

# catalyst

A LOCAL PARTNERSHIP IMPROVING  
COMMUNITY SERVICES

## YOUNG COLCHESTER: LIFE CHANCES, ASSETS AND ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

The Catalyst Project is led by the University of Essex and received £2.2 million funding from the Higher Education Funding Council for England (HEFCE) and is now monitored by the Office for Students (OfS).

The project uses this funding across the following initiatives:



### **Evaluation**

**Empowering public services to evaluate the impact of their work**



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## Contents

0.0	Executive Summary
1.0	Introduction
2.0	Project scope and methods
3.0	Young people in Colchester
4.0	Youth offending, victimisation and safeguarding in Colchester
5.0	Anti-social behaviour in Colchester
6.0	Interventions
7.0	Young people and community assets in Colchester
8.0	Recommendations
	References
	Appendices

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### Note on maps

The report contains maps created using ArcGIS software. The maps can be accessed in full and explored more in more detail via this link: <http://arcg.is/1LbGbK>





## 0. Executive Summary

- Colchester has a high population of children and young people relative to other Essex towns. The majority are thriving but a significant proportion, especially those from disadvantaged neighbourhoods, face challenges that limit their life chances and their capacity to fully engage with education, community assets and the local skilled labour market.
- Only c80% of primary and secondary children in Colchester are attending a school rated by Ofsted as 'good' or 'outstanding' - the third lowest proportion in Essex; c20% attend schools rated less than 'good' which is likely to impact their longer term academic and employment potential.
- Colchester faces the persistent challenge of meeting the needs of a small proportion of young adults who are 'not in education, employment or training' (NEET).
- Colchester has a wide range of community and commercial assets geared towards young people but much of this provision is directed at younger children or those from middle-income families able to pay entry/joining fees.
- Colchester, like other comparable towns, has certain neighbourhoods and wards that experience higher levels of anti-social behaviour (ASB) and crime than others. The precise locations of these 'hotspots' vary, however, according to the source of reporting data.
- Some local incidents of ASB and crime involve children under the age of 18 as both perpetrators and victims while others similarly involve older young people aged 18-24 years old. At the national level, young victims are less likely to report their experiences than older victims and their views are not typically captured in crime surveys.
- Local strategies to reduce ASB and crime involving children and young people require broader review. Current interventions involve a range of agencies including community police, youth justice, safeguarding, housing associations, schools, colleges, alternative provision centres, youth services and local businesses. These interventions would benefit from a more ambitious strategic vision for 'Young Colchester' designed to enhance the life chances of, and address the challenges presented by, children under the age of 18 and young people aged 18-24.
- Strategies organised around the encouragement of collective efficacy, community asset development and restorative practice should be considered. Similarly, existing strategies encouraging neighbourhood engagement and the cultivation of 'capable guardians' should also be extended.
- There is evidence to suggest that such approaches help to reduce reported ASB and crime, enhance life chances, promote inclusive economic growth and alter perceptions among the wider community of the scale of the 'threat' posed by children and young people.



# 1. Introduction

This project was commissioned by Colchester Borough Council's Safer Colchester Partnership (CBC SCP) and the University of Essex (UoE) Hefce-funded Catalyst initiative to assist in the development of interventions to reduce ASB, improve the life chances of marginal young people, make better use of community assets and promote inclusive economic growth and prosperity. ASB carries a range of implications for perpetrators and victims including the effects of criminal damage, social isolation, fear, deteriorating built environment, potential exclusion from education, training, skills and job opportunities. It may also result in disinvestment.

ASB remains high in certain hotspots in Colchester and tackling this is SCP's Key Priority 3 within its current plan. Two particular hotspot areas were identified in Castle ward and New Town ward based on police statistics on ASB in October 2017 indicating a small but significant escalation. ASB perpetrated by young people was a particular community concern in these areas at the time.

Recent research indicates that those young people who are NEET or otherwise disengaged or marginalised are more likely to engage in ASB and other forms of youth crime (Muncie, 2014; Goldson and Muncie, 2015). It also indicates that desistance from these activities is promoted by (re)accessing education/employment, by (re)building esteem-based relationships and maintaining youth-focused community assets (Laub and Sampson, 2001; Kazemian, 2014). Interventions offering support to vulnerable younger children and their families through family centres, pre-schools, primary schools, secondary schools, safeguarding and youth services are effective in preventing onset into youth ASB (Farrington, 2005; Wincup, 2013; Kazemian, 2014).

Finally, initiatives that encourage the development of 'collective efficacy' – or higher levels of trust between residents and greater willingness among them to act as 'capable guardians' at key times (for example, by maintaining a visible presence in a neighbourhood) – have also been shown to be effective. The term 'capable guardian' is taken from 'routine activity' models within criminology that argue that crime or ASB occurs when three factors come together within a given space at a given time: a likely offender, a suitable target, and the absence of a capable guardian (Cohen and Felson, 1979; Felson, 2002; Wikstrom, 2016). Collective efficacy typically refers to the ability of a community to create and maintain a safe and orderly environment. Studies indicate that where members of a community or neighbourhood have higher levels of trust between themselves, it is more likely that they will be able to create and maintain a safe environment (Sampson, Raudenbush and Earls, 1997; Odgers et al, 2009).

One ground-breaking recent study tracing the early life-courses of 700 young people growing up in Peterborough has led to the refinement of a further approach – 'situational action theory' – that analyses young people's time use, movement patterns and the characteristics of the environments through which they move (Wikstrom et al, 2012).

