

EXTRAORDINARY
ESSEX

GREATER ESSEX PROPERTY MARKET REVIEW

APRIL 2026



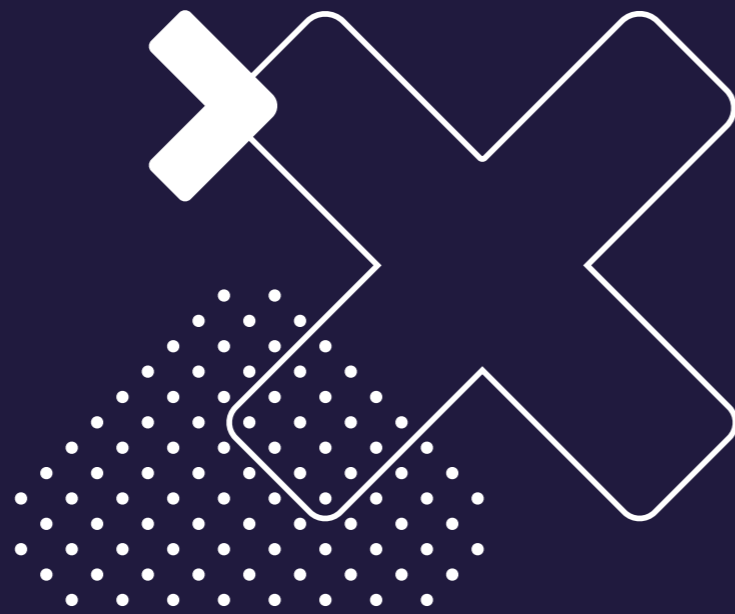
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Contributors: Essex County Council, Southend-on-Sea City Council and Thurrock Council thank partners and relevant organisations in Greater Essex for their contributions to this publication, including Lambert Smith Hampton who provided market intelligence.

Cover image: Minerva House © City & Country



WELCOME

This year's Greater Essex Property Market Review fills me with enormous pride and optimism. It signals that Essex is actively driving change, opening a bold new chapter for investment and growth across our region.

As Chair of the Greater Essex Business Board, I represent a business community united in its commitment to unlocking this region's full potential. Having worked across Essex for many years, I am delighted that the Review presents a compelling proposition for investors across the development sector.

Positioned between London, Cambridge, and global markets, Greater Essex is where innovation meets opportunity. Already the sixth-fastest growing economy in the UK, it benefits from two international airports and two freeports, underpinning its role as a gateway for trade, logistics and innovation. Together with the Lower Thames Crossing, these strategic assets have already secured over £11 billion of committed investment. From advanced manufacturing and MedTech to clean energy and logistics, our strengths are matched only by the scale of our ambition.

This Review reflects the momentum building across the region. Freeport East has advanced £250 million of private investment and enabled over £200 million of international inward investment across the wider East of England. Meanwhile, Kao Data's development of the UK's largest data centre campus, powered by renewable energy, places Greater Essex at the forefront of the secure, sustainable computing infrastructure essential to the UK's artificial intelligence (AI) ambitions.

The Extraordinary Essex platform continues to spotlight the opportunities available and the partnerships driving them forward, with Greater Essex taking centre stage at UKREiIF 2026.

Now is the time to invest in Greater Essex. The foundations are in place, the energy is palpable, and the opportunities are truly extraordinary.

➤ **Julia Gregory, Chair,
Greater Essex Business Board**

We're delighted to see the second edition of the Greater Essex Property Market Review launched at UKREiIF, providing the latest picture of the region's real estate sectors, highlighting recent successes and investment ready opportunities.

With its strategic location, thriving economy and strong connectivity to London, Essex remains one of the UK's most dynamic economies.

Since the last edition, planning permission has been granted for major sites, including the expansion of the Port of Tilbury, which will deliver Tilbury3 – a new rail-connected freight terminal.

In north Essex, £65 million of additional funding from Homes England will complete new road infrastructure, unlocking up to 7,750 homes at the new Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community.

Elsewhere in Greater Essex, the completion of Arterial Park – a 411,000 sq ft industrial development in Rochford – marks a significant investment in high-quality employment space along the A127 corridor. The park is located seven miles from London Southend Airport, now the UK's fastest-growing airport, which in 2025 recorded its busiest year since 2019.

This year's Review also highlights Essex's growing living sector – from city centre co-living projects to single-family rental (SFR) homes in the county's garden communities.

Alongside this momentum, our organisations are embarking on a bold transformation journey to enable even more responsive, effective local services – resulting in a stronger Greater Essex.

We invite you to join us in our shared commitment to strengthening Greater Essex's role as one of the UK's leading regional economies.

- **Nicole Wood, Chief Executive of Essex County Council**
- **Colin Ansell, Chief Executive of Southend-on-Sea City Council**
- **Dr Dave Smith, Chief Executive of Thurrock Council**



INDUSTRIAL





Essex's strategic location, access to cutting-edge innovation, and thriving supply chain make it a powerhouse for key sectors requiring industrial space, from advanced manufacturing and engineering to national logistics and freight services.

ADVANCED MANUFACTURING

A hub for innovation and production excellence, Essex's advanced manufacturing industry is a cornerstone of its economy. The county is home to around 4,200 advanced manufacturing and engineering companies, employing approximately 47,000 people.

The region's advanced manufacturing capabilities have attracted some of the world's leading manufacturers, including those in the aerospace and zero-emission vehicle industries. Notable companies such as Raytheon UK, Leonardo, and Teledyne e2v are leaders in the global defence and security market, providing products to the Ministry of Defence. In addition, Basildon is home to New Holland's tractor manufacturing plant, as well as the Ford facility, which is at the forefront of research and development for the next generation of electrified vehicles.

The East Regional Defence and Security Cluster

The East Regional Defence and Security Cluster (RDSC) brings together the counties of Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire, to strengthen the defence sector across the East of England. Launched in June 2025, the initiative harnesses the region's strengths in research, innovation, advanced manufacturing, and policy to enhance the UK's defence and security capabilities.

Strengthening connections

The Essex Manufacturing Alliance brings together businesses from every corner of the manufacturing sector at regular events. This initiative helps create an environment where local manufacturers, suppliers, and innovators can collaborate and strengthen connections.

✗ ESSEX'S ADVANCED MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY IS A **CORNERSTONE OF ITS ECONOMY**

✗ HOSTS **4,200 BUSINESSES**

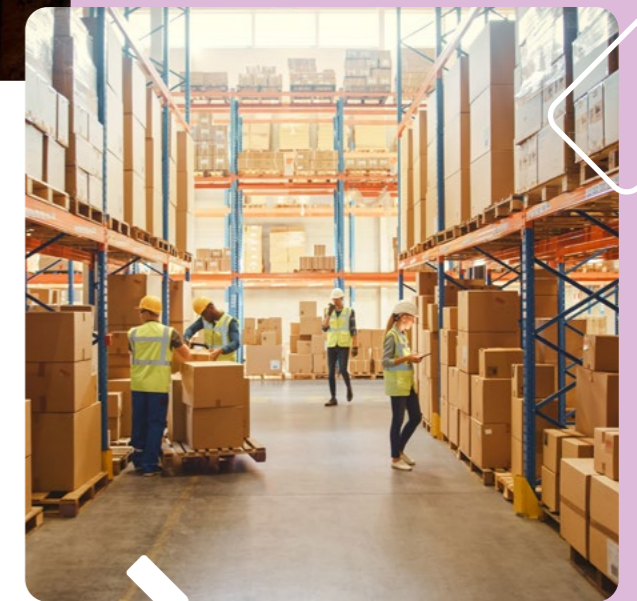
✗ EMPLOYS APPROXIMATELY **47,000 PEOPLE**



FREIGHT AND LOGISTICS

Essex is recognised as a national hub for import and export freight and logistics, with a thriving sector which employs a 39,000-strong workforce. In 2023, data from the Office for National Statistics showed that freight and logistics was the primary driver of new foreign investment into Essex, accounting for 62.4 per cent of total net foreign direct investment (FDI) flows in 2023 and securing the top spot in the county's industry rankings.

The county is home to two of the UK's 12 freeports – Freeport East and Thames Freeport – which build on the strengths of the international ports at Harwich and Felixstowe, London Gateway and the Port of Tilbury. Supported by the strategic road network, direct rail connections, and a coastal geographical advantage, Essex offers a competitive edge for national and international freight and logistics. It also has access to two international airports, London Stansted Airport and London Southend Airport.



A stock image of a distribution facility

AMONG THE NOTABLE FDI PROJECTS IN ESSEX IS AMAZON'S DISTRIBUTION FACILITY IN TILBURY, **EMPLOYING 2,000 STAFF**



KEY MARKET:
M25 AND M11 CORRIDOR

The M25 and M11 corridor are significant economic drivers and transportation routes, connecting London to Cambridge, and serving many key areas in Essex.



Image © Essex County Council

 **Harlow**

At the heart of this corridor is Harlow, a vibrant town known for its culture, connectivity and burgeoning business environment.

Located just 30 miles from central London and 36 miles from Cambridge, Harlow is strategically positioned to support global, cutting-edge industries. It has also benefitted from the opening of Junction 7a on the M11 in 2022, which provides motorway access from Harlow's town centre within minutes. Stansted Express offers access to central London by rail in under 35 minutes.

The town has several key industrial estates and is home to specialist companies within engineering, manufacturing, logistics, and delivery. Prime industrial rents are around £13-14 per sq ft.

The nearby **Harold Close Industrial Estate** was sold by CBRE Investment Management (IM) for £6.625 million in July 2025. The asset is a multi-let light industrial estate comprising 11 units, with a total gross internal area (GIA) of approximately 31,300 sq ft, and achieves average rents of around £13 per sq ft.

Templefields is another key industrial area, located on the outskirts of Harlow town centre and close to Edinburgh Way's retail parks, as well as the M11 junctions, 7 and 7a. Templefields is within walking distance of Harlow Mill railway station, which offers regular services to London, Stansted and Cambridge.

The area includes manufacturing and distribution space, trade counters, and motor trade locations, attracting numerous

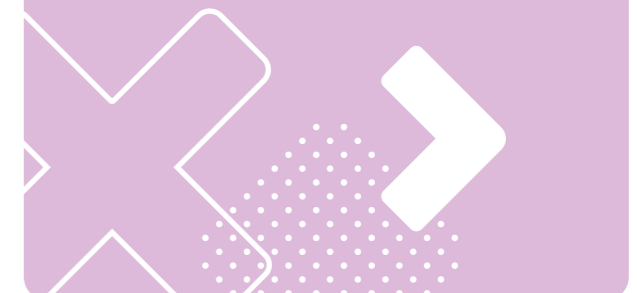
national and specialist occupiers. Notable businesses here include cosmetics brand Clarins' distribution centre, Astro Lighting, and New Era Energy, which has the UK's largest distribution network of renewable fuels.

Other prime industrial employment areas in the town include **The Pinnacles**, in the east of Harlow. It features industrial units, warehouses and office space, with major occupiers including wholesale foods supplier Brakes.

The nearby **ICON Harlow**, on Third Avenue, has been occupied by Wincanton, a leading logistics and supply chain provider, since 2022. Unit C at ICON Harlow is a logistics warehouse of around 71,500 sq ft, which has been refurbished by Mirastar. In 2025, Sybron Ltd – a leading supplier of cleaning, hygiene and catering products – agreed a 10-year lease on the unit at £17 per sq ft.



Prologis UK has acquired a 24-acre development site south of Waltham Abbey, from Next plc for £54.1 million. The site benefits from its location just off Junction 26 of the M25, and is earmarked for advanced manufacturing and logistics units. It is allocated for employment use in Epping Forest District Council's adopted Local Plan.



The construction of **Identity Harlow** at Harlow Innovation Park is now underway, with completion expected in summer 2026. This 150,000 sq ft industrial scheme is being delivered through a joint venture between Buccleuch Property, Investec REALIS and Wrenbridge. The project will feature six units ranging in size from around 12,500 sq ft to 59,500 sq ft, providing R&D and high-tech manufacturing accommodation, alongside office space.

Image © Produced for Wrenbridge and DTRE by Eighty Studio

M25

The M25 runs through the west of the Greater Essex region, connecting to the East Anglia via the A12 at Junction 28. The motorway also provides access to London and Kent, as well as several key roads including the M11, A127 and A13.

When built, the Lower Thames Crossing will connect to the M25 at Junction 29.

A major industrial development beside Junction 29 of the M25 has been formally granted planning permission by Brentwood Council. Known as **Indurent Park Brentwood**, the site will total 1.2 million square feet on 52 net developable acres. The development will include a new link road to Junction 29 of the M25.

The new logistics site by national developer Indurent is expected to meet around 40 per cent of Brentwood borough’s employment needs for the next decade or more. Once complete, the development is

anticipated to create up to 2,660 direct full-time jobs.

Other notable activity includes a 10-year term secured for £16 per sq ft in 2025 at **London Brentwood Commercial Park**. Fronting the junction of the A128/A127 at East Horndon and only three miles from the M25, the unit of approximately 22,500 sq ft combines warehouse space with around 3,500 sq ft of Grade A office.

- ✘ TOTAL OF **1.2 MILLION SQUARE FEET** ON 52 ACRES
- ✘ CREATION OF UP TO **2,600 DIRECT FULL-TIME JOBS**
- ✘ EMPLOYEES ESTIMATED TO SPEND UP TO **£6.9 MILLION ANNUALLY** IN THE LOCAL AREA

Image © Indurent



London Stansted Airport

Located in Uttlesford district, London Stansted Airport is the UK’s third-largest cargo airport, handling more than 220,000 tonnes of cargo annually, and the fourth-busiest passenger airport connecting to more than 200 destinations. Situated just off the M11 motorway, it connects to several strategic roads, including the A120 and M25, and offers rail links to London Liverpool Street and Cambridge.

Owned by Manchester Airports Group (MAG), London Stansted has experienced significant growth over the past decade. Passenger numbers increased from 17.5 million in the year to March 2013 to 30 million in the year to December 2025. The airport is also the largest single-site employer in the East of England, with over 12,000 people working for 200 on-airport companies.

Work is underway on a £1.1 billion investment programme at London Stansted, which includes extending the existing terminal by a third to improve the passenger experience. The investment is expected to double the airport’s economic contribution to £2 billion a year.

The programme will also fund a 14.3MW on-site solar farm to support the airport’s current and future energy needs. Construction is in progress, with plans for it to be operational by spring 2026.

In 2023, outline planning permission was granted for **BOX.STN** – a 150-acre industrial estate with approximately two million square feet of commercial development, adjacent to London Stansted Airport. Most of the site will consist of units for storage and distribution, with five per cent allocated for mixed business use.

Reserved matters approval was subsequently secured in 2025, with Columbia Threadneedle Investments announcing that development is expected to commence from 2026. Strategically located between London and Cambridge, close to junctions 8 and 8A of the M11, the site benefits from excellent proximity to the air freight and passenger facilities offered by Stansted Airport.

The development is expected to create over 2,500 jobs during the construction phase and more than 2,000 long-term career opportunities once completed.

Images (left to right): Cargo operations at London Stansted Airport; illustrating the airport’s transformation plans © London Stansted Airport



NEWS FEATURE:

Green light for London Stansted Airport plans to boost passenger capacity

London Stansted Airport has secured planning approval to increase its annual passenger limit up to 51 million passengers, paving the way for major growth.

The decision positions Stansted to become the UK's second-busiest airport, unlocking thousands of new jobs and contributing an estimated £366 million gross value added (GVA) to the economy.

It will allow the airport to maximise the full potential of its existing runway without increasing the number of flights or expanding beyond its current footprint, ensuring growth is achieved sustainably.

The plans have strong backing from leading airlines, unions, businesses, and representatives from tourism, hospitality and education sectors.



“As we grow our airport over the next 20 years, we will do it sustainably – decarbonising our operations and ensuring half of all passengers accessing the airport do so via public transport.”

Gareth Powell,
Managing Director of
London Stansted Airport



51 MILLION
PASSENGERS A YEAR

£366 MILLION
GVA



As part of the plans:

- ✗ **Junction 8 of the M11** will be improved to reduce congestion
- ✗ **Local bus services** will be enhanced to relieve pressures on local roads





**KEY MARKET:
NORTH EAST ESSEX**

Image © Freeport East

Freeport East Harwich

Freeport East is a government-backed special economic zone. Officially recognised as an Industrial Strategy Zone and aligned to the government's Industrial Strategy, it covers an area of over a thousand square kilometres and is also part of the UK's east coast green energy cluster.

Based around three main development sites, including the UK's biggest container terminal at Felixstowe, it offers access to more than 190 countries and 700 destinations worldwide, alongside a range of investment incentives, a special free zone customs model, and wider links to universities and research institutes.

One of 12 freeports in the UK, Freeport East has a particular focus on supporting priority sectors in the Industrial Strategy, including advanced manufacturing, digital

technologies, defence and clean energy, including offshore wind, green fuels and cleantech. It has already attracted over £250 million of private sector investment and created over 2,000 jobs in the local region.

Freeport East already includes Harwich International Port, which is home to the O&M base for the Galloper Offshore Wind Farm and regularly used for a range of other offshore wind and clean energy projects. Other businesses active in the port include Clarksons, RWE, DSV and Stena Line. The freeport is also attracting innovative new businesses such as Australia-based Rux Energy, who are using Harwich as a base for the development of new hydrogen storage technologies, and Firefly Green Fuels, developing sustainable aviation fuels.



Image © Freeport East

- ✘ ACCESS TO OVER 190 COUNTRIES
- ✘ OVER £250 MILLION OF PRIVATE SECTOR INVESTMENT ATTRACTED
- ✘ 2,000 JOBS ALREADY CREATED IN THE LOCAL REGION

Freeport East Harwich is also developing a Green Energy Hub (Bathside Bay) which will provide a deep-water 300-acre port expansion to provide new quay facilities, extensive laydown areas for assembly and marshalling, as well as associated manufacturing and business support spaces.

Planning permission for the Green Energy Hub, including land reclamation and a new quay wall, was secured in 2024.

Manufacturing space is currently available over 91 acres of plots, with access to the existing quay and national road network.

Freeport East and local partners are funding new power grid and transport improvements to support a range of manufacturing activities, as well as investment in associated innovation and skills facilities.



Located between Harwich and Colchester with access to the A120, **Centurion Park** is a new development of 11 high-quality warehouse and industrial units completed at the end of 2024 by Tungsten Properties. The development has units ranging from around 11,000 to 70,500 sq ft with yards up to 45m and dedicated office space to each unit. The units are built for sustainability and are rated BREEAM Excellent, EPC A+ and Net Zero Carbon in Construction. Over the past year, three new businesses have joined the park, taking a combined 112,000 sq ft of space.

Image © Tungsten Properties



Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community

Colchester and Tendring districts are set to welcome a new sustainable garden community, which includes a significant amount of land for new business premises, in addition to 7,750 homes.

Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) is a joint project between Tendring District Council, Colchester City Council and Essex County Council. The lead developer is Latimer, the development arm of Clarion Housing Group.

The principle of the development was ratified through the adoption of the Section 1 Local Plan in 2021 from Tendring District and Colchester City councils, which earmarked around 62 acres of employment land.

