbeing**.**

Part C: Proposals Review

| Current Proposals | Your Proposed Alterations |
|---|---|
| Enable residents to achieve two active 10's per day through everyday travel | |
| Collaborate with public health practitioners and stakeholders to raise awareness of walking for Health | See below for new proposal. |
| Support social prescribing to encourage walking as part of good mental health | Edit to read: Support social prescribing to encourage walking as part of good mental and physical health. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Promote Active Essex (Active Essex Strategy) | |

**New Proposals**

Pilot project in GP surgery's (Rural?) – "Give person" to facilitate contact with walking groups and other users of green infrastructure.

### 4.3.3 Enhance walking in neighbourhoods and priorities walking in new communities

**Activity 1: S.W.O.T**

| Strengths | Weaknesses |
|---|---|
| • Improved health and wellbeing.<br>• Improved social cohesion.<br>• Accessibility to services (e.g. transport, shops, schools etc.) and jobs (for all).<br>• Development enabler – to existing communities.<br>    ○ Reduce driving.<br>• Increased awareness/ appreciation of GI. | • Lack of political will.<br>• Lack of public/ planning information.<br>• Real or perceived costs.<br>• Retro-fitting to existing infrastructure costs.<br>• Maintenance cost in future. |
| **Opportunities** | **Threats** |
| • Promote good design.<br>• Education opportunities.<br>• Timely (Rise of environmental issues).<br>• Making walking a social norm.<br>• Marketing benefit. | • How will this affect those with medical etc. issues – social exclusion.<br>• Shared space in new developments (lack of parking, safety).<br>• Lack of density of developments – money. |

**Activity 2: Word banking and Proposals Review**

Part A and B: Word Banking and Joining

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| • Social prescribing<br>• Regular events | • Important health benefits.<br>• Community focus and interactions.<br>• Decease isolation | • Economic benefit – e.g. getting to work.<br>• Access to services – rail etc.<br>• Neighbourhoods |
| • Signposting<br>• Education and awareness raising. | • Safety<br>• 20 mph zones<br>• Keep it clean | • Not deliverable – e.g. lack of connectivity of developments and wider community, need political will and policies. |
| • Local amenities and facilities.<br>• Prioritise walking and cycling over other modes of transport. | • New walking routes.<br>• Connect with existing walking routes. | • Convenience |

Part C: Proposals Review

| Current Proposals | Your Proposed Alterations |
|---|---|
| Active by Design – make walking the most convenient way to get around our local areas. | • Include safe – otherwise good proposal. |
| Develop Framework for improving walking at a neighbourhood level drawing on Healthy Streets Principals | • Healthy Streets Principle – clarify what does this mean?<br>• Safe, convenient and attractive.<br>• Otherwise good proposal. |

| | |
|---|---|
| Develop a <u>framework</u> for working with developers to ensure that walking (and cycling) is designed in to <u>new housing and communities</u> and provide links to <u>existing destinations</u>. | <ul><li>Framework? Master plan – planning</li><li>What does this mean?</li><li>Should read new developments rather than new housing and communities as proposed.</li></ul> |
| Create better links to Walking <u>Corridors</u> from local neighbourhoods and new communities. | <ul><li>'Corridors' too linear: people like circular routes.</li><li>Suggested wording: ' Improve the existing network and create better links to existing walking networks from local neighbourhoods and new communities.</li></ul> |

**New Proposals**

Regular walking events.

Access information/ signposting/ education.

Improve attractiveness of routes: clean.

## 5. NEXT STEPS

John summarised that all the feedback/comments raised within the workshop will be captured and collated with findings from the consultation. These will be taken into to consideration to help review and amended the strategies prior to being taken to cabinet for sign off this winter 2019.  John thanked everyone for their participation and closed the workshop.

## 6. ANNEX 1: AGEND

**GREEN | ESSEX**
**ESSEX | WALKING**

**Strategies Consultation Stakeholder Workshop Agenda**

**16 May 2019**
Location: Corporate Suite (MAB 404), located on the 4th floor of Lord Ashcroft Building, Anglia Ruskin University, CM1 1SQ

**Time:** 9:00 – 14:00

**9:00am**     **Registration**

Tea and Coffee upon arrival

**9:30am**     **Opening and Welcome**

By Councillor Simon Walsh, Cabinet Member for Environment and Waste, Essex County Council (ECC)

**9:40am**     **Purpose for the Day**

By John Meehan, Head of Sustainability & Resilience, ECC (Chair)

**9:45am**     **Green Essex**

By John Meehan, Head of Sustainability & Resilience, ECC

**10:00am**     **Essex Walking**

By Julian Sanchez, Active Travel Programme Manager, ECC

**10:15am**     **Green Infrastructure GIS Mapping Model**

By Professor Andrew Lovett, Professor of Geography, School of Environmental Sciences at University of East Anglia

**10:40am** Tea & Coffee break

**WORKSHOP SESSION**

**10:55am**     **Introduction to the Workshop activities**

**11:05am**     **Activity 1: Are our Objectives the right objectives and are they feasible?**

Discussion and S.W.O.T analysis

**11:55am**     **Activity 2: Are these the right proposals or have we missed anything?**

Part A: Word banking exercises

Part B: Joining exercise to create proposals

Part C: Comparing proposals

**12:45am**     **Workshop sessions feedback**

**13:00pm**     **Close and Lunch**