## 2. Project scope and methods

**2.1.** The project's activities were sub-divided into four processes:

- Scoping: desk research to scope young people's life chances, assets and ASB.
- Interventions: action research to scope some existing interventions to reduce ASB among young people and to suggest how these might be refined. This involved discussion with key agencies including Colchester Borough Council, Essex Youth Services, Community Policing, Youth Offending Team and local 'alternative provision' provider, Nova.
- Evaluation and data analysis: in particular, the evaluation of a detached youth work intervention in the two identified hot spot areas (Castle and New Town wards)
- Engagement: to test our findings amongst a group of stakeholders and share with local media.

**2.2.** The approach undertaken in this project draws on recent academic and practitioner studies of youth offending, youth victimisation, desistance, ASB, NEETS, post-16 education challenges, community assets and life chances. It aims to assist in the further development of a robust local knowledge base around 'what works' to reduce ASB and to enhance young people's life chances. The project focuses on Colchester town centre and its surrounding suburbs.





### 3. Young people in Colchester

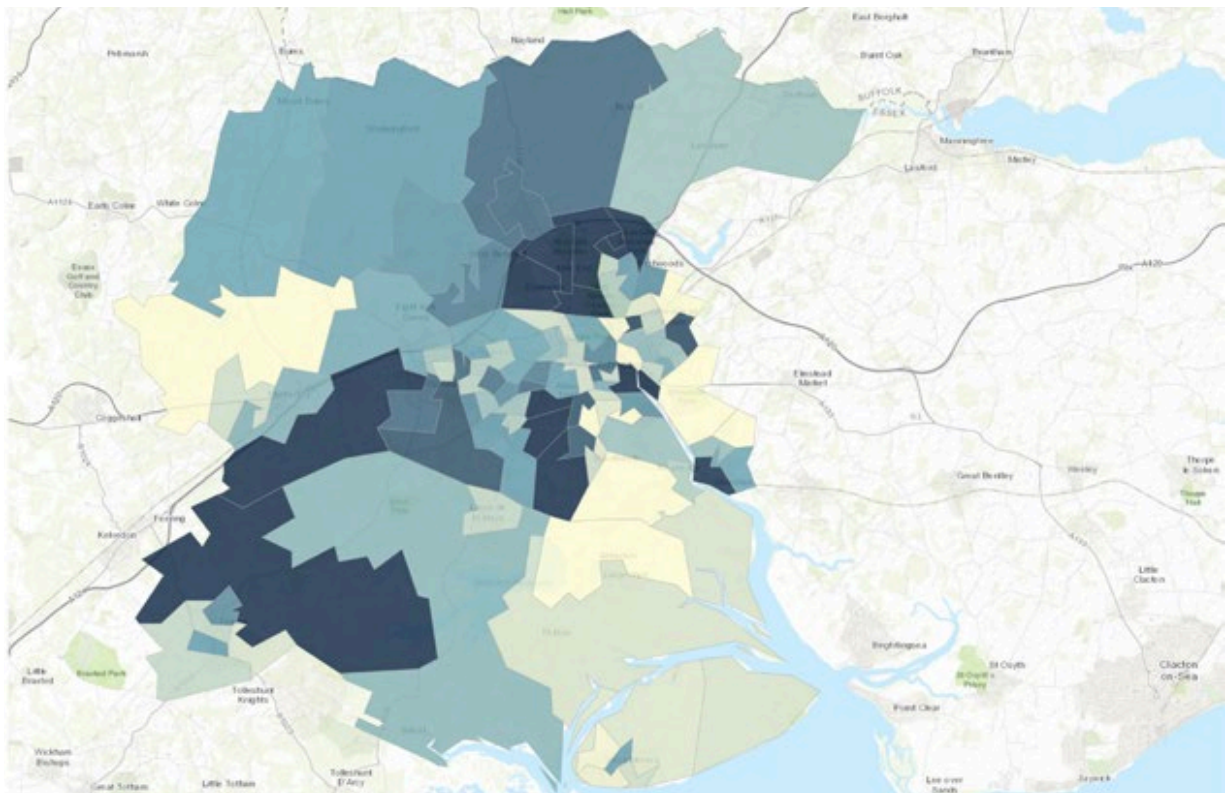
#### 3.1 Demographics

One of Britain's fastest growing towns, Colchester's population was estimated at 186,635 in mid-2016. It has a larger population than Basildon (183,378) and Chelmsford (174,089). Map 1 shows that Colchester has a high proportion of young people and a low proportion of over-65s relative to comparable towns. In mid-2016, the number of young people aged 0-19 years in Colchester was estimated at 44,132, making up 23.6% of the total population. Within this, 51.4% (22,667) were male and 48.6% (21,465) female (Colchester Borough Council, 2018; Office for National Statistics, 2017). The town hosts a military garrison and several thousand sixth form, further and higher education students (JSNA, 2016).

Map 1 indicates the distribution of 'Young Colchester' residents aged 11-19 years. It is a useful starting point for any new strategies aiming to enhance their life chances. It excludes a significant number of secondary and tertiary education students whose family home is outside the Colchester area.

#### 3.2 Profiling promising life chances

- Most children and young people living in Essex are in school (aged 11–16); in sixth form, vocational education or similar (aged 16–18); or in further education, higher education, apprenticeship or employment (aged 18–24).
- The percentage of pupils at Colchester secondary schools who achieved five or more GCSEs at grades A\*–C including English & Maths in 2015 rose to 55.0% which was contrary to the national trend where results have declined. The results are the third highest in the county and are above the Essex average, although they include pupils at the two grammar schools, the catchment areas of which now extend far beyond Colchester.
- 80% of all primary and secondary children attend a school in Colchester rated good or outstanding school. However, this is the third lowest percentage in the county. It is up from 69.9% in 2014 but still lower than the 84.3% across Essex as a whole (JSNA, 2016).
- Essex Youth Offending Service's most recent Essex NEET/ EET data for June 2018 indicate that c90% of young people in Colchester and Tendring are 'In Learning', a proportion in line with the county average. However, Tendring continues to have a higher NEET average, 4.3% compared to the county average of 3.1%.