In 2025, the Planning Inspectorate found the TCBGC Development Plan Document sound, after which it was adopted by Tendring and Colchester

councils. This planned for approximately 42 acres of land adjacent to the A120, including a new business park for general employment purposes and 20 acres of land north of the A133 – opposite Wivenhoe Park – for knowledge-based employment, leveraging opportunities from the adjacent University of Essex.

The development will be connected to key destinations in Colchester via a planned Rapid Transit System (RTS).

A planning application was validated in March 2026, with potential for delivery to commence in 2028.

THE DELIVERY OF THE TENDRING COLCHESTER BORDERS GARDEN COMMUNITY PROJECT COULD COMMENCE IN 2028

Image © Tendring District Council



INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY:

Industrial & logistics employment land, Harwich Valley

15 acres of land for commercial uses.

Harwich Valley is a mixed-use development which includes approximately 430,500 sq ft of commercial floorspace.

The employment land has consent for B2 and B8 warehouse units (approximately 259,000 sq ft GIA) as well as business units (around 26,500 sq ft GIA). The development also features a new roundabout off the A120 for improved vehicular access, beneficial for journeys to Harwich International Port, Colchester, London Stansted Airport, and the East Midlands via the M11. The anticipated unit sizes range from around 1,000 to 106,000 sq ft, providing flexibility for various business needs.

Opportunity at a glance

- Type of opportunity:** Employment land
- Real estate sector:** Development land – Employment
- Local Planning Authority:** Tendring District Council
- Site areas:** Plots up to 15 acres
- Tenures:** Freehold, long leasehold
- Lead promoter:** Harding Estates (East Anglia) Ltd

Images © Q+A Planning Ltd

For more information: extraordinaryessex.co.uk/opportunities






**KEY MARKET:
CENTRAL ESSEX**

Image © Crittall Windows



Image © Witham Industrial Watch Ltd

Chelmsford

Located at the centre of Essex, Chelmsford has a rich industrial history, with a significant number of estates and business parks in close proximity to the A12 and A414 connecting to London and beyond. Its thriving advanced manufacturing sector is led by Teledyne e2v and BAE Systems.

Notable activity in Chelmsford includes:

- **Consent for an employment development on land south east of Junction 18 of the A12.** Columba Park, below, will provide up to around

500,500 sq ft of space for mixed employment, logistics, storage and distribution.

- **The acquisition of Dukes Park Industrial Estate** – with average rents of approximately £13 per sq ft, the estate was sold by CBRE Investment Management to Clipstone for £14.35 million.
- **ARGO Real Estate’s acquisition of the 92,000 sq ft Northumberland Court**, comprising nine units ranging from 4,500 sq ft to 26,000 sq ft.

Image © Pigeon



Witham

Witham is a town in the heart of Essex, situated between Chelmsford and Colchester.

Strategically located with excellent access to the A12 and M25, it is an attractive destination for logistics companies, which occupy the town’s selection of industrial estates. A railway station near the town centre provides a regular service to London.

Witham’s industrial estates have held Business Improvement District (BID) status since 2009 through Witham Industrial Watch Ltd, collectively representing approximately 350 businesses in a variety of sectors. The funding has paid for security equipment upgrades, monitoring and safety training. As a result, it is considered a safer, low crime industrial area by Essex Police.

Freebournes Industrial Estate is the largest commercial area in Witham and consists of a mixture of warehouse and industrial units and office blocks. Notable occupiers include Crittall Windows, Britain’s oldest manufacturer of steel-framed windows, which won a Queen’s Award in 2010 for Enterprise in International Trade.

Situated adjacent to the A12 is Freebournes Park, a development of 10 warehouse and industrial units ranging from around 4,400 to 7,000 sq ft. Completed in 2023 by developer Chancerygate, the estate features environmentally friendly technologies, including photovoltaic panels on two of the units, electric vehicle charging points, secure cycle parking, and 15 per cent roof lighting.

The development has achieved a **BREEM rating of Very Good and all units have a minimum EPC rating of B**. Its occupiers include B2 Live Events, an events company which has worked with Amazon, Lacoste, and Absolut Vodka.



Another well-established estate is the **Crittall Road industrial area**, which is home to long-term occupier Simarco. The logistics firm, formed in 1997, has its UK head office and two distribution centres in the town, and reported a turnover of £94 million in 2025. Simarco also occupies other units in Witham and, in 2024, announced the expansion of its Moss Road warehouse, on Freebournes Industrial Estate, to increase capacity.

Other notable areas include **Eastways Industrial Estate**, which has convenient access to the A12. International freight forwarding company PFE Express is now the sole occupier of a newly developed, purpose-built site on Eastways, which fronts the A12. The development houses PFE Express's new head office and warehouse, occupying over eight acres.



Also on Eastways Industrial Estate, **Vision Park** is a new industrial scheme with outline planning permission for design and build opportunities up to 180,000 sq ft.



Image (below and right)
© Jake Huntley and Max Dowley at DTRE

Another industrial area is the **Briarsford Industrial Estate**, a multi-let modern industrial development.

PRIME INDUSTRIAL RENTS
IN WITHAM ARE AROUND
£12.50-13.50 PER SQ FT



Braintree Town and Great Notley

Approximately eight miles from Witham lies the market town of Braintree, which offers a blend of historic character and modern amenities, including Braintree Village shopping outlet.

The town is bypassed by the A120, providing connections to both the M11 and the A12, as well as fast access to London Stansted Airport. There are also regular train services from Braintree to London Liverpool Street.

Less than a mile from the town centre is the well-established **Springwood Industrial Estate**, which is home to at least 60 businesses, including those in the automotive, manufacturing and logistics industries.

Image © Caisson IO



Sitting within Springwood is **Bradbury Park Industrial Estate**, a development of 11 units ranging in sizes from around 7,750 sq ft to 60,000 sq ft, which completed in 2020. Suitable for B1/B2/B8 and Class E usage, the development achieved a **BREEAM rating of Excellent**. Its occupiers include Foxway UK, formerly Global Resale – a technology resell and reverse logistics business, which received the Queen's Award for Enterprise in the International Trade category in 2021.





Images: (above) © Marshgate Group & Panattoni; (right) © Braintree District Council

Horizon 120 Business, Innovation and Logistics Park is another key industrial area, located by the A131 in Great Notley, a village in Braintree District. The 65-acre employment site was developed following £24.3 million invested by Braintree District Council into the land and infrastructure, in partnership with commercial developer The Marshgate Group.

Horizon 120 benefits from a strategic location which provides easy access to major cities, airports and freeports. It is 15 miles from London Stansted Airport and 16 miles from Junction 8 of the M11.

At least 30 per cent of energy supplied to buildings at the eco-friendly site is from renewable sources, such as solar panels and air source heat pumps, with highly efficient thermal cladding and low energy lighting and controls. Adjacent is Gridserve, the UK's first electric vehicle charging forecourt.

Across nine commercial units, Horizon 120 provides more than 750,000 sq ft of high tech, industrial, office and logistics space. Of the nine units, three are in the Hyperion development, the largest speculative 'mid box' development in Essex comprising three units totalling around 159,500 sq ft.



Occupiers at Horizon 120 include **mobility equipment retailer CareCo**, which has its main distribution centre and warehouse at the development, **Medequip, provider of community equipment services** to councils and NHS Trusts across the country, and **British Offsite**, a subsidiary of Weston Group, which manufactures and distributes components for the new homes industry from the site.

Logistics real estate developer Panattoni is set to deliver approximately 748,500 sq ft of state-of-the-art industrial and logistics space at Horizon 120.

The first phase of the scheme, Panattoni Park Braintree, features a 172,000 sq ft unit, combining warehousing and office space. With planning permission granted in 2024, construction is underway and scheduled for completion in April 2026. A further three units totalling around 404,500 sq ft will follow in late 2026.

Panattoni acquired an additional 10-acre site in November 2025 for Panattoni Park Braintree 2.0. This new phase is expected to deliver six further units totalling 172,000 sq ft.

A variety of modern industrial and logistics units are available for lease or for sale at Horizon 120.



Maldon

Close to the town of Maldon, **Oval Park is a 29-acre business park, which is set to be transformed into a state-of-the-art employment hub, housing offices, warehousing, and research and development facilities.**

Oval Park is situated three miles from Maldon town centre, within a district that offers a mix of office and industrial floorspace. Notable businesses Maldon Salt, Mighty Oak Brewing Company and Wilkin & Sons run their operations in Maldon. Oval Park is also three miles from a railway station, with the fastest service providing direct connections to London Liverpool Street in 40 minutes.

The site, owned by manufacturer CML Microsystems Plc for many years, is designated employment land in the Maldon District Local Development Plan. CML Microsystems specialises in developing mixed-signal, RF, and microwave semiconductors for the global communications market. The company's headquarters are located at Oval Park.

In 2023, CML signed an agreement with the UK's leading premium salt brand, Maldon Salt, to develop approximately seven acres of land, subject to the company gaining planning permission.

Founded in Maldon in 1882, Maldon Salt holds the Royal Warrant as official purveyors of sea salt. Today, it exports to more than 60 countries worldwide and is a prominent player in the global sea salt market. The site will house Maldon Salt's headquarters, including office space, packing hall, warehousing, and distribution facilities.

Tecniq, a British design and manufacturing specialist known for its work in the ultra-high-end automotive sector, is also set to relocate to the new purpose-built business development at Oval Park.

The move forms part of a wider regeneration of the 30-acre site and will see Tecniq establish new headquarters featuring offices, research and development facilities, production space, and a classic car restoration workshop.

The relocation will bring significant economic benefits to the district, with Tecniq alone expected to create more than 200 highly skilled jobs and expand its workforce through dedicated training and apprenticeship programmes.

Image © Maldon District Council

STATE-OF-THE-ART EMPLOYMENT HUB HOUSING OFFICES, WAREHOUSING AND R&D FACILITIES



INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY:

X Available floorspace at Panattoni Park Braintree, Horizon 120

Industrial and distribution units from 16,500 to 241,000 sq ft, available in 2026 and 2027.

Panattoni Park Braintree is a logistics hub delivering approximately 748,500 sq ft of high-quality industrial space across 10 units, with warehouse accommodation, mezzanine offices and on-site car parking.

Part of the Horizon 120 business park, it is located 15 miles from London Stansted Airport and 16 miles from Junction 8 of the M11.

Targeting BREEAM Excellent, EPC A and Net Zero Carbon in construction, the scheme will include EV charging, PV panels and LED lighting, with units available from Q2 2026 to Q1 2027.

Image: © Marshgate Group & Panattoni

Opportunity at a glance

Type of opportunity:
Available floorspace

Real estate sector:
Industrial & warehouse

Local Planning Authority:
Braintree District Council

Floorspace: Units from 16,500 to 241,000 sq ft

Tenure: Leasehold and freehold

Lead promoter: Panattoni



For more information:
extraordinaryessex.co.uk/opportunities



**KEY MARKET:
THAMES ESTUARY**



Basildon

Basildon is a key centre for advanced manufacturing in south Essex, with excellent connectivity to road, rail and air transportation links. It is recognised as the largest economy in Essex.

Basildon has a number of industrial estates, developed in a phased basis due to it being a new town. These estates provide strategic access to the A127, A13, and M25, with prime rents currently at £13-14 per sq ft.

Burnt Mills Industrial Estate is home to a variety of businesses, offering warehousing and industrial units to occupiers including manufacturers, logistics companies, and scrap metal merchants. The Pipp's Hill industrial area is another prominent industrial estate, which offers a well-connected and convenient location for businesses, providing modern warehouse and industrial units.

The **Cranes Farm Road industrial area** includes a mix of office and business units, as well as high-specification modern warehouse and industrial units at the nearby **Carnival Park**. It offers quick and easy access to the national motorway network, while the **Southfields industrial area** includes a business park offering flexible office space solutions and is home to a variety of businesses. Laindon railway station is situated approximately a mile from Southfields.

Development in Basildon has focused on refurbishing and redeveloping older units on existing industrial estates. This includes a refurbishment programme at the well-established **Kierbeck Business Park**, which provides direct access to the A13. The seven-acre site, sold by St Modwen (now Indurent) to Petchey Holdings in 2024, comprises six industrial/warehouse units and four yards.

Elsewhere, Indurent has secured planning permission from Basildon Council through a hybrid planning application for 1.3 million square feet of industrial and logistics warehousing. The development, located on land east of Burnt Mills Industrial Estate, south of the A127, is expected to generate up to 1,870 jobs and add a significant boost to Basildon’s economy.

A Section 106 agreement is yet to be signed, with completion targeted for April 2026. It is expected to include new road infrastructure, a shared footway and cycleway, off-site highway improvements, enhancements to local bus services, and funding for the Basildon Construction Academy.

Basildon is well known for its affiliation with Ford, which has had its Dunton campus in the town since 1967. In 2024, the automotive manufacturer launched a new £24 million Propulsion Development Laboratory to develop and test electric vehicle powertrains.

The laboratory comprises eight vehicle-size rooms capable of testing electric power units and propulsion systems. It underpins Ford’s European electric vehicle plans. The research and development facility in Dunton is also home to the Ford Transit, which celebrated its 60th birthday in 2025.

The Ford Transit or Transit Custom has been the UK’s top-selling van for 59 years.

Basildon is also home to New Holland – a brand of CNH Industrial – which celebrated 60 years of tractor manufacturing in 2024. The same year it built its two millionth tractor – a 225hp T7.225, one of the most popular T7 models produced at the Basildon plant.

Recognised as one of only two major tractor manufacturing plants in the UK, the New Holland Basildon plant has the capacity to assemble a complete tractor every five minutes. Offering 10,000 different product specifications, it appeals to the global market, exporting to 180 countries around the world. The plant is also CNH’s Alternative Fuels Centre of Excellence.

Basildon has particular strengths in the digital, creative and tech sectors. International technology players like US fintech Fiserv and American software giant, SS&C, have made Basildon their UK headquarters.

Defence company Leonardo employs more than 500 people at its site in Basildon which has produced notable firsts, including the UK’s first military standard production thermal imager and the Phoenix unmanned military surveillance vehicle.

- ✘ PRIME RENTS ARE CURRENTLY AT **£13-14 PER SQ FT**
- ✘ A NEW BUSINESS PARK IS EXPECTED TO DELIVER **1.3 MILLION SQUARE FEET OF EMPLOYMENT SPACE** AND GENERATE MORE THAN **1,800 JOBS**
- ✘ FORD HAS HAD ITS DUNTON CAMPUS IN THE TOWN **SINCE 1967**

- ✘ BASILDON IS HOME TO NEW HOLLAND – WITH OVER 60 YEARS OF **TRACTOR MANUFACTURING**
- ✘ DEFENCE COMPANY LEONARDO EMPLOYS MORE THAN **500 PEOPLE** AT ITS BASILDON SITE
- ✘ BASILDON HAS PARTICULAR STRENGTHS IN THE **DIGITAL, CREATIVE AND TECH SECTORS**

INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY:

✘ Build-to-suit units at Indurent Park Basildon

Industrial and distribution units from 26,000 sq ft to 538,000 sq ft, available from December 2029.

Indurent Park Basildon is a 116-acre industrial and logistics development located on the A127 Enterprise Corridor, offering flexible B2/B8 space tailored to modern operational needs.

With units ranging from 26,000 to 538,000 sq ft and clear internal heights of 8-21m, the scheme provides versatility for occupiers of all scales, from advanced manufacturing to large format distribution.

The first units will be available from December 2029, offered on a leasehold basis with a range of tailored incentives, including flexible rental structures, capital contributions, and fit-out support.

Opportunity at a glance

Type of opportunity:
Build to suit

Real estate sector:
Industrial & warehouse

Local Planning Authority:
Basildon Borough Council

Floorspace: Units from 26,000 to 538,000 sq ft

Tenure: Leasehold

Lead promoter: Indurent

Image © Indurent

➔ For more information: extraordinaryessex.co.uk/opportunities




Canvey Island, Castle Point

Canvey Island lies off the southeast coast of Essex in the Thames Estuary, approximately 35 miles east of central London.

The A130 connects the island to the A127 and A13, providing access to the M25 and other motorways. The nearest railway station is Benfleet, which connects to south Essex and East London stations. Southend can be reached in 15 minutes, while London Fenchurch Street is a 50-minute train journey.

Canvey Island has strong links to the petrochemical industry, with the operator Oikos having operated a bulk liquid storage facility on the island since 1936. With a 70-acre facility boasting a tank capacity of 300,000 cubic metres, along with two marine jetties and access to the

deep waters of the River Thames, Oikos plays a key role in providing essential fuel supplies to UK industries, including airports such as London Stansted.

The island also has a main well-established industrial area, which is within easy reach of the A130 and major locations including Basildon and Southend.

Charfleets Industrial Estate includes a mix of industrial units, warehouses and office spaces. It is also home to International House – Canvey Island’s first dedicated co-working business space, which comprises offices, workspaces, and meeting rooms. Amber Business Park sits within the estate and hosts a varied mix of businesses trading from the park.

Image © Inner London Group

Thamesview130 is a completed and established business park on Roscommon Way, opposite the Charfleets Industrial Estate on Canvey Island. Around 20 minutes from Junction 30 of the M25 via the A130 and A13, it offers high-specification warehouse and trade units in a well-connected location.

The scheme comprises modern industrial units built to a strong specification, including steel frame construction, 6.5m eaves height, three-phase power and gas, and on-site parking.

Image © Inner London Group



The occupier mix includes national operators such as Screwfix and Howdens. Units are available freehold with planning consent for E(g), B2 and B8 uses. With the latest blocks completed and now largely occupied or sold, Thamesview130 is firmly established within the Thames Gateway.

Gateway130 represents the next phase of development. Located adjacent to Thamesview130, this new employment development will deliver industrial and warehouse accommodation ranging from approximately 3,000 sq ft up to 50,000 sq ft. Designed to support growing local firms, regional operators and larger occupiers, Gateway130 offers scalable, flexible space with access to the A13, A127, DP World London Gateway Port, and the M25.

Southend-on-Sea and Rochford

Situated at the mouth of the Thames Estuary, Southend-on-Sea is one of the UK's newest cities.

It benefits from two train lines that feed directly into the heart of the City of London and a road network that connects to the M25 and Dartford Crossing in 25 minutes.

By air, London Southend Airport connects to more than 20 locations across Europe and northern Africa. It is the UK's fastest-growing airport and in 2025 achieved its busiest year since 2019, with 720,000 passengers passing through its terminal.

To the north of Southend's urban area, Rochford district benefits from access to an east-west strategic highway network into London, M25 and beyond, and north-south links to Chelmsford.

Among Southend and Rochford's key sectors is advanced manufacturing, which plays a significant role in their economic landscape. Across both areas are a number of business parks and industrial estates, which accommodate a wide range of industrial, business and commercial premises.

Image © HBD



This includes the **Temple Farm Industrial Estate** and **Stock Road Industrial Estate**, well-established estates north of Southend town centre, and **Vanguard Way**, located three miles east of Southend, which features the Seedbed Business Centre with 42 serviced business units up to 1,500 sq ft.

Purdeys Industrial Estate is a large employment area offering easy access to Rochford, Southend, the A127, and London Southend Airport. Its occupiers include recycling and waste companies, food suppliers, and manufacturers.

Located in Rayleigh on the A127 corridor, **Arterial Park** is a recently completed development by Mirastar, providing approximately 411,000 sq ft of high-quality industrial and distribution space across 19 units.