Map 1: 2016 mid-year estimates (ONS) of the number of people aged 11-19 living in each Lower Super Output Area.

### 3.3 Profiling challenging life chances

- One fifth of Colchester's children and young people are enrolled in schools rated less than good. Low-quality education provision and negative educational experiences are common risk factors contributing to social exclusion, NEET status, ASB, criminal behaviour and other negative lifestyles.
- School exclusion data shared by Essex County Council suggests that both temporary and permanent exclusions are relatively rare but increasing.
- Essex County Council's breakdown of secondary school exclusion data in Colchester indicates an overall increase in fixed exclusions over three recent academic years (see Appendix 1). In particular, there was a clear increase in such exclusions from The Gilbert School, (rising from 25 in 2015/6 to 67 in 2016/7) and from St Helena's (rising from 47 in 2015/6 to 77 in 2016/7). Colchester Academy was the only local school to issue documented permanent exclusions and only issued a small number. However, this rising use of fixed exclusions in Colchester should be a concern for local youth strategic groups and local educational leaders including those heading schools, trusts and academies. There is a need for greater transparency around this issue because of the well-documented connections between exclusion from school, ASB, youth offending and youth victimisation.
- Essex County Council data indicates that 15.0% of all children in Colchester live in low-income families, the fifth highest in Essex but below the national figure of 18.0%. Colchester has nine wards with particularly high percentages of children living such families – St Andrew's (37.2%), New Town (28.8%), Old Heath (27.5%), Berechurch (23.7%), St Anne's (20.5%), Castle (19.9%), Highwoods (15.8%), Shrub End (15.3%) and East Donyland (15.2%). All these wards also show higher than average levels of long-term unemployment.
- Colchester has three foodbanks frequently used by low-income families and individuals; on the Moorside Estate in the Colchester Town Centre area, Brightlingsea and Wivenhoe. During school holidays, Firstsite arts facility operates a 'holiday hunger' scheme for local children.
- 12% of primary and 9% of secondary pupils were eligible for free school meals in 2015 (JSNA, 2016).
- Levels of provision for children and adolescents with emotional and mental health problems is a cause for concern. National benchmarking data indicates that Essex makes less than the English county average health investment in children and adolescent mental health (Essex County Council Commissioning Strategy, 2015).



## 4. Youth offending, victimisation and safeguarding in Colchester

### 4.1 Youth offending

- Youth offending rates in Colchester have declined over the last three years in line with national trends. However, local youth conviction rates have increased over the same period, particularly in the last 12 months (2017-2018).
  - Local youth justice interventions are broadly oriented towards diversion and restorative approaches although custodial disposals are still used.
  - The issue of gangs 'running over county lines', and recruiting children as young as 12 to distribute hard drugs around the town and its surroundings, has, however, become a cause of much recent concern. Essex Police has established Operation Raptor teams in the North, South and West of the county to tackle drug and gang-related crime.
  - The University of Essex Catalyst project has funded recent research on local knife crime. Researchers conducted an analysis of the Risk Assessment scores of 163 individuals receiving either a Referral Order or a Youth Rehabilitation Order between July 2012 and June 2013 and found that the overall reoffending rate for this group was 55.8% (proven offences within 12 months of the start of the order). A substantial proportion of young people therefore re-offended whilst on these community penalties. Further, a significant proportion of these re-offenders had either experienced abuse or witnessed other violence in the family context and were more likely to be aggressive, destructive or have poor control of their temper. Nearly two thirds of the young people (62.3%) who re-offended had had previous contact with, or referral to, mental health services, compared with less than half (44.3%) of those who did not commit further offences (Perperoglou, 2017).
  - The same study indicated that 90% of those who do not re-offend were able to identify incentives to avoid further offending, compared to less than three-quarters (73.8%) of those who did re-offend. This suggests that desistance might be actively encouraged through the creation and extension of constructive opportunities and incentives for young people.
- the school building; 79% reported to a teacher or other member of staff, 57% to a friend; the police knew about the incident in 14% of cases; some form of medical attention was needed in 21% of cases; 28% involved a form of 'weapon', 16% stones and 11% a stabbing implement (CSEW, 2016).
- The CSEW data shows that 54% of violence incidents experienced by young people involved assault with minor injury, and 68% of property crimes experienced by them were personal theft incidents. The survey found that 11.2% of respondents had been victimised once or more, indicating a high re-victimisation rate among this age group (CSEW, 2016). 11.2% of the Essex population aged 10-15 would equate to 13,426 young victims of crime in this age group (Butterworth, 2017).
  - A recent report on the needs of victims in Essex indicates that 8,706 victims of notifiable crime aged 0-17 were recorded by Essex Police during 2016 (Butterworth, 2017). Of those where a date of birth was recorded, 52.6% were male and 47.4% female. Boys were more likely to be victims in the 0-12 age group and girls more likely in the 13-17 age group. Most described themselves as 'White British' (79%). Self-defined ethnicity was not recorded for 10% of victims (Butterworth, 2016: 59). Most young Essex victims lived in Southend (11.8% of all young victims), then Basildon (10.5%), Colchester (10.5%) and Thurrock (9.9%). The report identifies specialist services currently available to support young victims. A future 'Young Colchester' strategy should include a review of these services.
  - Research on youth victimisation indicates that young people are frequent victims of ASB and crime but that they less likely to report this than adults and often less likely to receive adequate support from local agencies. It also indicates that there is likely to be a significant victim/offender overlap.
  - This research suggests that teachers, police, safeguarding, youth services and other local government agencies should work in closer partnership to highlight and combat youth victimisation and to reduce the under-protection of children in this regard.

### 4.2 Youth victimisation

- There is still relatively little known about young people's experiences as victims of crime. However, a recent wave of the Crime Survey for England and Wales (2016) estimated 716,000 incidents of crime experienced nationally by young people aged 10-15 in the year ending December 2016. This is likely to be a significant under-estimate due to under-reporting.
- The CSEW data indicates that 71% of these incidents happened in or around school, including 46% outside



### 4.3 Youth safeguarding

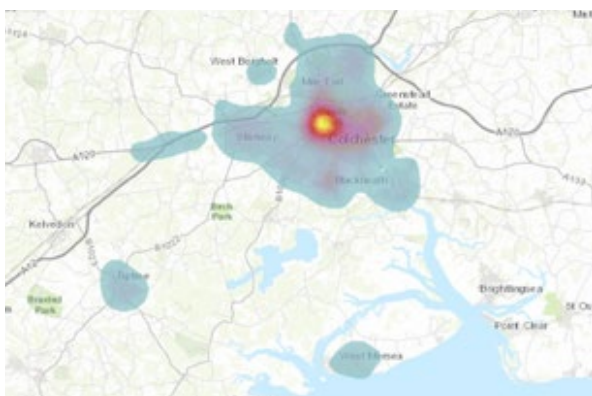
- National statistics for England (DfE, 2017) indicate that number of section 47 enquiries (children considered to be at potential risk of significant harm) has increased, from 172,290 in 2016 to 185,450 in 2017, an increase of 7.6%. Neglect was the most common initial category of abuse for children in need at 48.1%, followed by emotional abuse with 33.8%.
- The Essex Safeguarding Children Board (ESCB) recently reported that violent offences against all under 18 year olds have increased by one third since 2014-15. There has been an increase of 11% in the reporting of sexual offences against children and young people in Essex, which included the reporting of historical sexual abuse and non-contact sexual offences where children are the object of sexual images shared via the internet or mobile phone technology. There were 315 rapes of children or young people under 18 in Essex which were reported to the police in the year, with approximately half of these offences allegedly committed over a year before being reported. Nearly 40% of rapes of children or young people reported between April 2015 – March 2016 had been committed three or more years before the report was made (ESCB, 2016).
- One response to this has been the establishment of Stay Safe Groups (SSG) and Partnership Leads, with representatives of operational and strategic managers from statutory partner agencies mobilised to focuses on local practice and giving the ESCB a stronger locality focus.
- Child sexual exploitation, youth homelessness, and young victims of human trafficking and modern slavery are all growing local concerns in Colchester and the wider county.



## 5. Anti-social Behaviour in Colchester

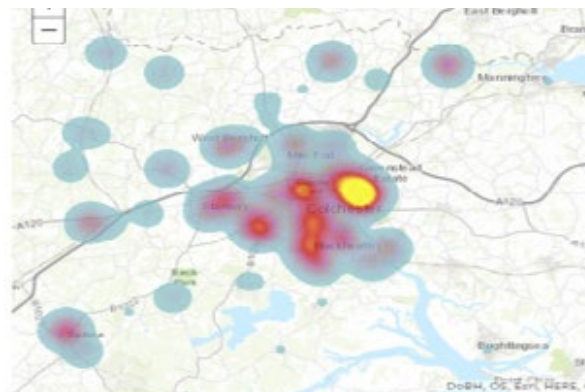
- **5.1** Map 2 (see below) shows ASB hotspots in Colchester based on police data from December 2016-2017. Further police data and local resident surveys carried out in October 2017 indicated a particular increase in ASB in Castle and New Town wards. In response to these concerns, the CBC Safer Colchester Partnership secured funding through the Startwell initiative to support a new 'detached youth work'. The Essex Youth Service Group then commissioned Essex Youth Services to deliver two intervention projects in Castle and New Town wards from February 2018. Several detached youth work sessions were conducted in both areas, often after school hours and occasionally over weekends.

**Map 2: ASB hotspots in Colchester, based on police data, December 2016 - November 2017**



- Subsequent to this, police data indicated a significant reduction in reported ASB activities in both wards: in Castle ward, there was a decline from 44 reported incidents in October 2017 to 14 in March 2018 and no reported incidents in May 2018; in New Town ward, there was a decline from 11 reported incidents in October 2017 to 5 in January 2018, reducing to 1 in May 2018. The possible reasons for this decline are explored further below. The detached youth project workers found very little evidence of ASB activities in the two hotspot areas during their period of engagement.
- The Acting Inspector and officers from the Community Policing team reported that an increase in police visibility and disruption tactics within the town centre area is likely to have given rise to displacement of ASB. New hotspots areas were reportedly emerging in Shrub End, Stanway and the Boada Skatepark, often involving young victims. These areas are patrolled intermittently by officers.

**Map 3: ASB as reported to Colchester Borough Homes, January 2015 – mid-July 2018**



Colchester Borough Homes is a large social housing provider. Their property management and tenant liaison work means that they encounter significant levels of ASB, not all of which is reported to the police. CBH data indicates that 1,095 ASB incidents were recorded between January 2015 and July 2018 (see Map 3 for distribution). It presents a wider range of hotspots than those identified by police data or SCP resident surveys. The data as presented here cannot be easily broken down by type of incident or age of alleged perpetrator.