The 10 units delivered as part of Phase 2 have achieved a BREEAM Excellent rating and incorporate a range of sustainable features, including LED lighting, EV charging, and bespoke solar packages.

The development benefits from a strategic location, with connectivity to the M25 (Junction 29) in around 16 minutes, while key infrastructure – including London Gateway, the Port of Tilbury, and London Southend Airport – is within close proximity.



Airport Business Park Southend is a 52-acre multi-use business park that is being delivered through a joint venture between HBD and Southend-on-Sea City Council. Located three miles from Southend city centre, it is six miles from the A130/A127 junction which links to the M25.

A notable development is the 140,000 sq ft freehold design and build unit delivered in 2023 for Ipeco Holdings, one of the world's leading manufacturers in aircraft seating. This more than doubles the company's existing occupation at Airport Business Park. There are also opportunities for units between 16,000 sq ft to 55,000 sq ft.

In 2025, HBD submitted plans for a £16.5 million expansion at Airport Business Park Southend. The proposed expansion of around 71,000 sq ft will deliver 10 new units on two undeveloped plots within the park.

Nine of the units will range from around 4,500 sq ft to 9,750 sq ft, while a single detached unit will provide approximately 16,500 sq ft of space.

Construction is expected to commence following receipt of planning permission, subject to occupier interest.

Image © HBD





**KEY MARKET:
THAMES FREEPORT**

Thames Freeport is an economic zone in the Thames Estuary, which provides connectivity to every continent by rail, road, river and international maritime routes.

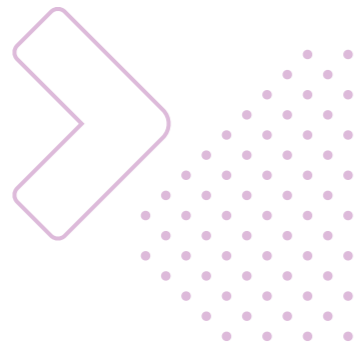
Located along the A13 corridor in south Essex, it brings together Forth Ports, DP World and Ford, who partnered in 2021 to secure Freeport tax site status.

Its strategic position places it closer to Europe's largest and most economically important consumer market than any other enterprise zone, with access to four airports and multimodal links across the UK.

Innovation at a glance

Thames Freeport is using its innovation and skills programmes to attract investment and create new opportunities across the freeport area. In the year to April 2026, innovation activity at Thames Freeport included:

- **40** homes retrofitted with a new tech stack
- **£150 million** first-round retrofit fund agreed in principle (heads of terms)
- **200,000** patients within the AI healthcare network
- **700+** patients supported via the health bus
- **450+** applications to Thames Freeport programmes
- **18** GP practices engaged in the health-tech network



DP World London Gateway

One of the UK's largest integrated logistics hubs, London Gateway combines a deep-sea container port with capacity to handle over three million units (TEUs) per year, a rail terminal offering more than 60 weekly services, and a 9.25 million square foot logistics park. The port currently operates four deep-sea berths, with two additional berths currently under construction as part of its £1 billion investment programme. London Gateway is capable of handling the world's largest container vessels, connecting UK trade directly to global markets.

Ford Dagenham

Located 15 miles east of London, Ford Motor Company's manufacturing plant at Thames Freeport is its sole diesel engineering and manufacturing location in Europe. The 44-acre site is also the largest manufacturing site in London and benefits from its proximity to regional manufacturing clusters, suppliers, and the end market. It has direct river access via a dock.

UK government backs Ford's electric vehicle expansion

In 2025, Ford UK secured £1 billion in government-backed funding to accelerate its transition to electric vehicle production.

The support, provided through an export development guarantee by government agency UK Export Finance (UKEF), underpins Ford's plans to scale up global production of electrified vehicles.

The investment marks a significant boost for the UK automotive sector, which is identified as a key priority in the government's Industrial Strategy.

New handling record reached

In 2025, London Gateway set a new annual handling record, surpassing three million units for the first time – a 52 per cent increase on 2024 volumes. This rise followed the opening of the port's fourth deep-sea berth and the addition of new vessel calls linked to the Gemini Cooperation's Asia-Europe Services. This milestone has been delivered alongside a £1 billion investment programme, which includes the construction of two additional all-electric deep-sea berths and a second rail terminal.

Tesco distribution centre

Tesco is planning to develop a multimillion-pound distribution centre at London Gateway in partnership with DP World and Witron. The energy-efficient and future-ready facility is expected to achieve a BREEAM rating of Outstanding and is scheduled to open in 2029.

The Hive Innovation Hub

A £13 million pioneering amenities and innovation hub will open at London Gateway Logistics Park in summer 2026. As part of Thames Freeport's mission to drive skills, innovation, and opportunity across the Thames Estuary, the 29,000 sq ft site will provide a number of facilities for local businesses and the community. This includes flexible meeting rooms and a dedicated training and innovation skills centre, alongside a state-of-the-art gym, two sports pitches, and food and drink facilities.



➤ **Port of Tilbury**

One of eight ports owned by Forth Ports Limited, the Port of Tilbury is currently the largest multimodal port in London. Home to 56 operational berths, 31 independent working terminals, 10.2km of quay and five million square feet of warehousing, it handles an annual throughput of 16 million tonnes of cargo per year.

In 2020, a new multimillion-pound port terminal – Tilbury2 – was built adjacent to the current port, on a 152-acre site which was part of the former Tilbury Power Station.

➤ **Port of Tilbury expansion approved**

The scheme, known as Tilbury3, will transform a 143-acre brownfield site adjacent to Tilbury2 into a hub for industrial storage, warehousing, and processing, alongside container handling and vehicle storage.

Outline planning permission was granted by Thurrock Council in February 2026, with construction anticipated to begin the same year. The new port area is expected to be fully operational by 2030.

The planning application for Tilbury3 said it has the capacity to create around 6,600 local jobs once operational, along with a £398 million uplift to Thurrock’s economy.

New dry dock facility

Uber Boat by Thames Clippers has broken ground on a new dry dock at Port of Tilbury, boosting local jobs and skills. Opening from the end of 2026, the facility will maintain the fleet more efficiently and places Tilbury at the centre of London’s river transport network.



➤ **Lower Thames Crossing**

The Lower Thames Crossing is a major new road that will connect Kent and Greater Essex through a tunnel beneath the River Thames. It is part of the biggest investment in the country’s road network for a generation and an essential component in the UK’s future transport infrastructure.

Delivered by National Highways, the Lower Thames Crossing will be the first major infrastructure project to be carbon neutral in construction. It is taking a low-carbon approach that only requires one machine to dig both the north and southbound tunnels, which also keeps costs down without adding extra construction time.

At least 20 per cent of workers will come from the most impacted boroughs, including Thurrock, which is also expected to benefit from investment in a Skills Hub. At least £1 in every £3 will be spent with SMEs offering significant opportunities for business in Thurrock and the wider Greater Essex economy.

The project was granted development consent by the Secretary of State for Transport in March 2025 and has since secured government funding. The expected completion date for the project is the early to mid-2030s.

Image © National Highways



➤ **Thames Enterprise Park**

Thames Enterprise Park (TEP) is a 700-acre brownfield regeneration project in Thurrock, forming one of the largest strategic employment and infrastructure opportunities in Essex and south east England.

Located within the Thames Freeport, TEP sits at the heart of the UK’s largest logistics cluster, offering investors a rare combination of scale, planning certainty, and multimodal connectivity.

The site benefits from 2.5km of direct River Thames frontage, alongside immediate access to the M25 and an existing rail connection to the national network. An extant Resolution to Grant planning permission covers 425 acres for approximately 3.72 million square feet of B2/B8 employment and energy floorspace, a rail terminal, and open storage, enabling accelerated delivery.

TEP is positioned to deliver additional UK port capacity, support critical national infrastructure and provide development

➤ **IN NUMBERS...**

700-ACRE
BROWNFIELD SITE

2.5KM OF FRONTAGE
DIRECT TO THE RIVER
THAMES

MULTIMODAL TRANSPORT:
RIVER, ROAD, AND RAIL

LOCATED WITHIN THE
THAMES FREEPORT

PROJECTED TO CREATE
UP TO 12,000 JOBS

UP TO FOUR MILLION
SQUARE FEET OF LOGISTICS
SECURED UNDER A
RESOLUTION TO GRANT

platforms for advanced manufacturing, clean energy, digital technologies, life sciences and defence. Its strategic river access and safeguarded freight function align with national policy for ports and decarbonisation.

With potential to create up to 12,000 jobs and catalyse supply chain resilience across the Thames Estuary, TEP represents a nationally significant opportunity to drive sustainable economic growth in Greater Essex.



2

SCIENCE AND HIGH TECH





With access to universities, research institutions, science and technology parks, as well as collaborative industry networks, Greater Essex has all the ingredients of a leading hub for science and high tech.

Its proximity to world-renowned research institutions, both within Greater Essex and in Cambridge and London, makes it an attractive location for businesses and talent from around the globe.

Among its offerings is the University of Essex, celebrated for its expertise in social and data science research, and ranked in the top 20 for research intensity in the latest Research Excellence Framework. Its institutes, including the Institute of Public Health and Wellbeing, bring together academics to deliver research, knowledge exchange, and inform policy and practice.

In 2025, Professor Tracy Lawson from the School of Life Sciences was ranked among the world's most influential researchers for her pioneering work in combating climate change through the development of drought-resistant crops. This expertise is supported by the school's £3.5 million Smart Technology Experimental Plant Suite (STEPS) laboratory, which allows researchers to test the impact of climate change on plants. Using the facility, they can replicate real environments from anywhere in the world and assess and control crop water use.

In addition, the school will soon open the £2.5 million Bioscience Skills Training and Research Laboratory (BioSTAR-Lab), funded by the government, to train workplace-ready scientists for the NHS and the life sciences sector. The facility will provide specialised research training and simulated practice in microbiology, cell biology and genomics, and is expected to welcome undergraduate students in 2026.

Alongside the University of Essex, Anglia Ruskin University (ARU) contributes to the county's higher education landscape. ARU has earned national recognition, being named University of the Year at the Times Higher Education 2023 awards, as well as at the UK Social Mobility Awards in 2023. It also holds a gold award for the quality of its education, awarded through the Teaching Excellence Framework, reflecting the outstanding quality of its teaching and student experience.

ARU's research institutes and four faculties bridge scientific, technical and creative fields, delivering impactful research which tackles pressing issues and makes a difference to communities. Its academic excellence has been recognised by the UK's Higher Education funding bodies, with 16 of ARU's research areas assessed as world leading.

Home to Essex's first School of Medicine, ARU provides high-tech teaching facilities for healthcare training. The university also has a 'SuperLab' where students can perform practical sessions and experiments using advanced technology, a state-of-the-art Social Sciences Research Laboratory in Chelmsford, and advanced manufacturing and 3D printing facilities.

THE UNIVERSITY OF
ESSEX IS RANKED
IN THE **TOP 20 FOR**
RESEARCH INTENSITY
IN THE LATEST RESEARCH
EXCELLENCE FRAMEWORK



Leaders in Knowledge Transfer Partnerships

Both the University of Essex and ARU have been recognised as leaders in Knowledge Transfer Partnerships (KTPs), which bring research teams and businesses together to drive innovation.

In 2025, the University of Essex ranked first for Innovate UK-funded projects and held the largest portfolio in the UK, with more than 50 active KTPs. The same year, it was awarded Best Knowledge Base KTP Support Team by Innovate UK, acknowledging its proactive business engagement and strong track record in connecting businesses with university research for real-world innovation.

Image © University of Essex

ARU is widely recognised for its success in KTPs. In 2025, a partnership between ARU and a Chelmsford-based company were named among the UK's most innovative KTPs of the past 50 years, earning a Silver Award at the national Innovate UK ceremony. The partnership's exceptional contribution to business growth also saw it receive the award for the Most Transformational KTP of 2025.

✘ UNIVERSITY OF ESSEX RANKED **FIRST FOR INNOVATE UK-FUNDED PROJECTS** IN 2025 AND HOLDS THE **LARGEST PORTFOLIO IN THE UK** WITH MORE THAN 50 ACTIVE KTPS

✘ A PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN ARU AND A CHELMSFORD-BASED COMPANY EARNED **A SILVER AWARD** AT THE NATIONAL INNOVATE UK CEREMONY



SCIENTIFIC DISCOVERY AND INNOVATION

Greater Essex is part of the East of England region, which boasts the largest technology cluster in Europe – the Cambridge Cluster – and is at the forefront of scientific discovery and innovation. It is also in the UK Innovation Corridor, which is recognised as a growing hub for technology and life sciences, and benefits from links with London and Cambridge.

In addition to close links with university research and hospitals including Addenbrooke’s – a leading centre for medical research and clinical trials – Greater Essex has several collaborative networks. This includes Health Innovation East, which brings together industry experts and leaders to drive forward healthcare innovations.

Images © Harlow College



Building a tech and AI talent pipeline

South Essex College’s £9 million **Centre for Digital Technologies** in Basildon provides state-of-the-art facilities for tech focused courses, including IT networking, app development, games design and animation. Its open plan spaces are inspired by tech-sector offices, preparing students to enter the industry.

This is complemented by **South Essex Advanced Technical Skills (SEATS)**, a not-for-profit organisation funded by Thames Freeport which was founded by major employers to address skills gaps in and around Essex by coordinating apprenticeships and training.

Coventry University is supporting with the delivery of work-based and employer-led programmes in engineering, logistics, managerial development, and digital skills.

Adding to this is the £11 million **Harlow Advanced Manufacturing and Engineering Centre**, which provides industry level training in automation, robotics, CAD/CAM and CNC systems – capabilities that translate directly into artificial intelligence (AI) enabled manufacturing, robotics integration and Industry 4.0 deployments.

Chesterford Research Park

Set within 250 acres of parkland, Chesterford Research Park offers advanced laboratory and office space for biotechnology, pharmaceutical and technology R&D companies. It features a low-density scheme with natural environments, an arboretum, and wide-open spaces, alongside research facilities. The park is owned by Aviva Investors alongside Uttlesford District Council.

The site is located close to Junction 9A of the M11, which connects with London, the East Midlands and beyond, as well as London Stansted Airport. Cambridge city centre can be reached within 13 miles, with the fastest rail links from the city providing access to London King’s Cross in under an hour.

The park’s Nucleus building provides amenities that foster collaboration within the life science community. With 24/7 security, including manned patrols and ANPR technology, the park ensures peace of mind for its occupiers.

Chesterford Research Park sits within the UK Innovation Corridor, linking Cambridge and London. It is also part of the South Cambridge Biocluster, joining other organisations nearby to form a world-leading cluster of life sciences research institutes, including Addenbrooke’s Hospital and Cambridge University. In addition, it is in the Oxford-Cambridge corridor, which spans multiple counties and accounts for over seven per cent of total UK GDP.

Currently around 350,000 sq ft of commercial floorspace at the park is occupied by 28 tenants, including biotechnology organisations Microbotica and Biomodal.

There are substantial plans for growth with a masterplan for around one million square feet for research and development uses. Completed in 2026, the Sidney Sussex Building delivers 56,000 sq ft of laboratory and write-up space, split into suites starting at 2,200 sq ft.

Images © Aviva Investors



FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AT THE PARK COULD ACCOMMODATE AROUND **1,700 ADDITIONAL JOBS**



Knowledge Gateway, Colchester

The Knowledge Gateway research and technology park is set within 200 acres of mature parkland at the University of Essex's Colchester Campus.

The site is located off the A113, three miles west of Colchester, providing easy access to the city centre and the major road network, including the A12. A rapid transport bus route will connect the University of Essex site to key locations, including railway stations, the hospital, and the city centre.

Since its inception in 2010, the Knowledge Gateway has secured £60 million of investment and is now home to more than 60 businesses across Parkside, Clingoe House and the Innovation Centre, Knowledge Gateway (ICKG). Many Knowledge Gateway businesses employ Essex graduates while also offering internships and placements to students.

The Knowledge Gateway has become a hub for science, technology, and digital creative companies. Established businesses include Above, a market leader for solar photovoltaic (PV) drone inspection and software solutions.

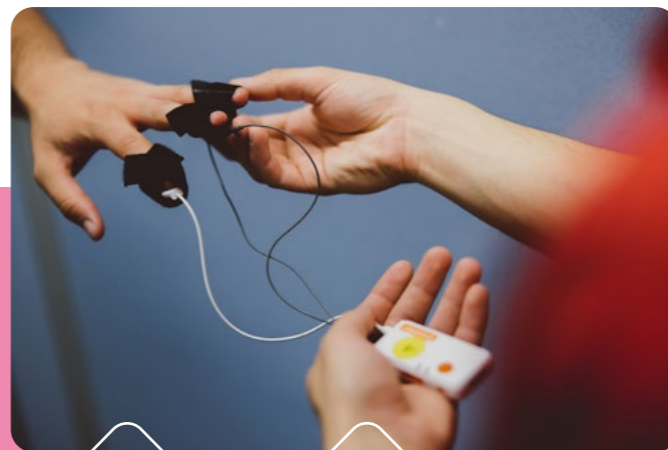
The site benefits from being located on the University of Essex's Colchester campus. The university is recognised internationally for research in the social sciences, science and health, and the arts and humanities.

It is also one of the leading universities in the UK for active Innovate UK-funded Knowledge Transfer Partnerships with businesses, with a portfolio value worth over £10 million.

The Knowledge Gateway provides access to research and laboratory facilities, including the university's Behavioural Science Lab, as well as links to leading researchers across key sectors including AI, agritech, data analytics, health, finance and logistics.

The Knowledge Gateway site is adjacent to the Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community, with significant knowledge-based employment land allocated just north of the A133 to support business and employment.

The first phases of Parkside offers flexible suites and buildings from 1,200 sq ft to around 5,700 sq ft. Clingoe House, which opened in 2024, is an office complex of around 41,500 sq ft that is already home to leading technology company MSX International. Availability includes suites from 2,000 sq ft through to single floors of just under 11,000 sq ft. The nearby ICKG offers further space and support for more than 50 companies.



TO READ MORE ABOUT
THE INNOVATION CENTRE
KNOWLEDGE GATEWAY
(ICKG), **TURN TO PAGE 54**



Horizon 120, Braintree

Horizon 120 Business Innovation and Logistics Park is a 65-acre employment site developed following a £24.3 million investment by Braintree District Council into the land and infrastructure, in partnership with commercial developer The Marshgate Group.

The park is home to leading high-tech businesses, including Essex X-Ray, a globally recognised supplier of core cable and component parts for high-voltage systems, operating from a 60,000 sq ft unit.

Logistics developer Panattoni is delivering nearly 750,000 sq ft of state-of-the-art industrial and logistics space at Horizon 120 with two phases of Panattoni Park Braintree. The first phase includes four units totalling around 576,750 sq ft which combine warehousing and office facilities. The second phase follows Panattoni's acquisition of a further 10-acre site, which will add 172,000 sq ft of high-quality industrial space across six speculatively developed mid-box units.

Read more about Horizon 120 on page 22.

Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult, Braintree

Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult's (CGT Catapult) Braintree Manufacturing Innovation Centre is focused on supporting the development of manufacturing operations for advanced therapies. It is part of the CGT Catapult's work to build a world-leading cell and gene therapy sector in the UK.