### 5.2 Who is involved with ASB?

Police data for the Castle ward area for 2017-18 indicate that a substantial proportion of reported ASB and criminal activities were committed by those aged over 18 years old. Table 1 shows that 11-17 year olds were responsible for only a small minority of these. This fact was further corroborated by detached youth workers, who were informed by local businesses that much of ASB affecting them seemed to be committed by 18-24 year olds and adults. No breakdown by age, gender or ethnicity is available.

### 5.3 What types of ASB are involved?

- ASB activities are recorded by the police under three main categories: ASB Environmental (eg, fly-tipping, defacement, dropping litter and dog fouling in parks and playgrounds); ASB Nuisance Youth (eg, rowdy behaviour, street drinking, begging); ASB Personal Nuisance (eg verbally abusive language, harassment or threatening and intimidating behaviour). It was not possible to break down local ASB data from police or CBH sources into these categories due to low numbers in each category. Young people are involved in all three types of ASB, as both perpetrators and victims.

### 5.4 Why are young people involved in ASB?

- Notably, Colchester Borough Council and Essex Youth services indicated that 11-17 year olds were believed, by the community, to be responsible for ASB in both hotspot ward areas, yet our other data sources suggested that ASB incidents were more likely to occur amongst 18-24 year olds and the adult population. Younger teenagers congregating in large groups in the town centre and around Castle Park and Firstsite may be perceived as threatening by the wider public but may not be involved in formal ASB.

Further, young adults (aged 18-24) may be perceived by the wider public to be younger than they are.

- It may be that areas such as Castle and New Town wards have high levels of ASB activity but it should be noted that ASB hotspots 'move' across the town. It may also be that these areas have relatively high levels of collective efficacy. Residents may be more willing than those in other areas to report ASB and to respond to local surveys. As a result, these areas may have episodic and periodic higher levels of reported ASB.
- There does not appear to be a strong correlation between levels of youth deprivation and levels of reported ASB in Castle and New Town wards. For example, these two wards have some of the lowest rates of NEETs in the Colchester area, with St Andrews, Berechurch and Shrub End having the highest (see Appendix 2).
- Young people with prior experiences of victimisation, mental and emotional health issues, looked-after care status and safeguarding concerns are often likely to be at greater risk of becoming involved in ASB as children.

		Month/Year Offence Recorded	Arson and criminal damage	Burglary	Drug offences	Miscellaneous crimes against society	Possession of weapons	Public Order	Robbery	Sexual offences	Theft	Vehicle offences	Violence against the person	Grand Total
CASTLE WARD	2017	July	1		1	1		1	2		5		10	21
		August			1			4		2	5	1	6	19
		September	2		5	1		4	1	1	3		7	24
		October	2		7		1	4		1	4		12	31
		November	4	2	2			4		1	7	1	10	31
		December	1		3		1	1	1		6		4	17
	2018	January	1		3		1	1		2	5		12	25
		February	1					1		2	7		7	18
		March			5		1	3	1	1	8	2	7	28
		April		1	1			3	4	3	8		7	27
		May	4		3			2	1	3	4		14	31
		June	1					4	2	2	5		8	22
		Total Offences Youth(s) investigated	17	3	31	2	4	32	12	18	67	4	104	294
		All Crime Total	387	177	125	43	31	308	51	135	1168	111	1203	3739
		Proportion of All Crime with Youth Suspect(s)	4%	2%	25%	5%	13%	10%	24%	13%	6%	4%	9%	8%

Table 1: Recorded offences by type and totals of youth crime committed in Castle ward, 2017-2018 (source: Colchester Community Police)



## 6. Interventions

### 6.1 Policies and local interventions

There are a range of policies and local interventions addressing particular elements of the needs of 'Young Colchester'. These include:

- 0-11 years: parenting services, pre-schools, primary schools, safeguarding services
- 11-16 years: secondary schools, safeguarding services, Nova (alternative provision provider), FE College, community police, police, YOTs, restorative justice provision.
- 16-24 years: YOTs, National Probation Service, police, Bernard Brett House, YMCA, local social housing providers; sixth form colleges, FE/HE colleges

Their activities are governed, in part, by national policy frameworks. These include the Children Act; Children and Families Act; Working Together to Safeguard Children as well as education legislation. At the local level, partnership working is central to the delivery of these frameworks. The Safer Colchester Partnership plays a key role here and could consider extending its remit to include a more direct focus on enhancing young people's life chances, especially those at risk of victimisation and/or of becoming involved in ASB.

### 6.2 Evaluation case study: Startwell-funded interventions: ASB 'Hotspots' Project in Castle and New Town wards

- CBC commissioned the Essex Youth Service to deliver two intervention projects in locally identified ASB hotspot areas in Colchester, based on evidence provided by police and other partners. The project was delivered from February to July 2018, and two experienced, detached youth workers were deployed to work in the two locations for 3 hours per week over a 22 week period. The overall goal was to engage with young people in these two areas, with the aim of encouraging diversionary activities and reducing or preventing ASB-related activities.
- The two workers' recorded evaluation data indicates that they engaged with 41 individual children and young people, some on more than one occasion, some already known to them through their routine work, who were deemed to present a potential risk of ASB or related activity. Most of their engagement was focused on the Colchester town centre area and on older youths (7 were aged 15-16; 25 were aged 17-19; 4 were aged 20-25). A further 5 children aged 11-12 were engaged in the New Town area.
- The workers found very little evidence of ASB activities in the two designated areas, despite the fact that they varied the times of the intervention, with sessions ranging from post-school hours to evenings and weekends on occasions. They did, however, engage with a number of older youth and young adults (above)

who were street homeless and others whom they suspected of the subtle forms of drug dealing.

- Street-based day-time drug dealing by older youth was observed in the Vineyard car park area and Osborne Street area and reported to the police. It was also suspected by the youth workers to be occurring in certain town centre cafes.
- Low levels of ASB in one of these areas (the High Street area of Castle Ward) is likely to have been partly explained by a particular intervention undertaken during this period by the managers of McDonald's in the High Street: the installation of CCTV (and the occasional playing of classical music) in the restaurant foyer appeared to have had the effect of dispersing the large groups of young people who had previously congregated there.
- Given the low levels of observed and reported ASB in the two designated locations, the detached youth workers extended their geographical area to include the Leisure World skateboard park. Again, they found little evidence of ASB and suggested that (in line with observations made by Colchester community police) that this area is used responsibly by most young people and also benefits from high levels of adult informal supervision and, thereby, exercise of informal 'capable guardianship' given the close proximity of Leisure World and McDonalds on Cowdray Avenue. Notably, this 'guardianship' may be lacking in the relatively isolated and under-supervised location of the Boada skatepark in Shrub End.
- The longer term impact of the detached youth work intervention in these two designated areas over the designated period should be reassessed in the autumn and winter of 2018 through CBC SCP's own analysis of local patterns of ASB reporting and their own engagement with residents in those two areas.
- Our tentative conclusion in this brief evaluation of the Startwell-funded intervention is that 'detached youth work' should play an important part in any future Young Colchester strategy (or similar) but that those undertaking it would benefit from attending training in current tactics and evaluation of detached work, and that they should feel able to move their location more readily and at their own discretion, based on their valuable knowledge of local youth cultures and networks. They should also feel able to make more regular contact with the community policing, YOT teams, local businesses and Castle Park staff, where appropriate and with the relevant ethical clearance, to ensure that key information about key trouble spots is shared more rapidly.
- A further tentative conclusion is that Townhouse is a very valuable asset for Young Colchester that would benefit from greater investment, greater publicity and review/expansion of the current range

of activities offered. The upcoming 50th anniversary of the establishment of the Townhouse offers a very interesting opportunity in this respect.

### **6.3 Local interventions to reduce ASB and youth offending**

There are a number of other local interventions in place with these aims. In order to place the Startwell-funded initiative in context, the following local interventions are also in place:

- Virtual Crew, an SCP-supported project aimed at Year 6 pupils focused ASB, Drugs and Alcohol, Internet Safety/Online Grooming and Fire Safety
- Gangs Awareness for schools, conducted by Gangsline in PRU/alternative education and in the Gilberd and Philip Morant schools. Gangsline is a Police and Crime Commissioner commissioned service to deliver a two year service to six districts across Essex, including Colchester, and working with the 14-24 age group, those at risk of, or affected by, gangs and offering 1-2-1 mentoring.
- Colchester United KICKS programme has been funded by SCP and the Youth Offending Team Framework offers free sports and learning opportunities for those aged 11-18.
- Essex Police Op Gallery is a partnership working with the fire services, immigration service, CBC and HMRC to tackle issues around human trafficking. Recent initiatives have identified 15 victims of human trafficking, including at least one teenage girl.
- Firebreak Project with Essex County Fire and Rescue Services, a diversionary activity aimed to increase self-esteem and confidence whilst at the same time re-engaging young people into education.
- Secondary schools and the trusts that manage many of them are likely to be undertaking many more activities through their PSHE and pastoral programmes. Greater transparency and information sharing between trusts, schools, parents and SCP would be of great benefit to further service development in this field.
- Essex Youth Service offer a range of services in Colchester, including many run from the Townhouse facility in the town centre. ECC youth groups also operate in Stanway Youth Centre and Highwoods Youth Centre

### **6.4 Local interventions to improve marginal young people's life chances**

- Secondary schools and the trusts/academies that manage many of them are key to the improvement of young people's life chances, in particular through securing high GCSE pass rates, maintaining low pupil exclusion rates and offering strong frontline safeguarding.
- Colchester Sixth Form College and other local sixth forms offer mostly A-level post-16 provision to large numbers of students. Entry thresholds mean that many are unable to access this provision.
- Colchester Institute is a large general FE college that offers a 'second-chance opportunity' for many from disadvantaged backgrounds or youth and adults from and with low academic achievements. It provides a wide range of vocational further education and training programmes, as well as vocational higher-education programmes mostly validated by the University of Essex. It offers well-established training and apprenticeship provision, delivered both directly and through a range of subcontractors. Students studying at the Institute have the opportunity to gain vocational qualifications, GCSEs, apprenticeship or university degrees.
- Nova training is an independent training provider for 16-19 year olds offering a range of vocational education and apprenticeship training with the opportunity to gain key employability skills, along with Functional Skills qualifications in Maths and English. It offers formal 'alternative provision' for those excluded from, or preferring to opt out, of mainstream schools, as well as vocational courses to those referred by the NEET intervention team, local schools and others.
- Make Happen, hosted by the University of Essex as part of its obligation to ensure fair access, and aiming to encourage pupils in deprived wards to consider higher education as an option.
- National Citizenship Service – a voluntary personal and social development programme for 15–17 year olds in England and Northern Ireland, funded largely by money from the UK Government, and offered in Colchester in partnership with the Essex Youth Service, the University of Essex and other youth services.
- Local businesses already offer a small but important number of work placements, work experience and apprenticeships. In September 2018, the National Apprenticeship website indicated that there were just 44 individual apprenticeship positions available in Colchester, some of which were degree-level.
- The East of England Co-op retail group operates a proactive policy around antisocial behaviour in and around its stores, including employing specialist anti-social behaviour officers who connect with local youth services. The store on Wherstead Park in Ipswich serves as a practice example that other local businesses may wish to investigate.