The facility houses a fully-licensed manufacturing innovation centre that consists of quality control laboratories, warehouses, development laboratories and a team of staff with expertise in Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP) manufacturing. It secured regulatory licensure from the Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA) in early 2024.

The focus of the site is to help bridge the gap between scientific research and full-scale commercialisation to advance the growth of the UK cell and gene therapy industry.



Images © Cell and Gene Therapy Catapult

Harlow Innovation Park and Kao Park, Harlow

Situated within the Harlow Enterprise Zone at the heart of the UK Innovation Corridor, Harlow Innovation Park and Kao Park are science and technology business parks adjacent to each other. Both parks benefit from being connected to the highest available broadband speed because of their location alongside Kao Data.

Harlow Innovation Park is a 27-acre site that provides office, research and development and mid-tech workspaces, for businesses focused on all areas of science, technology, research and innovation.

Owned by Harlow District Council and delivered in partnership with Vinci Developments UK, Harlow Innovation Park is now fully allocated following an agreement for the final 2.27-acre plot. This last phase will be brought forward by the property developer Wrenbridge.

Recent milestones include the opening of The Social Club – a café and social space open to the whole community – as well as the construction of the Identity Harlow scheme, being delivered through a joint venture between Buccleuch Property, Investec REALIS and Wrenbridge.

The 150,000 sq ft scheme will deliver R&D and high-tech manufacturing accommodation, alongside office space, and aims to attract cutting-edge companies in life sciences, technology, research and advanced manufacturing. It is expected to complete in summer 2026.

Other developments on the park include the Nexus building, which provides 30,000 sq ft of office and sharing working space across three floors, and Modus, a development providing 45,000 sq ft of mid-tech research and development and production space. Nexus's primary occupiers include electronics manufacturer Renesas and UK Health Security Agency (UKHSA), while Modus counts water technology provider Xylem among its occupiers.



Image (above) © Kao Data
Image of Identity Harlow (below) © Harlow District Council



Harlow Innovation Park is also home to Anglia Ruskin University's Arise Harlow – a hub for innovation, where entrepreneurs and start-ups work alongside students and academics in a collaborative environment.

Adjacent to Harlow Innovation Park is Kao Park, a 36-acre development which hosts several innovative businesses including technology providers Arrow Electronics and Raytheon UK. It has historical significance as the former location of Standard Telecommunications Laboratories, where fibre optic telecommunications technology was first developed in the 1960s.

Data centre operator Kao Data has a significant presence at the park, spanning 15 acres with a campus that will eventually comprise four data centres engineered for AI and advanced computing, and will provide a combined capacity of 40MW.

Both parks benefit from road, rail and air connections, with a strategic location that places them 30 miles from central London and 36 miles from Cambridge. Access to the M11 from Harlow has been further improved with the opening of Junction 7a, making it possible to reach the motorway within five minutes.



UK Health Security Agency campus, Harlow

Harlow is set to become the home of the UK Health Security Agency's (UKHSA) new headquarters in a move that will bring £3.8 billion of investment into the town and presents major opportunities for the local and wider economy.

Replacing UKHSA's facilities at Porton and Colindale, the new National Biosecurity Centre will become one of the world's largest health protection science centres, positioning Harlow as a national hub for health innovation. It will safeguard the UK against emerging public health threats through cutting-edge research into dangerous pathogens and life-saving vaccines.

The centre is expected to be operational from the mid-2030s, creating 2,750 jobs, alongside 1,600 construction jobs that will inject £28 million annually into the local economy during development.



Chelmsford Garden Community Innovation Hub

A masterplan for the 2,065-acre Chelmsford Garden Community (CGC), set to significantly grow the county town, outlines the development of an innovation hub which will provide employment space for high-tech sectors as well as key growth sectors, including creative, digital, media, and business and professional services.

The CGC Innovation Hub is planned for delivery during Phase 2 and will provide around 430,000 sq ft of floorspace. It will benefit from close proximity to a key transport corridor, including the adjacent park and ride site and access to public transport services.

CGC is a mixed-use development delivered in partnership between Countryside (now part of Vistry Group), L&Q, Ptarmigan Land, and Halley Developments/Greycoat Real Estate. The site has the potential to accommodate approximately 10,600 new dwellings and around 610,000 sq ft of employment floorspace.

Chelmsford has a rich history of invention and innovation, which includes being the birthplace of radio. In 1899, technology pioneer Guglielmo Marconi opened the world's first wireless factory in Chelmsford, before going on to develop Morse code machines for ship and transatlantic communication. His equipment saved many lives at sea, earning him the Nobel Prize in Physics in 1909 alongside Karl Ferdinand Braun, for their contributions to the development of wireless telegraphy. In 1920, one of Marconi's engineers was involved in the first live worldwide radio broadcast from Chelmsford, which led to the foundation of the BBC in 1922.



INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY:

✕ Various opportunities, Chesterford Research Park

Research and technology (including laboratory) units from 2,200 sq ft to 75,500 sq ft, available now.

With a masterplan for around one million square feet, of which approximately 350,000 sq ft is already occupied, there are a variety of sites available for new, bespoke laboratory and research and development buildings at Chesterford Research Park, the ideal environment for innovation and growth.

Build-to-suit options within three years.

Opportunity at a glance

Types of opportunity:
Build to suit & available floorspace

Real estate sectors:
Science & high tech

Local Planning Authority:
Uttlesford District Council

Buildings:
Units from 2,200 sq ft to 75,500 sq ft

Tenure: Leasehold

Lead promoter: Cheffins and Savills

Image © Aviva Investors



For more information:
[extraordinaryessex.co.uk/
opportunities](https://extraordinaryessex.co.uk/opportunities)





3

**INNOVATION
CENTRES**





Greater Essex is home to several innovation centres that provide on-site support and networking alongside high-quality floorspace and facilities.

In recent years, Essex has become a centre of innovation and entrepreneurial spirit. Armed with a business community ready to take advantage of innovation and technology, physical connectivity, and sociable communities for knowledge transfer, Essex is well-positioned to benefit from a wide range of opportunities for growth.

PHYSICAL CONNECTIVITY AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

A strategic location, with proximity to major transport links affording easy access to London, Cambridge, and the wider UK motorway network, makes Essex an attractive location for businesses looking to connect with major economic hubs.

This is backed by access to world-class research, resources, and learning, with strong links between business and academia. At the centre of this are Essex's universities which are recognised for their cutting-edge research, ranked among the top 40 universities in the UK, and have innovation centres supporting early-stage businesses and start-ups. These strong connections create sociable communities for knowledge transfer, translating innovative research and academia into practical applications.



SUSTAINABLE INNOVATION

With its status as the sunniest county in the UK, in addition to having the second longest coastline in the UK, Essex has the potential to capitalise on innovations in decarbonisation – promoting more sustainable technologies such as ground and air-source heat pumps and solar, moving away from reliance on fossil fuels. In doing so, the county is positioning itself as the place to build sustainably.

Essex can also take advantage of other aspects of its natural landscape, including large, flat open spaces and access to coast and waterways.

DRIVING COLLABORATION AND GROWTH

Essex's ambition to harness its thriving clusters of innovation aligns closely with the government's focus on tech growth and realising its potential to encourage collaboration between the public and private sectors, attract top talent, and drive economic growth.



Exploring innovation in the business community

Essex held a business summit in October 2024, exploring the innovation and potential amongst the county's business community. Hosted at Hylands House in Chelmsford, the event led by Essex County Council united over 175 businesses and organisations under the themes of grow, innovate and connect.

Connected Innovation

Essex County Council is part of Connected Innovation alongside Norfolk and Suffolk County councils, working together to strengthen regional collaboration, drive innovation, and attract investment. The initiative brings together the region's academic institutions and public and private sectors, fostering stronger partnerships and supporting innovation-led growth.





Arise Chelmsford

Arise Chelmsford is an innovation hub for businesses specialising in the life science, advanced manufacturing, digital and technology sectors, and is part of Anglia Ruskin University (ARU).

It is located on ARU's riverside campus in Chelmsford, next door to the state-of-the-art School of Medicine and benefitting from the excellent amenities and facilities of this modern university. A 15-minute walk from Chelmsford city centre, Arise Chelmsford provides access to rail links that connect to the heart of London within 30 minutes.

Arise Chelmsford opened its doors in 2014 as a partnership between ARU and Essex County Council, with support from Chelmsford City Council, to promote business growth in Essex. It comprises more than 10,000 sq ft of office and innovation space over three floors and is currently home to more than 42 businesses.



Its business accommodation offers meeting rooms, a kitchen area, and innovation space, bringing together academics, researchers, and students, with access to supporting facilities.

The hub is supported by the expertise and resources of ARU, providing skills, talent, innovation and business support, including the academic community comprising more than 1,200 expert members of staff. This connection promotes the exchange of knowledge, skills, and innovation.

Arise continues to provide cost-effective and economic co-working opportunities, offering excellent flexibility, access to 30-day rolling terms, and a wide level of collaboration. For information on availability and pricing, email ariseinnovation@aru.ac.uk

Recognition and accolades

Research at ARU is recognised for having a real-life impact. In the most recent Research Excellence Framework, the university achieved world-leading impact in nine out of 16 subject areas, meaning ARU research demonstrated a significant and impactful effect on areas like the economy, society, culture, public policy, services, health, the environment, and quality of life. It signifies that ARU research has achieved a level of originality, significance, and rigour that is recognised as **the best in the world**.

In 2024, ARU became the first institution in the UK to receive the **Entrepreneurial University Award from the National Centre for Entrepreneurship in Education (NCEE)** – a five-year accreditation in recognition of commitment to fostering enterprise and entrepreneurship, demonstrating ARU's significant impact on communities and society.



Arise Harlow

With a history of technological advancements, Harlow is considered a significant hub for innovation. The town is the birthplace of fibre optic telecommunications technology, which was invented by two electrical engineers in the 1960s and led one of them – Sir Charles Kao – to win the Nobel Prize for Physics in 2009.

Harlow is located within the UK Innovation Corridor (UKIC) – the fastest-growing and most sought-after area in the UK for science, technology, research and innovation. Connecting London and Cambridge, UKIC is known for transforming research and ideas into commercial products and services. In 2024, Harlow was named the UK's number one tech hub by TalkTalk Business, offering the ultimate combination of high salaries and affordable living for tech professionals.

Harlow is home to ARU's second Arise Innovation Hub, which opened in 2022 and is located on Harlow Innovation Park. It is ideally positioned for those wanting to be part of a growing science community that is well connected to research clusters in both London and Cambridge.

Funded by ARU and Essex County Council, with support from Harlow Council, the £6 million building provides 10,000 sq ft of office space and innovation over two floors. This includes professional meeting rooms, a welcome area, kitchenette and collaboration spaces.

Arise Harlow is connected to ARU's academic expertise, interns, live briefs and knowledge exchange. Currently, it is home to 34 innovative and entrepreneurial businesses, specialising in the life science, advanced manufacturing, digital and technology sectors.

It also benefits from strong community networks and high-quality digital infrastructure, as well as Harlow's rail, road and air connections. The M11 and M25 motorway networks are nearby, with London Stansted Airport less than 20 minutes away.

There are opportunities to occupy a dedicated space at Arise, as well as co-working and virtual office opportunities – all on flexible, rolling 30-day terms. For information on availability and pricing, email ariseinnovation@aru.ac.uk



IN NUMBERS...

✘ **OVER 250 JOBS SUPPORTED**

✘ **OVER 76 BUSINESSES SUPPORTED**





Innovation Centre, Knowledge Gateway Colchester

Located to the east of Colchester and set within 200 acres of parkland is the Innovation Centre, Knowledge Gateway (ICKG), a thriving hub for innovators, entrepreneurs and businesses with space for up to 60 enterprises.

The 38,000 sq ft centre sits at the heart of the University of Essex's Knowledge Gateway research and technology park and is managed in partnership with Oxford Innovation, the UK's largest innovation centre operator.

ICKG has achieved over 85 per cent occupancy and is home to more than 50 businesses from the creative and digital sectors, as well as Software as a Service (SaaS), fintech, health-tech, education and recruitment. ICKG provides office space, co-working areas and meeting rooms, as well as services such as professional mentoring and strategic business support. There is also a busy programme

of networking events run by ICKG and partners such as the Essex Chambers of Commerce.

The University of Essex is consistently recognised internationally for the quality of its research, and ICKG businesses are ideally placed to benefit from collaborations with leading academics in key fields including artificial intelligence (AI), embedded systems, plant productivity, logistics, health, finance and data analytics.

ICKG occupants also benefit from having the university's Business Engagement team based on-site. The team supports entrepreneurs to connect with university researchers to develop their products and services. Alongside having access to a pipeline of graduate talent, ICKG businesses have offered 90 internship and work placement opportunities to Essex students over the past five years.

IN NUMBERS...

- ✕ 85% OCCUPANCY
- HOME TO MORE
- ✕ THAN 50
- BUSINESSES**
- 90 INTERNSHIP
- ✕ AND WORK
- PLACEMENT**
- OPPORTUNITIES
- OVER THE PAST
- FIVE YEARS

Images © University of Essex



ICKG offers flexible all-inclusive serviced packages for suites which can accommodate between 3-11 people. For information on availability and pricing, submit an enquiry at www.innovationcentre-kg.co.uk



 **Launchpad**

Southend-on-Sea has undergone steady investment and development over the last two decades, capitalising on its proximity to an international airport, as well as a large talent pool. The development of Airport Business Park Southend marks significant investment by Southend-on-Sea City Council. The business park benefits from a Local Development Order, offering a simplified planning process for applicants.

At the heart of the business park stands Launchpad – an £8 million innovation hub for entrepreneurs, startups and scale-up businesses. Its road network provides access to Southend-on-Sea city centre and London Southend Airport.

Owned by Southend-on-Sea City Council and managed by Oxford Innovation Space, Launchpad opened in 2022 following local grant funding. The building was constructed in partnership with HBD and achieved an Outstanding BREEAM status, in recognition of its sustainable design and construction.

Situated in Rochford, Launchpad spans 34,000 sq ft over three floors, providing around 17,500 sq ft of lettable space, including offices, co-working space and meeting rooms. The hub also has breakout areas, privacy pods, kitchens on each floor, a café, secure internal cycle storage space, and changing rooms with shower facilities. Its office spaces can be tailored to suit occupiers' needs, providing a range of sectors with access to state-of-the-art facilities.



Currently, Launchpad is occupied by 30 businesses from sectors including IT, pharmaceuticals, design and marketing, architecture, as well as retail, finance, and accountancy. Additional businesses use the co-working space on a flexible basis. In addition, an on-site Business Growth Manager provides free-of-charge business support, including skills workshops, access to networking and events, and signposting to funding opportunities. They also provide access to exclusive tools from Oxford Innovation, including diagnostic tools to help businesses reach their ambitions and the Beauhurst data platform, which offers insights into the economy.

Images © Oxford Innovation



Launchpad has a flexible tariff-based approach to co-working and serviced offices, with daily rates also available. For availability and pricing, contact rlaunchpad@oxin.co.uk



IN NUMBERS...

23 JOBS
CREATED

UP TO **91%**
OCCUPANCY
IN THE LAST SIX
MONTHS





4

**MIXED-USE
DEVELOPMENTS**





Many of Greater Essex's major settlements benefit from rail access to the capital in under 45 minutes, making them attractive to homebuyers and private renters.

Regional shopping destinations include Chelmsford, Lakeside Shopping Centre, Eastgate Shopping Centre, Southend-on-Sea, and Braintree Village. These provide extensive commercial floorspaces, including prime shopping centres. Many places in Greater Essex have a strong evening and night-time economy, offering a mix of restaurants, cinemas, and public spaces.

The four designated garden communities across Greater Essex will realise the Town and Country Planning Association's (TCPA)



Garden City Principles, bringing together high-quality, sustainable homes, dedicated employment spaces, integrated transport systems, and places where people want to live, work, visit and do business. Collectively, over 24,000 new homes will be delivered within Greater Essex's garden communities, with more schemes likely to come forward in the coming years.

Several key centres in Greater Essex have been identified as prime locations for regeneration and growth. This offers potential for higher density mixed-use developments, where people can live, work, and play.

Subregional centres providing well-used retail spaces, community uses and schools are also often well-connected via rail, local bus routes, or the strategic road network. Epping and Saffron Walden are among those commanding high retail rents with transactions topping £30 per sq ft.

With steady population growth across Greater Essex over the past decade, there is potential to capitalise on the increased spending of new residents in local businesses and services.

- ✘ CHELMSFORD WELCOMED MORE THAN **32 MILLION VISITORS IN 2025**
- ✘ LAKESIDE SHOPPING CENTRE WAS RANKED IN THE **TOP 20 OF THE MOST VIBRANT UK RETAIL LOCATIONS IN 2023**
- ✘ OVER **24,000 NEW HOMES** WILL BE DELIVERED WITHIN GREATER ESSEX'S GARDEN COMMUNITIES



Chelmsford

Granted city status in 2012 as the first city in Essex, Chelmsford has undergone substantial investment in recent years. It is known for being a prime destination to live, work and visit, with two railway stations and a fast train service connecting to the City of London in less than 40 minutes.

Chelmsford's second railway station opened at Beaulieu Park in October 2025, serving the new Chelmsford Garden Community, which will comprise around 10,600 homes, employment land and extensive public green spaces.

As the county town of Essex, Chelmsford is rich in history and is blessed with heritage architecture, including an early 18th-century stately home at Hylands House, and Chelmsford Cathedral, one of the smallest in England yet celebrated for its unique charm and historic significance.

The city centre offers a mix of shopping, dining, and entertainment options. In 2025, it welcomed more than 32 million visitors, with footfall rising by over five per cent compared with 2019. Chelmsford's evening and night-time economy has also been recognised with the Purple Flag accreditation for 13 consecutive years.

➤ AT THE END OF 2024, TOP PRIME RETAIL RENTS IN CHELMSFORD WERE AROUND **£120 PER SQ FT**

In Autumn 2025, the city hosted BBC Radio 2 in the Park across three days, attracting tens of thousands of music fans to the festival. The festival generated an estimated £4.1 million boost to Chelmsford's economy and benefitted the city's retail, food and leisure sectors.

Images © Essex County Council



Chelmsford is the pre-eminent office location in Greater Essex, with over two million square feet of stock in the local administrative area.

- Notable lettings include a 10-year lease for a 12,000 sq ft office at Parkview House on Victoria Road, secured by RSA Insurance – now **Intact Insurance** following its rebrand at the end of 2025 – at £31 per sq ft.
- The law firm **Tees** also secured a new 11-year lease at Parkview House at the end of 2025, doubling its existing first-floor space to create an expanded Chelmsford hub with approximately 13,250 sq ft of modern office accommodation.
- In addition, a 10-year lease was secured by the insurer **Allianz** for a 17,000 sq ft office at Amlin House on Victoria Road, at £33.50 per sq ft.

Source: CoStar

Linking to existing retail on the High Street is **Bond Street Chelmsford**, a 300,000 sq ft retail and leisure development by Aquila Holdings, which sits next to the River Chelmer. The precinct offers a combination of open-air shopping, riverside restaurants, cinema and public spaces, as well as a basement car park. Essex's first John Lewis anchor store occupies a 90,000 sq ft building over three floors. Further development proposals within Chelmsford city centre are being promoted and encouraged to create a diverse mix of retail, food and drink, leisure and entertainment, cultural, community, business and residential uses where they positively contribute towards increased footfall, activity and vibrancy.