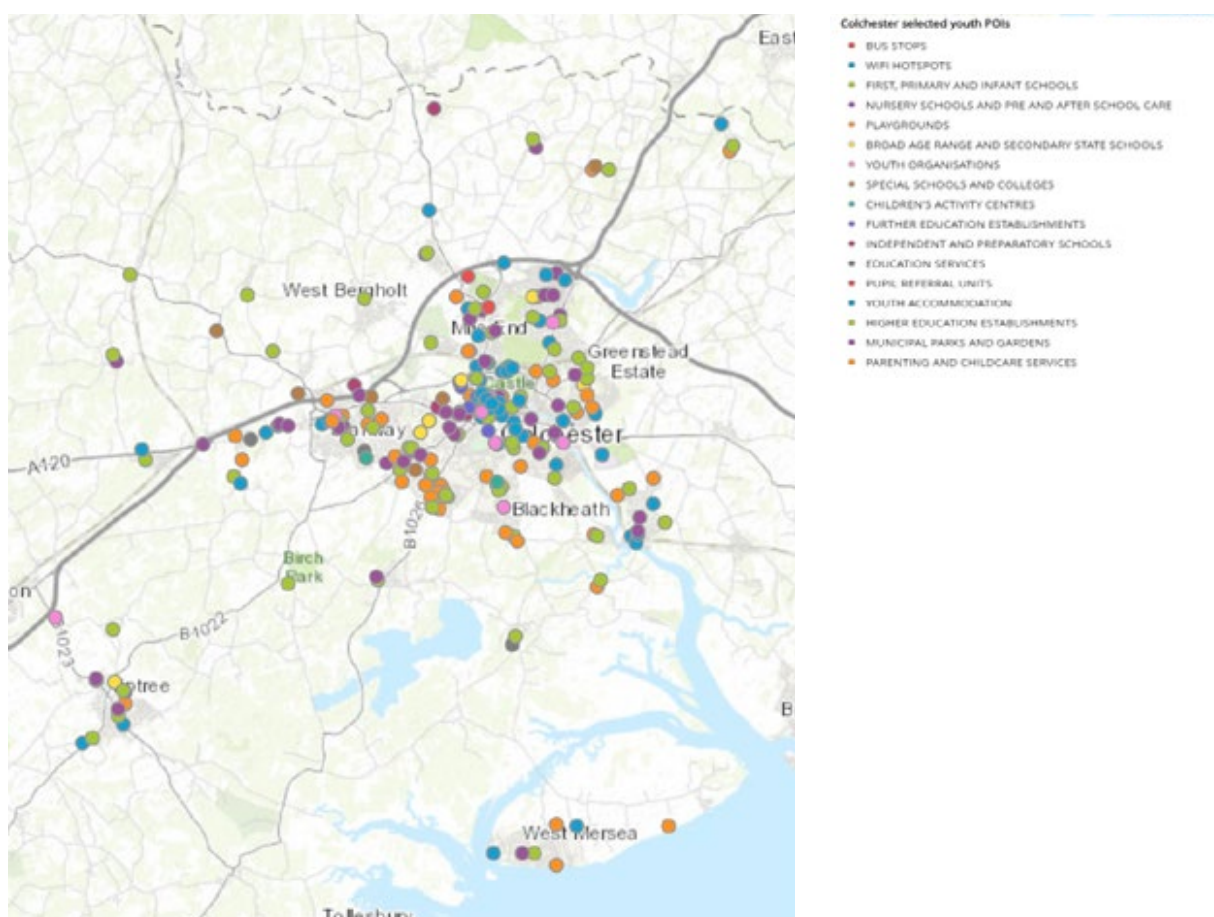
## 7. Young people and community assets in Colchester

### 7.1 Defining community assets

A community asset can be defined as any space, resource, service, network or series of events that enhance a community's cohesion, well-being or prosperity. Recent studies of collective efficacy, community cohesion and local growth have stressed the importance of mapping and maximising community assets (for overview see Green and Haines, 2015). The practice of Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) is now well established. It is grounded in appreciative inquiry, the identification of social capital and the practice of participatory community development (Mathie and Cunningham, 2010).

### 7.2 Children and young people's access to community assets in Colchester

Children and young people have access to a range of community assets in Colchester (see Appendix 3). What follows here is a preliminary discussion of how these might be defined and maximised. Map 4 has been produced by using ArcGIS software to identify particular 'points of interest' (POI) within Ordnance Survey geo-data. It provides a starting point for further work that might be done in this field. Youth community mapping initiatives in Canada and other states have been collected by Ragan (2009).



Map 4: Selected youth assets in Colchester (excluding bus stops), 2017



### 7.3 No go areas?

Young people's access to local assets in Colchester can be very limited. The town has a wide range of community and commercial assets geared towards young people but much of this provision is directed at younger children or those from middle-income families able to pay entry/joining fees.