In 2023, the city unveiled the new traffic-free **Tindal Square** at the top of the high street in front of the landmark Grade II* listed Shire Hall building. The scheme removed traffic from the area with prioritised pedestrianised space, a cycle link, trees and seating. Previously, the square was separated from the High Street by a road. The area now provides a location for a range of cultural activities and to maintain the setting of Chelmsford Cathedral, while adding to the vitality of the high street.



Chelmsford City Council is seeking a development partner to help deliver the **Chelmer Waterside scheme** – a £250 million regeneration project on a former gas works site. Located less than a five-minute walk from the city centre, the 16-acre site will be redeveloped into a vibrant residential and commercial area, featuring 35 per cent affordable homes. The residential-led scheme will also include space for flexible commercial use and a new public open space which will utilise the waterfront.

Image: Tindal Square
© Chelmsford City Council



Image: Bow Bridge, early infrastructure delivery at Chelmer Waterside

Improved accessibility to Chelmer Waterside and the local area is being provided by a wide range of infrastructure across different scales, including:

- **The new Bow Bridge Road**, opened in July 2025, which enables enhanced walking, cycling and restricted vehicle access linking to Wharf Road and Parkway
- The Army and Navy **Sustainable Transport Package**
- **Upgrades to the Springfield Road/Navigation Road junction** were completed in 2025, delivering a fully signalised junction as part of the planning agreement for the Peninsula site

These will enable the delivery of up to **1,000 new homes** and make the **best use of the city's waterways**. The developer Taylor Wimpey has already completed more than 400 homes in the wider area.

Works for the relocation of the gas pressure reduction system are due to complete in late spring 2026.



Chelmsford Garden Community

Image © Essex County Council

Chelmsford Garden Community is a large sustainable urban extension that is being delivered to the north-east of the city. It is a joint project between Countryside (now part of Vistry Group), L&Q, Ptarmigan Land, and Halley Developments/Greycoat Real Estate. The garden community incorporates the award-winning Beaulieu Park development, building on its success in delivering high-quality new housing. It is supported by £218 million of Housing Infrastructure Fund investment, which has delivered the new Beaulieu Park station, and will deliver the first phase of the Chelmsford North East Bypass.

The new community will comprise 10,600 new dwellings alongside around 46 acres of employment land, a country park, destination green spaces, and community facilities including primary and secondary schools. More than 3,000 homes have already been completed.

At the end of 2025, planning approval was granted for new phases of the community comprising 2,750 additional homes, as well as village centres, retail units, a new school, parks and community spaces.

The final planning application – to be considered in spring 2026 – will propose a further 3,500 homes, two primary schools, an all-through school, neighbourhood centres featuring a main healthcare facility, a sports hub, new parks, and an employment area.

The garden community includes the proposed Willow Hill employment hub which will consist of around 161,500 sq ft of employment space. There are also prospects for an innovation park, which will appeal to leading businesses in the research and development and high-tech sectors. It could help place Chelmsford at the forefront of 21st-century economic development in Essex and beyond.

The new employment development will be in addition to existing commitments for significant new office and business floorspace in Chelmsford Garden Community at Beaulieu and Channels, including Beaulieu Exchange business park.

The development is supported by a comprehensive masterplan that has been prepared by the developers of the garden community in collaboration with the local authority.



Image (above) © Murphy Group
Image (below) © Essex County Council

THE GARDEN COMMUNITY AND THE NORTH OF CHELMSFORD AND ITS SURROUNDINGS WILL BENEFIT FROM THE PROVISION OF MAJOR TRANSPORT INFRASTRUCTURE DEVELOPMENTS

Planning approval was also secured for the Northern Radial Distributor Road – a major new route along the northern edge of the development, which will be critical to the operation of the Chelmsford North East Bypass.

The development will take its main vehicular access from Essex Regiment Way, Beaulieu Parkway, and a new vehicular access via the Northern Radial Distributor Road. Access to the site will be improved by Section 1A of the Chelmsford North East Bypass, which is currently in construction and when complete will link the Northern Radial Distributor Road and Beaulieu Parkway.

The garden community will also provide an extension of on-site Chelmsford Area Bus Based Rapid Transit (ChART) connecting with the city centre and Chelmsford and Beaulieu Park railway stations.



Hammonds Farm

Hammonds Farm Garden Community is an emerging development within the Chelmsford Local Plan. The plan is currently under review and was most recently consulted on in January 2026. There are initial plans for around 3,000 homes to be built by 2041, and potentially a further 1,500 homes at a later stage. The ambition is to provide one new job for every new home, with around 463,000 sq ft of new employment floorspace to be delivered by 2041, helping to retain talent within Chelmsford.

NEWS FEATURE:



First railway station on Great Eastern Mainline for over a century opens its doors to passengers

Beaulieu Park railway station opened ahead of schedule in October 2025.

Rail links in north Chelmsford have been transformed with the opening of Beaulieu Park station, marking a major transport milestone for the local area and unlocking further growth across the wider region.

Operated by Greater Anglia, the station connects passengers to London Liverpool Street in just 40 minutes, with up to four trains per hour during peak times and two per hour in off-peak periods. The station features three platforms, more than 700 parking spaces, a bus interchange, cycle facilities, step-free access, and space for retail and catering.

Beaulieu Park is first new station on the Great Eastern Main Line for over 100 years and is set to generate a £250 million economic boost for the region, supporting 2,500 new jobs and delivering thousands of new homes.

The landmark Beaulieu Park station project was backed by £175 million of funding from:

- Homes England
- Essex County Council
- Chelmsford City Council
- South East Local Enterprise Partnership
- Countryside (part of Vistry Group) and L&Q



Images © Mulholland Media

The station is located on the doorstep of what will become the new Chelmsford Garden Community, eventually comprising over 10,600 new homes. It will provide easier and quicker access to jobs, helping the economic development of the area and encouraging further investment.

A new road – Beaulieu Parkway – opened two years ago and helps bring passengers to the new railway station from the nearby A12.

The station will also be complemented by the £78 million Chelmsford North East Bypass, which will be built in stages in order to have infrastructure in place when it is needed. Section 1A of the bypass, which will join with a new east-west link road (Northern Radial Distributor Road), is expected to be completed by spring 2026. The bypass will provide easier access to the A12 and a direct route to the new railway station, helping to ease congestion and pollution on local roads.



“Under the trusted services of publicly owned Greater Anglia, we’re delivering on our Plan for Change by building a simpler, more modern rail network that supports communities and powers the UK’s economy.”

**Lord Hendy CBE,
Rail Minister**

“For over three decades, Countryside and subsequently L&Q have been working in partnership with Essex County Council, Chelmsford City Council and Network Rail to deliver this critical piece of infrastructure as part of our Beaulieu development. Its arrival will have a transformative impact on the residents of Beaulieu and beyond, providing easy and quick access into London and easing congestion in and around Chelmsford city centre.”

**Martin Leach,
Managing Director of Vistry Strategic Land & Major Projects,** on behalf of the developers of Beaulieu, Countryside (part of Vistry Group) and L&Q





Image © Essex County Council

Harlow

Set on the border of Essex and Hertfordshire and located between London and Cambridge, Harlow is a fast-growing town that has seen significant investment and regeneration in recent years.

Alongside infrastructure upgrades, there are plans for large-scale housing growth through the Harlow and Gilston Garden Town (HGGT) project. HGGT will deliver 23,000 homes through £1.3 billion of infrastructure upgrades, enabling the population to grow from about 85,000 to around 140,000.

Located in the west of Essex, Harlow has a vibrant town centre offering a range of retail, dining, and leisure and cultural facilities, including two shopping centres. It benefits from two railway stations, providing rail links to London Stansted Airport in 20 minutes and the city of London in 40 minutes. The town is also served by a network of local buses and has one of the most extensive segregated cycle networks in the country.

The majority of works on Harlow’s Sustainable Transport Corridor, linking the town centre with Harlow Town railway station, were completed in March 2026.

The scheme has delivered new bus lanes and improved walking and cycling routes, alongside public realm with trees, signage, and upgraded lighting.

Significant long-term investment to transform Harlow town centre is being brought forward through the Harlow Regeneration Partnership (HRP), a joint venture formed by The Hill Group and Harlow Council in 2023. Harlow Council’s plans to regenerate the town centre into a mixed residential, retail and leisure district include the development of council-owned sites for regeneration, in addition to other sites. The partnership is formed on a non-exclusive basis, allowing Harlow to explore the right development route for the right projects.

In October 2025, Harlow Council announced it had secured a landmark deal and collaboration partnership to transform a four-acre site which spans Broadwalk, Eastgate and Westgate.

Regeneration is also progressing across several sites following successful bids for government funding.

➤ The delivery of the **Arts and Cultural Quarter** at Playhouse Square and College Square is underway, with the Hill Group acting as the lead contractor. Backed by £20 million from the Levelling Up Fund, the £34 million flagship regeneration scheme will be a mixed-use building, consisting of affordable dwellings and ground floor community and commercial space. Major upgrades will be made to Harlow Playhouse Theatre, including an extension to provide space for live performance and exhibitions, a music school and recording studios, a contemporary café/restaurant, and a bar. The delivery of the scheme is part of Harlow Council’s plans to establish the town as a cultural capital for the East of England by 2028.

➤ **A new sustainable transport hub and interchange** will replace the existing bus station using £23.7 million through the government’s Towns Fund programme. Now underway and due for completion in summer 2027, the interchange will feature better passenger facilities, including covered waiting areas and a cycle hub for 80 bikes. It plans to improve links with commercial locations, the nearby railway station, and the HGGT Sustainable Transport Corridor.

➤ As part of its £23.7 million Towns Fund-backed redevelopment of **Market Square**, Harlow Council has acquired Market House for £6.2 million and announced plans to transform the formerly neglected office building into a modern business hub. Refurbishment works began at the end of 2025 to convert the upper floors into high-quality, flexible workspace and upgrade the building’s exterior. Under a new agreement with the council, Co-Space will operate the workspace. Due for completion in summer 2026, the wider Market Square redevelopment – including Adams House and The Rows – will also deliver leisure, hospitality and nightlife spaces, alongside new homes, a water feature, an open-air market, and outdoor dining areas.

➤ **The regeneration of the town centre over the next 10 years** will be supported with £20 million through the Pride in Place programme to support the regeneration of neighbourhood centres. It brings the total amount of government funding secured by Harlow Council to more than £60 million.

THE INTERCHANGE WILL FEATURE **BETTER PASSENGER FACILITIES, INCLUDING COVERED WAITING AREAS AND A CYCLE HUB FOR 80 BIKES**



Image © Harlow District Council

 **Basildon**

Located 25 miles east of central London, Basildon is the largest economy in Essex and the second-largest employer in the Thames Estuary after Canary Wharf.

Ranked third nationally in the Economy and Business element of the Lambert Smith Hampton UK Vitality Index 2024, Basildon was established as a new town in 1949 and now has a population of more than 190,000.

It has a transport hub with a bus station and a railway station offering rail links to the City of London in 35 minutes, while benefitting from additional railway stations in the neighbourhood areas of Billericay, Wickford, Laindon and Pitsea.

The town centre and surrounding areas offer a range of retail, dining, leisure and recreational options, including a cinema complex which opened in 2024. The Basildon Sporting Village on the outskirts of the town centre is noted for having a 50m swimming pool, which underwent a £1 million refurbishment project in 2025.

Image © Essex County Council

The Sporting Village also houses the South Essex Gymnastics Centre used by Olympic gymnasts.

Basildon Council is preparing a new local plan which promotes the borough as a catalyst for growth in south Essex, proposing around 27,000 new homes and employment over the next 20 years up to 2043. Basildon town centre is at the core of growth plans, with its potential to accelerate regeneration across the borough and wider parts of the county. This is supported by a Basildon Town Centre Masterplan which aims to guide future investment and development and unlock potential.

- ✗ POPULATION OF OVER **190,000**
- ✗ RAIL LINKS TO THE CITY OF LONDON IN **35 MINUTES**
- ✗ AN EMERGING LOCAL PLAN PROPOSES AROUND **27,000 NEW HOMES** BY 2043



There are opportunities to enhance Basildon’s evening economy, with redevelopment beyond recent residential and mixed-use permissions. This redevelopment aims to offer a broader range of activities within a well-designed, resilient and multi-functional public realm, with ambitions to enhance connectivity and movement.

Westgate

The draft masterplan identified three opportunity areas around Westgate – the retail park, car park, and the car park to the rear of Towngate Theatre.

In 2024, Basildon Council acquired the Westgate Shopping Park for £18.5 million to explore redevelopment plans. One of the town’s retail parks, Westgate opened in 1999 and currently offers a car park, and independent and major retail shops. Located on the western edge of Basildon town centre, the 13 acres of land includes the Towngate Theatre and the Basildon Centre – a civic centre which houses the council services.

A full planning application for the first phase of the masterplan was submitted

in July 2025, following public consultation earlier in the year. The proposal is for a mixed-use development comprising a 95-bedroom hotel to be operated by French hotel chain B&B Hotels, 97 affordable extra care homes with communal facilities, as well as new commercial spaces and a landscaping and public realm.

Plans are also progressing for the second phase of the development which includes Westgate Arena – a 3,500-seat indoor venue for live events – with Basildon Council forming a dedicated project team to deliver the project. Wider plans for Westgate also include around 525 new homes.

Aldi has also been given permission to convert two former shop units into a new supermarket at the shopping park.

Town Square

Basildon Council has acquired the former Marks & Spencer site in the town centre, with plans to turn it into an indoor market and entertainment hub.

Image © Essex County Council



Basildon East Walk

The opening of the new Sigered, King of Essex pub in East Walk marks the return of JD Wetherspoon to the town, following a £2.75 million investment. The venue, which opened in October 2025, replaced former retail units.



Images: Illustrative views of Dunton Hills Garden Village © Brentwood Borough Council & HTA Design

Eastgate

Built in two phases during the 1980s, the Eastgate International Shopping Centre was once the largest indoor shopping centre in Europe, bringing 2,000 jobs to the area. The centre wraps around the south-east side of the town centre, dominating the area while providing significant retail space.

In 2023, Galliard Homes and DVS Ground Rent acquired the shopping centre through a joint venture. Plans were approved by Basildon Council in 2024 to bring forward the development of a private medical centre at the former three-storey Debenhams retail building, acquired by Basildon Health Centre Ltd.

Construction is now underway on the facility, which is due to open in June 2026. Backed by the healthcare development team at Fenton Whelan, it will feature diagnostic capabilities including MRI, CT, X-ray, and ultrasound, alongside treatment rooms for endoscopy procedures, operating theatres, overnight hospital bedrooms for patient stays, and a range of outpatient services.

Great Oaks and Broadmayne

The development of a former retail park being brought forward by Donard is set to include an 11-storey building consisting of 245 dwellings, commercial and community floorspace, space for public artwork, rooftop gardens, and extensive cycle parking. Located at the former site of Staples and Carphone Warehouse, the Great Oaks development will be on the doorstep of Basildon town centre's amenities and transport links.



CONSTRUCTION TRAINING TO EQUIP RESIDENTS WITH SKILLS FOR THE FUTURE

Basildon Council has launched the Basildon Construction Academy (BCA), a new initiative aimed at equipping residents with the skills and qualifications needed to thrive in the construction and built environment sectors.

As the borough undergoes significant regeneration and development, the BCA ensures local people benefit directly from this growth. Offering practical pathways into employment, the Academy aims to support residents in building future-ready careers.



Dunton Hills Garden Village

Lands Improvement has acquired the freehold interest in a 551-acre site in Brentwood district, assuming the role as master developer of Dunton Hills Garden Village over a 12-year period. The scheme, which has a gross development value in excess of £480 million, will deliver 3,700 new homes, community, healthcare and education facilities set within a mix of green spaces, in close proximity to the town of Brentwood and the mainline railway station at West Horndon. The scheme is genuinely landscape led, with 50 per cent of the site given over to green and blue infrastructure. The development is expected to start in 2026.

- ✘ GROSS DEVELOPMENT VALUE IN EXCESS OF **£480 MILLION**
- ✘ **3,700** NEW HOMES
- ✘ 50 PER CENT OF THE SITE GIVEN OVER TO **GREEN AND BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE**



 **Colchester**

One of the UK’s fastest-growing places, Colchester is a diverse urban centre in the north of Essex which gained city status in 2022.

It provides employment to nearly 108,000 people, many of which travel to Colchester from the surrounding area. The city is also home to 15,000 students from more than 140 countries who study at the University of Essex’s Colchester campus.

The city has two railway stations, with the fastest services connecting to London Liverpool Street in 47 minutes. Its main station will benefit from step-free access as part of the government’s Access for All (AfA) programme.

By road, the A12 provides links to London and the East of England.

Colchester has a rich heritage that has set the scene for major tourism investment in recent years. With many new hotels across a variety of price points, investment in new and existing attractions, plus a range of retail, dining, leisure choices and easy access to coast and countryside, the city of Colchester is now firmly on the short break wish list.

Across two weeks in August 2025, the city welcomed approximately 65,000 visitors as it hosted a series of eight concerts. The Summer Series in the award-winning

Castle Park generated increased footfall for city centre shops, restaurants, and hotels, supporting hundreds of local jobs and showcasing Colchester as a premier cultural destination.

Multimillion-pound investments are bringing new space for growth, new business space for tech firms, new road access, and the latest in gigabit and 5G connectivity, all enabled by a forward-thinking council, strong partnerships, networks and a great location, not least being within the boundary of Freeport East.

Team Colchester, a partnership between Essex County Council and Colchester City Council, revised the Colchester City Centre Masterplan in 2023, setting out ambitions for regeneration.

A creative hub and collaborative workspace – the Digital Forum – launched in January 2026 following a £6.25 million investment from the government’s Town Deal fund. Featuring 5G connectivity, the hub offers space for established and growing businesses, digital artists, entrepreneurs, tech creatives and digital nomads in Essex, as well as firms looking for a satellite office outside of major cities such as Cambridge.

Located at the site of Colchester’s former bus depot, the hub is on the doorstep of Colchester’s cultural quarter, comprising Colchester Castle Museum and Castle Park, the new St Botolph’s Quarter heritage trail, St Botolph’s Priory, the Roman Wall, the Curzon Cinema and creative business centre SPACE Studios at 37 Queen Street, and the award-winning contemporary visual arts gallery, Firstsite.

In recent years, Colchester has attracted significant investment and growth, with more than £40 million in government funding and millions more in grants to regenerate the city centre.

Redevelopment and repairs at the Grade II listed Balkearne Water Tower, known locally as Jumbo, are being funded by an £8 million grant from the National Lottery Heritage Fund. In partnership with North Essex Heritage, the £10.9 million restoration is being led by Sir Robert McAlpine Special Projects and includes converting the space into a restaurant, event venue, and visitor experience. Colchester City Council granted listed building consent in January 2025.

A new public square behind Colchester Town station to create a space for events, including markets, and a heritage trail to increase tourism, is being developed at St Botolph’s Quarter, funded by a £7 million investment from

the government. Updated plans for the square were shaped by public consultation, and a planning application was submitted in August 2025. Construction is expected to begin in early 2027.

A lively space for outdoor events, markets and leisure has been developed at St Nicholas Square with a £1.6 million government grant. Hundreds gathered to mark the grand opening of the newly redeveloped square in July 2025.

Upgrades at Mercury Theatre, including LED stage lighting and digital cameras and equipment to live stream performances and other events, are being funded through a share of £24.2 million through Arts Council England’s Capital Investment Programme in addition to a £500,000 capital grant from the government’s Getting Building Fund.



Image © Essex County Council



The redevelopment of a key gateway into Colchester city centre – St Botolph’s Circus – are among the city centre works funded by a £19.6 million investment from the Local Regeneration Fund (formerly the Levelling Up Fund). The proposals for St Botolph’s Circus will see the area regenerated into a multi-mode transport hub, including new plaza areas and improved accessibility for pedestrians, wheelchair users and cyclists. Work is anticipated to begin by spring 2026 and is scheduled for completion in autumn 2027.

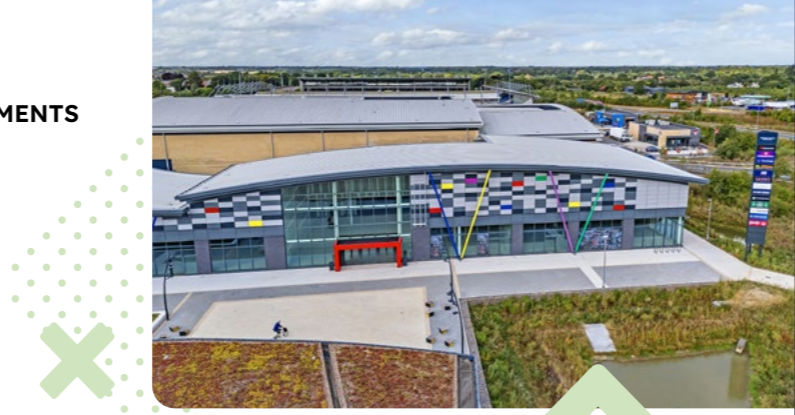
Images (top): the new Digital Forum; (right) vision for Colchester Town station; (left) the station as it currently is

Located within the city centre's core retail offering, the 281,000 sq ft open-air **Culver Square Shopping Centre** has been sold to a private investor for approximately £11 million, transacted by Green & Partners on behalf of M&G Real Estate. The sale includes a long leasehold interest through to 2248, a WAULT of 5.1 years to expiry, and a reported gross income of £2.15 million per annum.

Anchored by TK Maxx and H&M, the scheme includes a mix of national and independent retailers. The deal includes the 130,000 sq ft former Debenhams building, offering asset management opportunities, with plans to reposition this space in response to current retail and leisure demand.



Located in the heart of Colchester, **Minerva House** is a redevelopment of the former Marks & Spencer building on the High Street. Acquired by City and Country from Marks & Spencer in March 2025 for £1.9 million, the 1970s property is being transformed into a vibrant mixed-use destination, combining retail, dining, and commercial space under one roof. The scheme will deliver six units ranging from 3,000 sq ft to 19,000 sq ft, with a total floor area of approximately 261,000 sq ft.



Outside the city centre, **Colchester Northern Gateway** is a phased development which has planning consent for 300 new homes, healthcare provision with older persons accommodation, and commercial floorspace.

Property developer Turnstone has brought forward a **leisure development** on 10 acres. Located off Junction 28 of the A12, the park already features a number of occupiers, including Hollywood Bowl, restaurants Slim Chickens, Wendy's and Greggs, a Travelodge hotel, and Fastned EV charging facilities. Vue Cinemas has also committed to bringing a nine-screen cinema to the development, due to open in spring 2026.

To the west of Colchester city centre, **Stane Retail Park** is a 15-acre scheme which opened at the end of 2021. The fully let development is anchored by an 80,000 sq ft Marks & Spencer and features a diverse mix of leading national retailers, including Superdrug, Mountain Warehouse, Furniture Village, Greggs, and COOK.

In February 2025, the park was acquired by a private investor client of Pembrey Asset Management from developer The Churchmanor Estates Company plc for £33.95 million.



Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community

The Tendring Colchester Borders Garden Community (TCBGC) will include 7,750 new homes to the east of Colchester, supported by new dedicated employment spaces, a new country park, and community facilities.

A transformational new public transport system – known as the Colchester Rapid Transit System (RTS) – is being delivered as part of a £164.9 million grant awarded by Homes England's Housing Infrastructure Fund (HIF). The HIF is

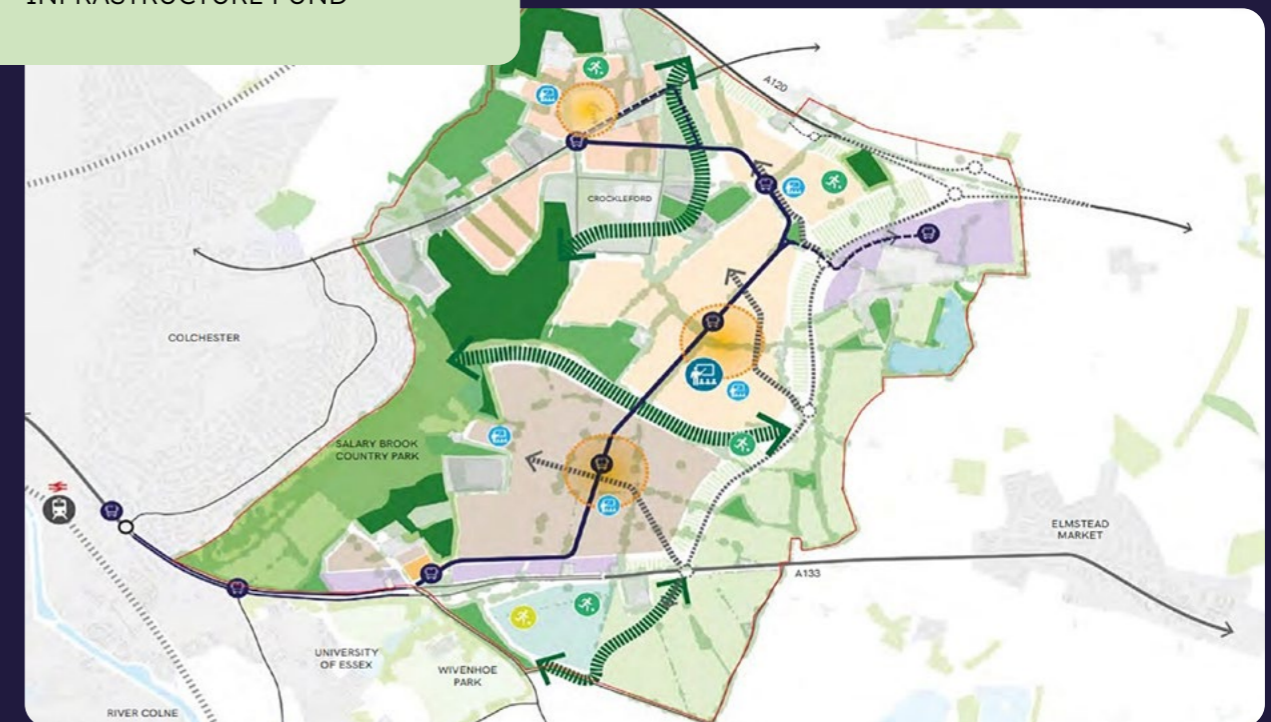
also funding the A1331 link road, which will connect the A133 with the A120 as part of the new garden community development.

Significant infrastructure milestones were reached in 2025:

➤ **Rapid transit lane and walking and cycling route** completed, with the dedicated lane already in use by Colchester's Park and Ride and local bus services. It will also support new rapid transit services once the first homes in the garden community are built, providing direct links to key destinations including the park and ride, mainline railway station, city centre, University of Essex, Colchester Hospital, and the new garden community itself.

➤ **New roundabout on the A133** completed to enable the start of works on the garden community and provide future residents with access to the development. Phase one of the A1331 link road remains on track for delivery in 2026. In March 2026, extra funding was secured from Homes England to deliver phase two of the link road, which will extend the route to a new junction on the A120. The garden community master developer, Latimer, will contribute a further £21 million to complete the project.

- ✗ **7,750 NEW HOMES TO THE EAST OF COLCHESTER**
- ✗ **NEW DEDICATED EMPLOYMENT SPACES, A NEW COUNTRY PARK, AND COMMUNITY FACILITIES**
- ✗ **TRANSFORMATIONAL NEW PUBLIC TRANSPORT SYSTEM – KNOWN AS THE COLCHESTER RAPID TRANSIT SYSTEM**
- ✗ **£164.9 MILLION GRANT FUNDING AWARDED BY HOMES ENGLAND'S HOUSING INFRASTRUCTURE FUND**



Clacton-on-Sea

Clacton-on-Sea is a traditional seaside town on the Essex coast with a population of 55,000.

The town offers a variety of attractions for day trippers, including a pier and three beaches. It is also home to a range of retail, dining, and leisure facilities, catering to both residents and visitors.

A railway station in the town offers direct links to London, Chelmsford and Colchester. By road, the A133 provides access to the town from the A12. Bus services connect to a number of locations, including Harwich – another coastal town with a rich maritime history, three railway stations, an international port, and ferry services. Adjacent to Harwich International Port is Freeport East Harwich, which is developing a temporary offshore wind and green energy hub.

Clacton-on-Sea has been the focus of significant public sector investment aimed at town centre regeneration and improving the quality of life for residents.

An investment of £20 million through the Local Regeneration Fund will support the development of a nearly £30 million **Civic Quarter scheme**, comprising the Clacton Hub and new dwellings proposed adjacent.



The Clacton Hub is a multi-storey skills and learning hub at the existing Clacton Library site. Led by Essex County Council, it will include a brand-new library, learning spaces, an Adult Community Learning Centre, local registration services, space for the District Local History Society Museum, and a multi-use space offering a provision for other further and higher education partners. Planning permission for the redevelopment of the Clacton Library site was granted in August 2025.

Adjacent is the site of the former Carnarvon House building on Carnarvon Road, which Tendring District Council plans to replace with a mixed-use civic and community space, including new creative workspaces for entrepreneurs, as part of the **Clacton Civic Quarter**. The plans, which were approved by the district council in March 2025, include a small number of dwellings and improvements to the existing High Street car park.

The Civic Quarter will also include a new urban realm, which will benefit from a range of hard and soft landscaping features.



Clacton and neighbouring coastal village Jaywick have also been awarded £19.7 million through the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government’s Community Regeneration Partnership.

This includes the following projects:

➤ **£3.75 million redevelopment of Clacton Leisure Centre**, focusing on feasibility work and upgrades to existing facilities. The long-term ambition is to deliver a new **Active Wellbeing Centre**, providing sustainable sports facilities, integrated health and wellbeing services, and an outdoor facility on the site.

➤ **£900,000 cultural or creative hub** – the transformation of three disused, council-owned buildings on Clacton’s seafront.

➤ **£3.5 million to bring Martello Tower E** in Clacton back to community use.

➤ **£3.2 million Open Spaces project in Jaywick** to enhance up to 10 public spaces within the area, with works scheduled for summer 2026. Co-designed with local residents, the improvements could include improved walking routes, new play equipment, and updated car parking.

➤ **£3.8 million Clacton Town Centre Public Realm project** which aims to increase footfall and improve accessibility on the route between the town centre and the seafront and will benefit from a range of hard and soft landscaping features. Construction is due to commence in 2027.

➤ **£3.75 MILLION REDEVELOPMENT OF CLACTON LEISURE CENTRE, WITH LONG-TERM AMBITION FOR A NEW ACTIVE WELLBEING CENTRE**

Images: Computer generated images of the Carnarvon Terrace site



Image: Clacton Leisure Centre © Tendring District Council



Clacton has also secured an additional £20 million through the government’s Pride in Place programme. Over the next four years, this investment will focus on enhancing the town centre, co-funding Community Regeneration Partnership projects in public realm and shop front improvements, as well as supporting a housing uplift programme in the heart of the town. In March 2026, the government approved a 10-year vision and four-year regeneration plan for the future of Clacton, submitted by the Clacton Town Board – made up of local representatives from a number of sectors – which lays out the areas where the £20 million funding will be allocated.

Hartley Gardens is a new development in the north of Clacton, which could see

around 1,700 new homes, up to 17 acres of employment land, and community facilities including a new primary school and nurseries. It is a mixed-use allocation in the Tendring District Local Plan. In Autumn 2025, the council held a six-week public consultation to gain views on a draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), a series of background documents which provide detailed planning guidance, and a masterplan to help shape future planning applications for the site. The SPD was formally adopted by the council in December 2025 and is now a material consideration for any future planning applications for the site.

The first planning application for the site is expected in 2026, with development anticipated to begin in 2029.

Canvey Island

Located on the south coast of Essex, Canvey Island is a town with a unique history. Home to Dutch immigrants in the early 17th century, it features Dutch cottages dating back to 1618 – one of them now a museum.

The town has sandy beaches, arcades, and a 230-acre nature reserve, Canvey Wick,

which is home to rare bees, beetles and birds. A £1.5 million pavilion has also opened on the seafront, providing a café and modern public toilets for residents and visitors.

In March 2026, the government confirmed £20 million of Pride in Place funding to transform Canvey Island over the next 10 years.

Image © Metal



The regeneration plan, shaped by local voices and submitted by the Canvey Island Neighbourhood Board, proposes 10 key project themes, including:

- improved access to and from Canvey
- enhancing opportunities for children and young people
- skills and employment development linked to key local growth sectors
- reducing the cost of living and healthier homes
- youth and community infrastructure



Other regeneration projects in the town centre are already underway, including the £2.1 million refurbishment of the Knightswick Shopping Centre. Bought by Castle Point Borough Council in 2019, the centre was built in the 1970s and has 28 ground-floor shop units. The works will include upgrades to lighting, flooring, ceilings, along with new WiFi, digital screens and CCTV, refreshed branding, and improved accessibility. The modernised centre is due to reopen to the public in summer 2026.



Plans have also been submitted to convert the town’s former Barclays bank into a four-storey block of flats. The building would house 24 one-bedroom units across the first, second and third floors – nine of which will be affordable housing. An office is proposed on the ground floor, along with 17 parking spaces and cycle storage.

Lakeside, Thurrock

Located in West Thurrock near junctions 30 and 31 of the M25, Lakeside offers approximately three million square feet of out-of-town retail space, serving a comparison and convenience goods catchment spend of over £3 billion annually. This includes the flagship Lakeside Shopping Centre, Lakeside Retail Park, and a range of additional retail warehousing and standalone units.

Lakeside Shopping Centre is one of the UK's largest enclosed malls with 20 million visitors a year. Managed by Global Mutual and Savills, it was ranked among the top 20 of the nation's most vibrant retail locations in 2023 by JDM Retail, HSBC UK and Retail Week.

Since opening in 1990, the centre has grown to offer more than 250 retail units, with key tenants including Marks & Spencer, Next, Zara, H&M, Primark and Apple, and The White Company and Bershka being added in 2026. Its retail mix is complemented by a wide range of dining options within the centre and along

The Boardwalk, which overlooks Alexandra Lake, as well as leisure attractions including Hollywood Bowl and Puttshack.

Across Alexandra Lake sits Lakeside Retail Park – a 28.4-acre site spanning a gross internal area (GIA) of 377,000 sq ft. The park features large-format stores from leading food, discount, DIY, electrical, furnishings, and furniture retailers, including Next Home, Dreams and Tapi, arranged around 1,200 parking spaces.

In April 2025, Lakeside Retail Park was sold by Landsec to GTAM Apex Lakeside Bidco for £114 million – one of the largest retail property transactions in recent years.

The Lakeside area is further enhanced by additional retail parks, including Lakeside Extra Shopping Park, owned by British Land, and West Thurrock Retail Park, owned by Strathclyde Pension Fund and managed by DTZ Investors. The retail parks enjoy a 95 per cent occupancy rate, well above the UK average.

Image © Lakeside Shopping Centre



Southend-on-Sea

One of the sunniest places in the country, Southend-on-Sea is known for having the longest pleasure pier in the world – a landmark that has stood for nearly 200 years. In 2022, it gained city status in tribute to the late Sir David Amess MP, who championed to make Southend a city throughout his career.

Located on the Thames Estuary, Southend offers a coastal lifestyle and rich cultural heritage, while benefitting from excellent connectivity with rail stations situated directly in the city centre and at the airport. The fastest rail services reach London Fenchurch Street in just 50 minutes, while London Liverpool Street can be accessed in under an hour. A three-hourly rail service also runs between the city centre and London Southend Airport, with a journey time of just five minutes.

Southend also offers a vibrant mix of high street shopping, two shopping centres, and a broad range of entertainment, dining, and events. Its evening and night time economy has held Purple Flag accreditation since 2012.



SOUTHEND-ON-SEA'S EVENING AND NIGHT TIME ECONOMY HAS HELD PURPLE FLAG ACCREDITATION SINCE 2012

Major regeneration is underway through the £500 million Better Queensway project, which aims to transform the 1960s estate north of the city centre into a safer, greener and more vibrant neighbourhood.

The Better Queensway masterplan sets out a clear plan to upgrade the area and deliver better-quality housing, providing around 1,600 new homes alongside new public spaces and a park.

Following changes in partnership, the scheme is now fully owned by Southend-on-Sea City Council. Infrastructure improvements, delivered by Taylor Woodrow and supported by a £15 million Housing Infrastructure Grant, are already underway. Lambert Smith Hampton has also been brought in to review the plans.

X LAKESIDE SHOPPING CENTRE IS ONE OF THE UK'S LARGEST ENCLOSED MALLS WITH 20 MILLION VISITORS A YEAR



NEWS FEATURE:



Living sector

Greater Essex has seen a flurry of build-to-rent (BTR) investment in recent months, from city centre co-living projects through to single-family rental (SFR) homes in the county's Garden Communities.

Chelmsford

Highgate Capital plans to create the city's first co-living development – **Assembly Place** – at the site of the former Debenhams building in the city centre. The scheme features 181 flats and shared communal spaces, including a lounge, co-working space, event space, gym, cinema, and a podcast studio. If planning permission is granted, the former Debenhams building – which currently houses The Range – would be demolished to make way for the units. The development of up to 10 floors would be operated by Loom CoLiving.

Invesco Real Estate has forward-funded the development of 99 SFR homes at **Beaulieu** from East Anglia housebuilder Hopkins Home, for £40.6 million. The homes are expected to be completed in early 2027.

Images © (left) Kennedy Wilson; (right) Orwell Real Estate



Basildon

Works are progressing on a BTR development in Market Square, Basildon town centre, which has planning permission for 492 dwellings. A three-block, mid-rise property acquired by Toronto-based investor Starlight in 2024 has been demolished in preparation for the construction of the new scheme. Starlight has completed a forward commitment to purchase the project, which has a GDV of circa £113 million. The scheme has commenced and will be delivered by a joint venture between Orwell Real Estate (founded by Neil Strelitz) and Housing Growth Partnership (HGP). It will include around 13,000 sq ft of shared residential amenities, and approximately 17,750 sq ft of commercial space.



Harlow

Long Harbour has forward-funded the delivery of 105 SFR homes in **Newhall**, Harlow, from housebuilder Vistry Group, for an undisclosed price. The homes are part of the wider Newhall Masterplan, a 2,135-home scheme, with the first handover due in April 2026. Long Harbour investment director Will Cazaly said the investment would help to plug the gap between supply and demand of single-family housing.

Great Dunmow

Long Harbour has also forward-funded the delivery of 65 SFR homes in the historic market town Great Dunmow, from the housebuilder Dandara, for an undisclosed price.

In 2024, Kennedy Wilson and the Canada Pension Plan Investment Board (CPPIB) purchased 50 units at Great Dunmow Grange from Barratt Redrow for an undisclosed amount, as part of their SFR housing joint venture.

INVESTOR APPETITE FOR GREATER ESSEX SFR REMAINS STRONG

With its proximity to London and strong transport connectivity, Greater Essex offers a compelling combination of resilient occupational demand and more attractive pricing compared with London and the inner Home Counties.

Alongside sustained demand from families seeking larger, higher quality homes at more affordable rental levels, lower land and construction costs further enhance scheme viability and support stronger long-term income returns for investors. As a result, Greater Essex is widely regarded as a core location for SFR investment.

THE RISE OF CO-LIVING – THE UK'S FASTEST GROWING HOUSING TREND

With growing demand for city living, short commutes and proximity to amenities, co-living investments are on the rise in the UK.

Co-living has emerged as one of the fastest growing sub markets within UK residential investment and development.

Combining private, self-contained living spaces with shared communal facilities, the UK's co-living sector offers a flexible and affordable solution for a wide range of renters – from young professionals to single parents, recent divorcees, and adults living alone.

As well as offering all-inclusive rents and flexible terms for those that prioritise convenience, it can offer residents opportunities for greater social interaction with the option to join events and activities.

Compared with traditional BTR, co-living schemes are often better placed to navigate current viability and affordability pressures across the UK development landscape. This is driven by higher space efficiencies and the incorporation of shared amenity provision, which together support stronger income densities and operational performance. As a result, co-living assets are better able to offset elevated land, construction, and financing costs.





5

DATA CENTRES



This is an artist impression of what a new hospital could look like; not a design of the new hospital. Image © Gilling Dod Architects



With the rapid technological progress in artificial intelligence (AI), the demand to develop data infrastructure to harness this technology has reached an all-time high across the globe. At the heart of this are the data centres that will house the infrastructure that store, process and manage vast amounts of data. These facilities are expected to see unprecedented growth, driven by the demand for larger, more powerful capabilities.

Across the south of England, this growth has accelerated rapidly in recent years.

While London remains the UK’s primary hub for data centres, constraints around land availability, power capacity and development timelines – particularly within the established west London and Docklands clusters – are increasingly pushing operators and investors to consider locations around the wider M25 corridor.

Greater Essex is emerging as a standout beneficiary of this outward expansion. The county combines strategic proximity to London’s core connectivity ecosystem, while offering larger development parcels, established employment land allocations and comparatively deliverable planning pathways. Critically, in a market where grid capacity is often the main enabler of delivery, parts of Essex provide more viable opportunities to secure power at scale than many core London locations.

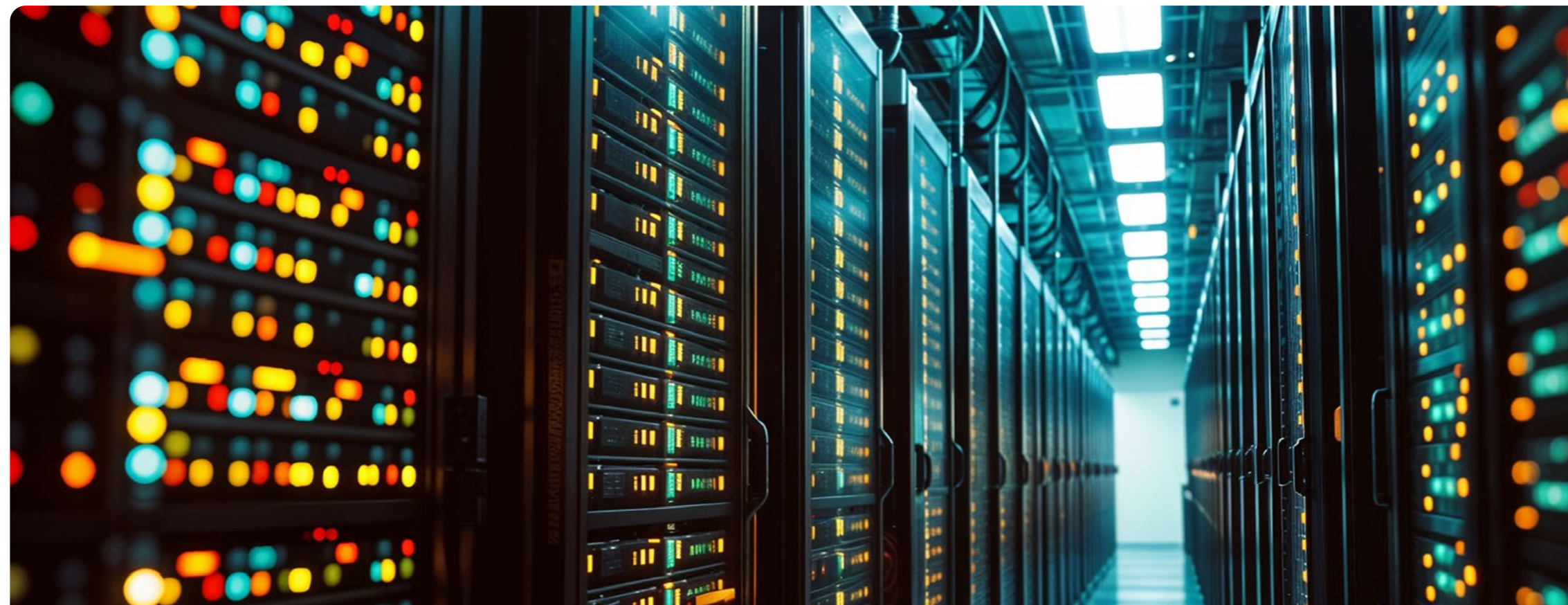
Significant investment is already underway, including a £2 billion project in Loughton set to play a pivotal role in the country’s AI ambitions. The site will also form part of an emerging data centre cluster along the M11 corridor. It is located just 10 miles from Kao Data, which is part of the UK’s largest data centre campus currently under development.

The region also benefits from a cross-sector public-private partnership – the Essex + Hertfordshire Digital Innovation Zone (DIZ) – which brings together local authorities, industry, and the private, health, voluntary and education sectors, to explore digital infrastructure opportunities. Among its members is the Princess Alexandra Hospital in Harlow, which aims to be one of the most digitally advanced hospitals in the UK.

The UK government recognises data centres as key infrastructure needed for

future industries and, in 2024, gave them Critical National Infrastructure designation. Recent changes to the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) mean that local authorities must now facilitate their development by identifying suitable locations for data centres. The government has also confirmed that data centres will be able to opt into the Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs) planning regime. NSIP applications are determined by the Secretary of State, rather than local planning authorities.

As Greater Essex positions itself at the forefront of AI and cloud computing infrastructure, wider opportunities are opening up across other sectors – including advanced manufacturing, technology, and innovation. These developments complement major regional assets and are attracting global players, reinforcing Essex’s position as a hub for innovation and investment.



ESSEX IS HOME TO A **27,000 STRONG AI AND DIGITECH WORKFORCE** THAT CONTRIBUTES **£2.63 BILLION** IN GROSS VALUE ADDED (GVA) TO THE ECONOMY



Kao Data, Harlow

Kao Data's Harlow campus, opened in 2018, forms part of the UK's largest data centre campus currently under development. In 2023, its second data centre, KLON-02 – a 10MW facility – became operational. Its third data centre – a 17.6MW liquid-cooled facility – is due to open in Q2 2027.

Spanning 15 acres, the Kao Data campus is set to comprise four data centres engineered for AI and advanced computing, offering a total capacity of 40MW.

The company has also announced a proposal by Downing Renewable Developments (DRD) to build a Green Data Solar Farm on nearby greenbelt land which, if approved, would supply up

to 40MW of solar-generated electricity directly to Kao Data's Harlow campus via a power purchase agreement. In addition to bypassing the National Grid, the solar farm would support Kao Data's ambition to achieve full net zero by 2030.

The campus also includes Kao Park, a science and technology business park that counts Raytheon UK, the NHS and Arrow Electronics among its occupiers.

Strategically located within the Harlow Enterprise Zone and the UK Innovation Corridor (UKIC), the campus benefits from close proximity to London and Cambridge's AI and tech ecosystems, London Stansted Airport and the M11 motorway. Harlow is also central to the Essex + Hertfordshire DIZ.



- ✘ THE **UK'S LARGEST** AI SUPERCOMPUTER
- ✘ 50MW SITE IN LOUGHTON SET TO BE **OPERATIONAL BY EARLY 2027**
- ✘ **500 JOBS** TO BE CREATED DURING CONSTRUCTION
- ✘ UP TO **250 FULL-TIME ROLES** ONCE OPERATIONAL

Wickford Data Centre, Basildon

Developer Caineal secured planning permission from Basildon Council in September 2025 for its £1.3 billion data centre on green belt land in Wickford.

The development will create a gross internal area (GIA) of up to around 289,500 sq ft, comprising two levels of IT halls and three levels of office space. In addition, the development includes two external plant areas running alongside the building, covering a combined 62,600 sq ft.

With an estimated £1 billion construction cost, the data centre is expected to generate more than 600 jobs during the construction phase, as well as create 120 permanent, high-skilled roles once operational.

In addition to the data centre, the development includes a commitment to biodiversity net gain with the creation of a 34.5-acre local nature reserve to the east of the site, along with financial contributions towards education, employment, skills development, and sustainable transport.

Nscale AI Data Centre, Loughton

Nscale – a London-based AI hyperscaler – has committed to building the country's largest AI supercomputer at a site acquired in Loughton, investing an overall £2 billion in the UK's data centre infrastructure. The plans will support the UK government's AI Opportunities Action Plan and ambition to become a global leader in generative AI.

The 50MW site in Loughton, scalable to 90MW, will initially house 23,040 NVIDIA GB300 graphics processing units (GPUs) in early 2027. This infrastructure will deliver the computing power needed to provide Microsoft's Azure services across the UK.

Outline planning permission was secured in 2024, with a reserved matters application submitted in February 2026.

Construction is expected later this year, creating 500 jobs during the build, and up to 250 full-time roles once operational.



Kao Data's second data centre, KLON-02 © Kao Data

Thurrock Data Centre, Purfleet

Acquired on behalf of Google’s parent company Alphabet from London Strategic Land Partners Limited (LSL) in 2023 for a reported £47 million, Thurrock Data Centre is a proposed data campus at a former chalk quarry at Lakeside Basin.

The 129-acre site is strategically located close to the M25 motorway and A13. It offers rail connectivity to London’s Docklands in 20 minutes.

It currently lies within the London Green Belt but benefits from a draft allocation for Tier 1 employment use in the draft Thurrock Local Plan (2023).

In June 2025, a planning application was submitted to Thurrock Council for the site’s redevelopment. The proposal includes the delivery of a hyperscale data centre campus comprising up to four data centres with a combined gross external area (GEA) of around 1.40 million square feet, an external plant of up to approximately 280,000 sq ft, and a separate 43,000 sq ft office building.

Blackwater Data Centre Campus, Chelmsford

A proposal to deliver an 88MW data centre campus adjacent to the new Beaulieu Park station has been submitted by Tritax Chelmsford Propco Limited.

Forming part of the new Chelmsford Garden Community, the Blackwater data centre campus would comprise two hyperscale data centres, office space and public realm, with the potential to create up to 310 full time equivalent roles.

The development proposes approximately 720,000 sq ft of GEA floorspace across two plots of greenfield land totalling around 21.5 acres.

North Weald Data Centre, Epping Forest

Plans for a data centre campus at North Weald Airfield have been approved.

In December 2025, outline planning application was granted for Global Infrastructure UK Ltd’s proposal, which includes up to two data centre buildings and separate office space, totalling around 830,500 sq ft GEA.

A report prepared by Epping Forest District Council said the development is expected to create up to 200 direct jobs and 780 additional local jobs, as well as generate £79 million annually for the local economy.

In 2024, the council sold 52 acres at the North Weald Airfield site to Alphabet – Google’s parent company – for £88.2 million (£1.7 million per acre).

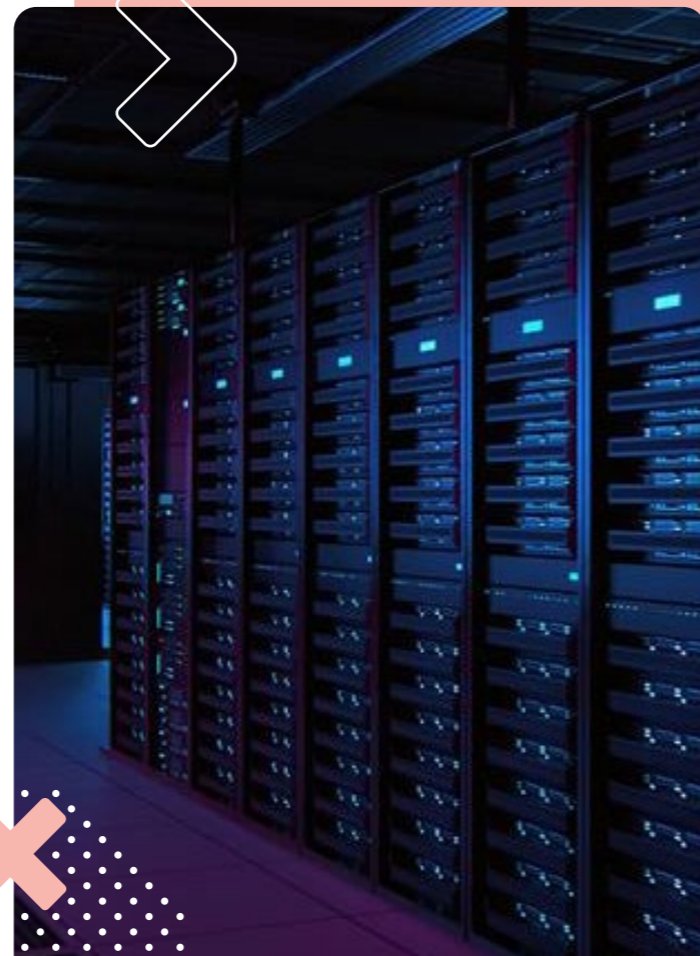


Image: Illustrative masterplan



FUTURE DEVELOPMENT AT NORTH WEALD AIRPORT

The vision for North Weald Airfield encompasses both employment land and a new extension to the existing village.

A landscape-led masterplan will deliver 1,200 new highly sustainable homes, a local centre with community facilities and shops, a new primary school, sporting facilities and extensive green open spaces.

It will be a key employment location, with around 100 acres of land to the east of the airfield designated for employment uses.

The airfield sits within the UKIC linking London to Cambridge, and the Essex + Herts DIZ, a public-private partnership which works to ensure it has the infrastructure to support the digital needs

of businesses and public services. The area benefits from high-speed digital connectivity, following a multimillion-pound investment to upgrade broadband infrastructure.

A masterplan published in March 2023 supported a range of potential uses for future development at the airfield, including data processing. The airfield will continue to function as an operational aerodrome, with the construction of a new control tower to incorporate new facilities for fire and rescue services.

The remaining site, approximately 25 acres, is expected to be developed for light industrial and innovation workspace. Work on the strategy is ongoing.



**ENERGY
GENERATION
AND STORAGE**



Greater Essex’s natural assets make it a powerhouse for the renewable energy sector. With the second-longest coastline in the UK, benefitting from strong North Sea winds, the county sits at the heart of one of the world’s largest markets for offshore wind and continues to attract investment, including more than 5GW of offshore wind farms already in development in the southern North Sea.

The Five Estuaries Offshore Wind Farm – one of the most significant projects on Essex’s energy coast – reached a major milestone at the end of 2025, securing development consent from the Secretary of State for Energy Security and Net Zero. With an anticipated capacity of up to 1,080MW, the project will generate enough clean electricity to power around one million homes and is scheduled to become operational by the end of 2030.

Greater Essex is also at the forefront of significant solar energy development. As one of the sunniest regions in the UK, it already hosts nearly 450MW of ground-mounted solar capacity, with more than 1,000MW currently under construction or approved through planning. This includes Longfield Solar Farm – one of the largest facilities of its kind currently in development in the UK – along with arrays at Crays Hall, Birch, Ockendon, Crouch and Medebidge solar farms. Applications are also being progressed for additional sites, including Hedgehog Grove.

GREATER ESSEX IS AT THE FOREFRONT OF **SIGNIFICANT SOLAR ENERGY DEVELOPMENT**

A POWERHOUSE FOR HYDROGEN, BIOMASS AND BATTERY STORAGE

Investment in onshore renewable energy infrastructure is accelerating in Essex, with Purfleet, Tilbury and Southend all recognised for their potential in hydrogen, biomass and battery storage.

The East London Hydrogen Pipeline (ELHP) is a new, 100 per cent hydrogen pipeline that will stretch approximately 75km along the north bank of the Thames, linking hydrogen producers and major industrial users.

Starting in Stanford-le-Hope, Thurrock, and extending west to Newham, it aims to decarbonise hard-to-abate sectors across London, serving sites including Tate & Lyle, the capital’s largest industrial gas user.

Essex is also set to host **major green hydrogen capacity**, including proposed electrolyzers at the Port of Tilbury – which could potentially reach 100MW – and the Haltermann Carless facility in Harwich.

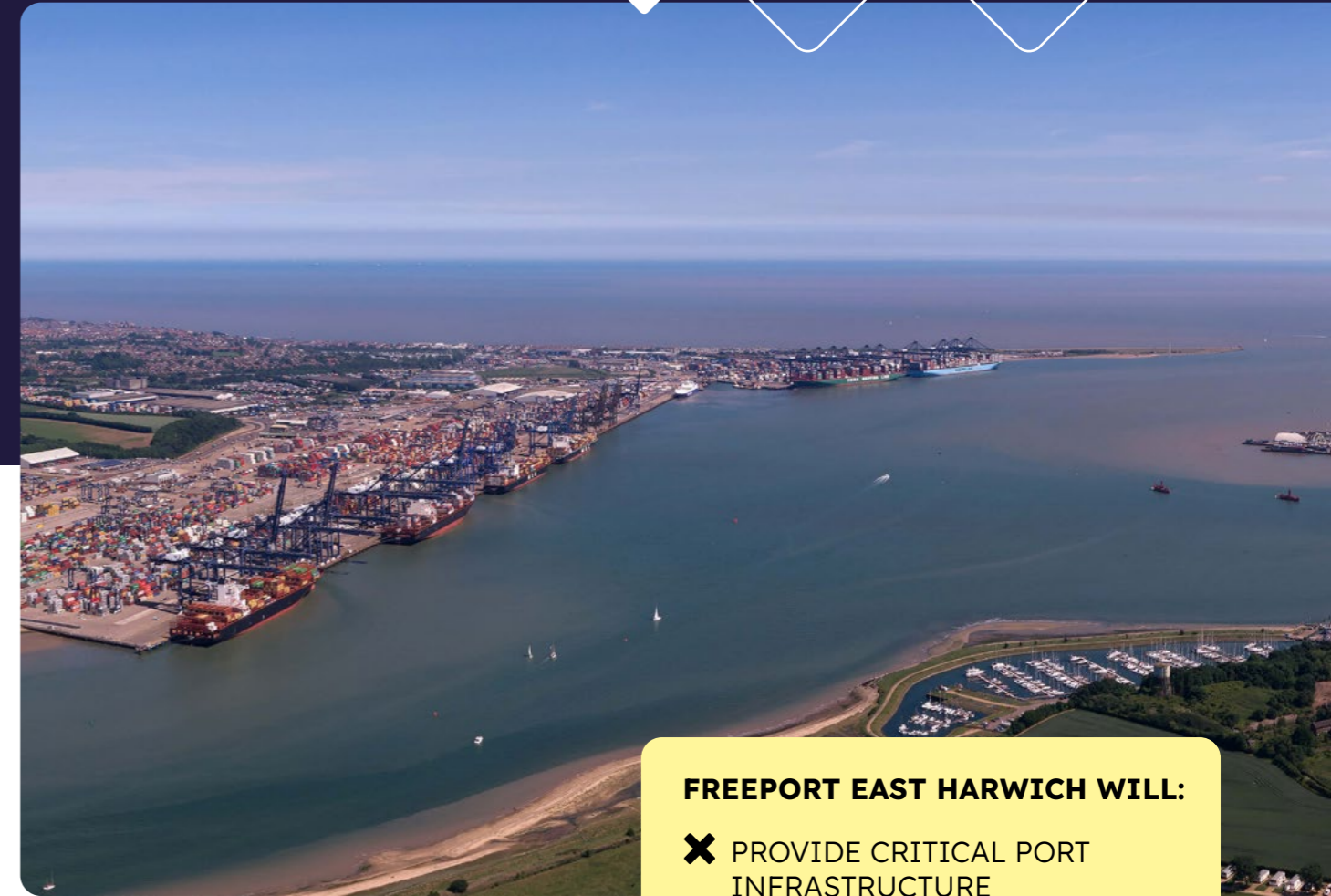


Image © Freeport East

The county is also home to the **UK’s largest battery energy storage system**. In August 2025, National Grid connected Statera Energy’s 300MW Thurrock Storage project to its transmission network at Tilbury substation. It is now delivering clean electricity flexibly to the network across London and the south east.

Freeport East Harwich – one of Greater Essex’s major ports – offers potential for clean energy production with supporting business and infrastructure. With the development of its Green Energy Hub (Bathside Bay), the freeport will provide critical port infrastructure, boost the region’s renewable energy capacity, as well as provide access to markets in the rest of the UK and Europe.

FREEPORT EAST HARWICH WILL:

- ✘ PROVIDE CRITICAL PORT INFRASTRUCTURE
- ✘ BOOST THE REGION’S RENEWABLE ENERGY CAPACITY
- ✘ PROVIDE ACCESS TO MARKETS IN THE REST OF THE UK AND EUROPE

Over the past year, Freeport East has opened a new office at Scandinavia House in Harwich, along with an innovation hub, which offers workspace to support businesses in key growth sectors such as clean energy, artificial intelligence (AI), digital and maritime, in addition to hosting workshops, networking events and mentoring programmes.

Read more about Freeport East Harwich on page 14.

FUTURE-PROOFING GREATER ESSEX

Adding to these developments, Greater Essex is attracting significant investment through several Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects (NSIPs). These projects aim to reinforce the electricity network in the region, boosting energy security and future proofing the transportation of clean energy to support the transition to net zero.

They highlight the critical role of long-term renewable energy infrastructure projects in supporting sustainable housing and economic growth in Greater Essex and beyond.

With the rise of data centres to support advances in AI, there is a greater need for renewable energy to power them. Sustainable housing growth also depends on having the renewable energy infrastructure, including a decarbonised grid, to fully harness the potential of powering homes with clean energy.

Among the NSIPs planned in Greater Essex are the Norwich to Tilbury, Twinstead Tee and Sea Link projects, which will reinforce the electricity network in the East Anglia region. Another project, the Tarchon Energy Interconnector, will create a direct power link between the UK and Germany.

- The **Norwich to Tilbury project** includes a new substation in Tendring district, benefitting nearby onshore and offshore wind projects. The proposed project has been granted early construction funding from Ofgem. National Grid's Development Consent Order (DCO) application for the Norwich to Tilbury was accepted for examination by the Planning Inspectorate in September 2025, and the examination phase began in February 2026. If approved by the government, the project is expected to be operational by 2031.
- **Twinstead Tee** is a proposal to build new overhead and underground network cables and is expected to be completed by 2029.
- The **Sea Link project** will see the construction of new infrastructure needed to connect clean energy, with a development decision to be made in mid-2026.
- The **Tarchon Energy Interconnector** is a significant initiative that will allow 1.4GW of electricity to move in either direction between the UK and Germany. The project benefits from the proximity of Essex's east coast to mainland Europe, increasing the security and reliability of energy demand. Recently, Tarchon has opened a new office at the Freeport East Harwich Innovation Hub. A DCO for the project is expected to be submitted in January 2028.

REACHING CLEAN ENERGY AMBITIONS

With a high number of renewable energy and offshore wind development opportunities, Greater Essex is driving a decarbonised economy and is key to the UK government's ambition for the country to be powered by clean energy by 2030.

TARGETS FOR THE UK INCLUDE GENERATING 45-47GW FROM SOLAR AND CONNECTING 43-50GW OF OFFSHORE WIND BY 2030.

The infrastructure provided by schemes in Greater Essex makes the region fertile ground for investors to contribute to and benefit from the clean energy transition.

GREATER ESSEX EVENT BRINGS TOGETHER GROWING ENERGY SECTOR

The debut Essex Energy Summit, held in January 2026, brought together more than 140 energy developers, supply chain businesses, educators, policymakers, and strategic partners.

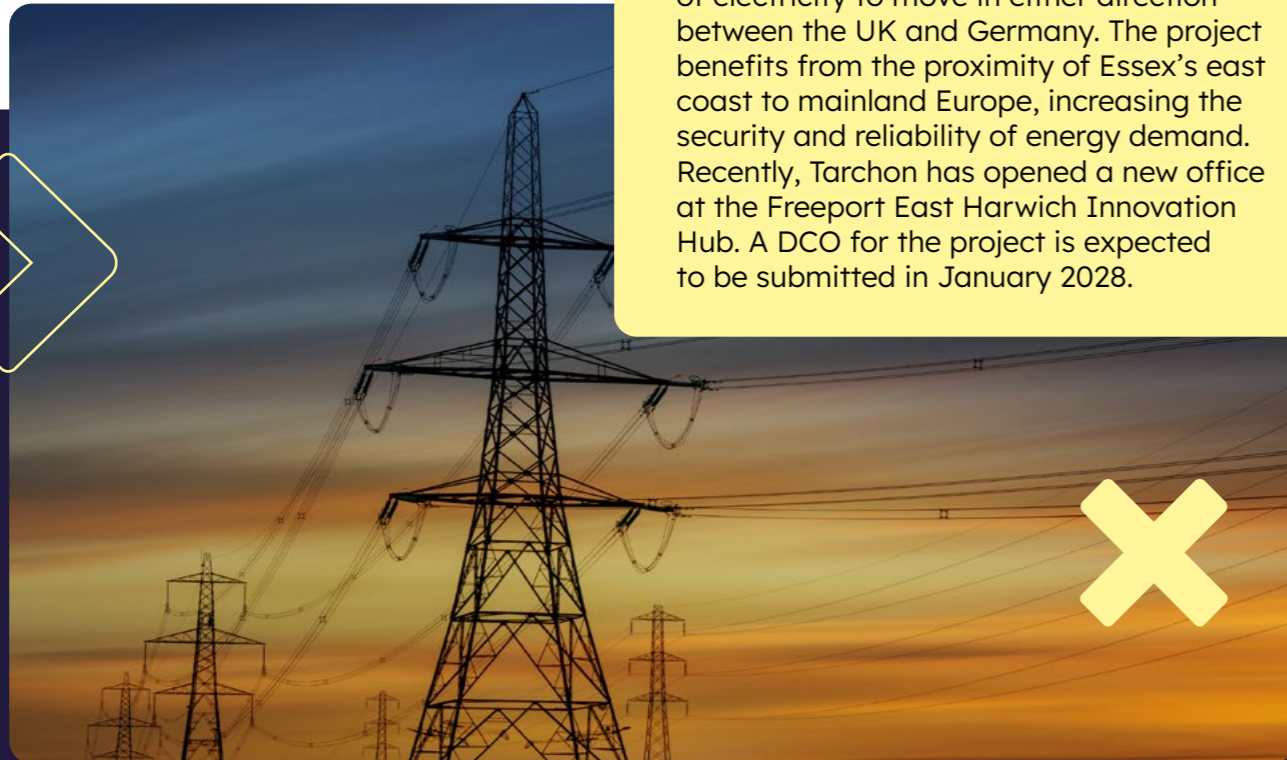
Hosted by Essex County Council, the event focused on the many energy projects planned for the region in the coming years, featuring expert panels on NSIPs and showcasing emerging supply chain opportunities in Essex's growing energy sector.

With the potential for investments in clean energy to bring around 60,000 jobs to the East of England by the end of the decade, the event also explored strategies for building a skilled workforce to power the future of energy.

MANUFACTURING CAPABILITIES FOR NUCLEAR ENERGY PROGRAMMES

With the UK's Small Modular Reactor (SMR) programme accelerating and a multi-decade delivery pipeline ahead, Greater Essex offers a strong manufacturing base for specialised fabrication, modular assembly and advanced component production. Specialist Essex firms provide the precision engineering capability needed for reactor

module manufacturing, while North Essex benefits from its proximity to Bradwell – recognised by the government as a potentially suitable site for nuclear infrastructure at Bradwell-on-Sea. Together, these locations create a compelling platform for potential long-term nuclear supply chain investment and workforce development.




GREATER ESSEX: RENEWABLE ENERGY PROJECTS







1 Longfield

 **500MW** solar farm
 Braintree and Chelmsford
 In development

 Power equivalent to the consumption of **96,000 homes**


5 Hedgehog Grove

 **98MW** solar farm
 Braintree and Uttlesford
 Under application / in planning

 Power equivalent to the consumption of **45,000 homes**


9 Birch

 **40MW** solar farm
 Colchester
 In build



 Power equivalent to the consumption of **12,800 homes**

13 Burnham-on-Crouch

 Up to **25.5MW** solar farm
 Maldon
 Pre-construction

 Power equivalent to the consumption of **6,000 homes**


2 Five Estuaries

 **1,080MW** offshore wind farm
 Post-consent / in development

 Power equivalent to the consumption of up to **one million homes**


6 Ockendon

 **59MW** solar farm
 Thurrock
 Operational since 2023

 Power equivalent to the consumption of **15,000 homes**


10 Crays Hall

 **25.6MW** solar farm
 Basildon
 In build

 Power equivalent to the consumption of **12,500 homes**


14 Medebriidge

 **72.5MW** solar farm
 Thurrock
 Operational since 2025

 Power equivalent to the consumption of **26,000 homes**


3 Gunfleet Sands

 **172MW** offshore wind farm
 Operational since 2010

 Power equivalent to the consumption of **125,000 homes**


7 Grasslands

 **49.9MW** solar farm
 Rochford
 Operational since 2025

 Power equivalent to the consumption of **16,500 homes**

11 Crouch

 **23MW** solar farm
 Basildon and Brentwood
 Operational since 2024

 Power equivalent to the consumption of **8,000 homes**


15 Hanningfield

 **42.4MW** solar farm
 Chelmsford
 In development

 Power equivalent to the consumption of **18,000 to 22,000 homes**


4 North Falls

 **100MW** offshore wind farm
 Under application / in planning

 Power equivalent to the consumption of **400,000 homes**


8 Layer

 **49.9MW** solar farm
 Colchester
 Operational since 2024

 Power equivalent to the consumption of **16,500 homes**

12 Middlewick

 **20.7MW** wind farm
 Maldon
 Operational since 2014

 Power equivalent to the consumption of **9,200 homes**

16 Dengie Marshes

 **108MW** wind farm
 Maldon
 Under application / in planning

 Power equivalent to the consumption of **100,000 homes**

17 Tilbury Green Power

41.6MW waste wood biomass plant
 Thurrock
 Operational since 2019

Power equivalent to the consumption of **97,000 homes**

18 Links

35MW solar farm
 Braintree
 Pre-construction

Power equivalent to the consumption of **11,600 homes**

19 Bramble Hall

30MW solar farm
 Maldon
 Under application / in planning

Power equivalent to the consumption of **13,739 homes**

20 Thurrock Power

450MW gas-fired thermal power plant
 Thurrock
 In construction

Power equivalent to the consumption of **one million homes**

21 Thurrock Storage

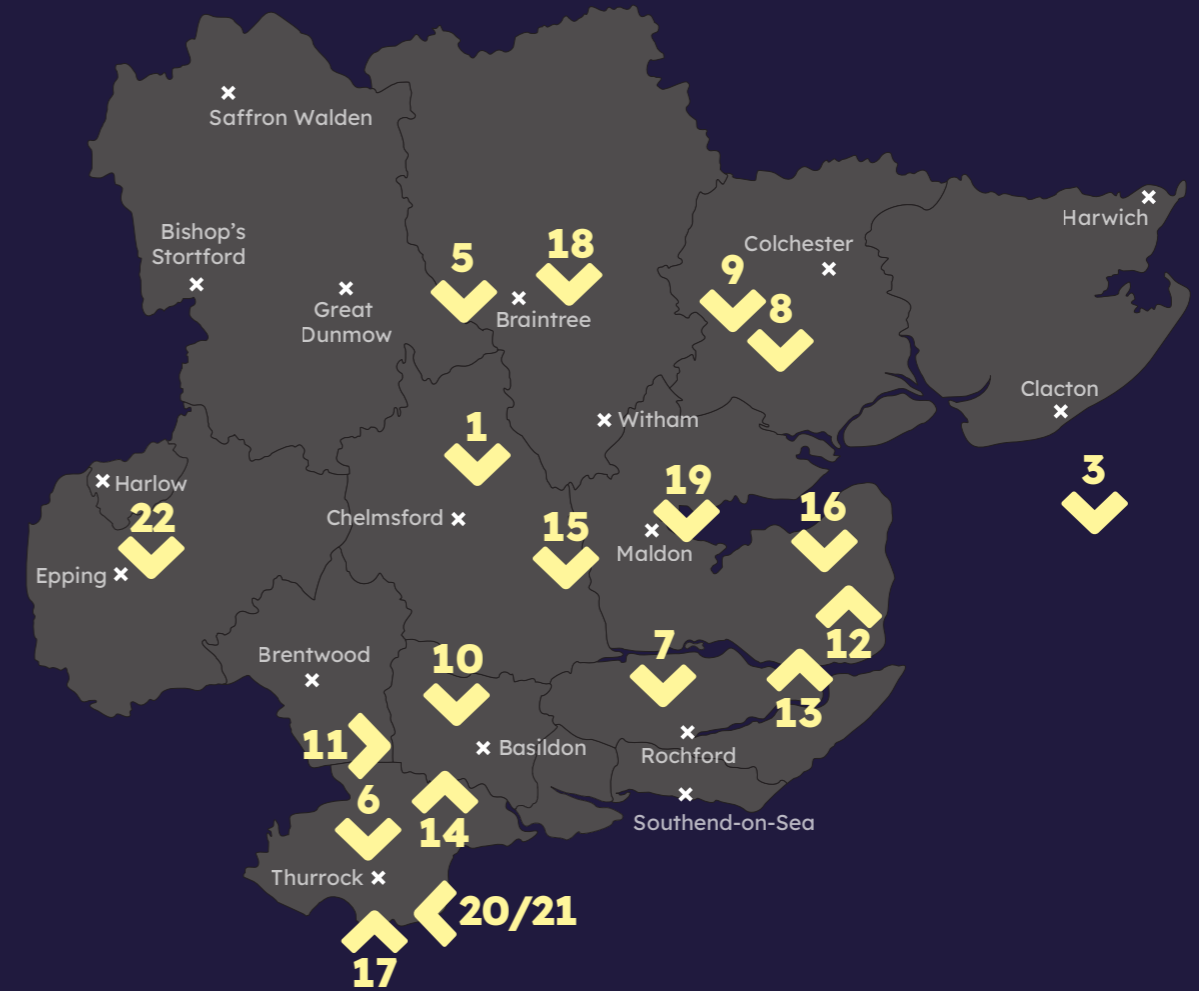
300MW battery energy storage system
 Thurrock
 Operational since 2025

Power equivalent to the consumption of **680,000 homes**

22 Nickerlands

28MW solar farm
 Epping Forest
 Pre-construction

Power equivalent to the consumption of **5,600 homes**



NEWS FEATURE:

Longfield Solar Farm to power Transport for London with clean energy

Solar facility secures 15-year deal to supply green electricity to the Tube.

Longfield Solar Farm, a solar and battery storage facility north-east of Chelmsford, is set to deliver renewable electricity to Transport for London (TfL) under a new 15-year Power Purchase Agreement (PPA).

The agreement, awarded to EDF Renewables through its subsidiary Longfield Solar Energy Farm Limited, will see the solar farm supply around 20 per cent of its output to TfL – enough to power more than 29,000 homes.

Over the life of the contract, TfL expects to cut carbon emissions by more than 28,000 tonnes – the equivalent of 33,300 one-way flights between London and New York City.

In December 2025, energy company METLEN secured the engineering, procurement, and construction contract for Longfield Solar Farm.

Construction is scheduled to begin in early 2027, with completion targeted for 2030.

Medebridge solar farm powers up University of Manchester campus

Up to 65 per cent of the University of Manchester’s electricity demand is now being met by clean, renewable power from the Medebridge solar farm in Ockendon, Greater Essex.

The solar farm generates 72,500 megawatt hours (MWh) of electricity each year – enough to power more than 26,000 homes.

Having gone live in 2025, the university has secured 80 per cent of the site’s output through a long-term purchase agreement spanning the next decade.

The deal marks a significant milestone in the University of Manchester’s sustainability journey, supporting its ambition to become zero carbon by 2038.

The Greater Essex Local Area Energy Plan, produced on behalf of Essex County Council by City Science, presents the evidence base for future energy planning.



INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITY:

Green Energy Hub, Freeport East Harwich

Port infrastructure for green energy projects and supporting uses, on plots from 5 to 79 acres, available from 2027.

Forming part of the Harwich Tax Site at Freeport East, the 301-acre site offers plots of up to 79 acres that are ideal for green energy projects and supporting uses.

With significant scalability for pre-assembly, construction, and O&M activities, the site benefits from existing planning consents and a 1.4km waterfront, including a 450-metre heavy-duty berth.

Image © Freeport East



Opportunity at a glance

Type of opportunity:
Build to suit

Real estate sector:
Renewable energy and storage

Local Planning Authority:
Tendring District Council

Site areas: Plots from 5 to 79 acres

Tenure: Leasehold

Lead promoter: Hutchison Ports UK

For more information:
extraordinaryessex.co.uk/opportunities



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Essex County Council

Contact us:
extraordinaryessex@essex.gov.uk

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