Further, young people are effectively 'barred' or 'deterred' from congregating in groups in a large number of public spaces in town. Map 5 was produced by young people involved in recent ECC Townhouse and Firstsite youth groups. It is entitled '*Moved On*' and was created by Firstsite YAK (Young Art Kommunity) in collaboration with Ilona Sagar in 2013. The blacked out parts indicate areas they felt unable to access and where they were often 'moved-on' by those in positions of authority, including security staff employed by private owners of many town

centre spaces. These included the areas around the Townhouse itself, entry to and areas within Castle Park, areas around Firstsite, St Botolph's Priory, retail spaces such as Culver Square, Gala Bingo and Lion Walk, and St Mary's car park. Their exclusion from these public spaces is complex but is likely to contribute to their sense of disconnection from their local community and, in some cases, to their subsequent engagement in ASB.



Map 5: No go areas in Colchester for young people?



## 8. Recommendations

- CBC SCP, Essex Youth Service (EYS) and partners to develop a **strategic vision for 'Young Colchester'** to enhance local life chances, reduce local inequalities and encourage inclusive local economic growth. This strategy should develop distinctive actions to meet the specific needs of children, young people and young adults within particular age/ year groups (pre-school, primary school, secondary school, 16-18 year olds, and 19-24 olds).
- CBC SCP, EYS and partners to develop **new public communication strategies to encourage more positive perceptions of children and young people** in Colchester whilst taking proper account of public anxiety around ASB and crime.
- CBC SCP, EYS and partners to **make more effective use of crime and asset mapping** in developing targeted and flexible responses to ASB whilst continuing to be mindful of the displacement effects that certain 'hotspot' interventions can produce.
- Suggested action: review of CBC and ECC-run 'youth assets' (notably sports, leisure and arts facilities) to enhance access, particularly among socially marginal young people
- Suggested action: undertake a Participatory Asset Mapping initiative – a process where younger and older community members collectively create asset maps by identifying and providing information about their own community's assets.
- Suggested action: maximise existing youth community assets that could help to reduce ASB, enhance collective efficacy, encourage (in)formal 'capable guardianship' and contribute to economic growth.
- Suggested action: review interventions and town centre privatisations that can result in the effective 'barring' of many young people from many public spaces.
- Suggested action: review provision and facilities offered by the Townhouse as a valuable asset for Young Colchester that would benefit from greater investment, greater publicity and review/expansion of the current range of activities offered. The upcoming 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of the Townhouse offers a very interesting opportunity in this respect.
- The longer term impact of the EYS **detached youth work intervention** in the two designated Colchester areas over the designated period **should be reassessed** in the autumn/winter of 2018 through CBC SCP's own analysis of local patterns of ASB reporting and their own engagement with residents in those areas.
- Suggested actions: those undertaking detached youth work to: identify and complete training in current tactics and evaluation of detached work; feel able to move their location more readily and at their own discretion, based on their valuable knowledge of local youth cultures and networks; feel able to make more regular contact with the community policing, YOT teams, local businesses and local park/leisure staff, where appropriate and with the relevant ethical clearance, to ensure that key information about key trouble spots is shared more rapidly.
- CBC SCP, EYS and partners to **review their approach to youth victimisation** in all its forms and to consider extending existing restorative practices.
- CBC SCP, EYS and partners to **(re)connect with local secondary schools, academy trusts, colleges and approved provision** – as the spaces where most children and young people spend most of their time. In particular, these education providers should be encouraged to review their respective 'second chance' offers to young people, notably those who achieve, or who are at risk of achieving, low GCSE results, and those who are at risk of temporary or permanent exclusion.
- **Local businesses should be encouraged to play a more proactive role** in offering high-quality work-placements and apprenticeships through their links with existing education providers such as Colchester Institute, Nova and the University of Essex.
- Those developing a Young Colchester strategy should consult the following **good practice models** linked to the fields covered in this report: Restorative Solutions ([restorativesolutions.org.uk](http://restorativesolutions.org.uk)); Peterborough Adolescent Development Study; Youth Friendly Health Services project (see Amsden and VanWynsberghe, 2005); initiatives evaluated by the Centre of Excellence in Youth Engagement, Canada; Vancouver's Youth Community Mapping Toolkit; initiatives detailed in Ragan (2009) Community Youth Mapping Annotated Bibliography.





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# Appendices

## Appendix 1. School exclusion data for Colchester schools, 2013/2014 to 2016/2017

		2013/4		2014/5		2015/6		2016/7	
SCHOOL	SORT	FIXD	PERM	FIXD	PERM	FIXD	PERM	FIXD	PERM
NorthEast Essex Additional Provision School	PU	97		114		117		86	
Thomas Lord Audley	SE	45		48		21		69	
Phillip Morant School and College	SE	73		68		120		78	
Thurstable School Sports College and Sixth Form	SE	36		31		71	2	58	
The Gilberd School	SE	47		13		25		67	
Colchester Royal Grammar	SE	1		12		7		12	
St Helena's School	SE	56		24		47		77	
Colchester County High for Girls						1		7	
The Stanway School	SE	16		15		25		37	
Alderman Blaxill School (closed 2014)	SE	13							
St Benedict's Catholic College	SE	37		9		26		38	
Colchester Academy	SE	87	2	83	3	70	2	76	3
Langham Oaks	SP					2		6	
Kingswode Hoe	SP	21		29		24		23	
Lexden Springs	SP				1				
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>529</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>446</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>556</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>634</b>	<b>3</b>

Source: School census. Exclusions are collected 2 terms in arrears and in some cases are not recorded at all if the school changed its DFE number (perhaps due to Academy conversion or change of academy sponsor) between the date of exclusion and the date of the census return.

## Appendix 2. Distribution of NEET young people

NEETS by Colchester ward (Nov 2014)	
Ward	NEET Total
St Andrew's	31
Berechurch	29
Shrub End	28
St Anne's	19
Tiptree	17
Highwoods	15
Harbour	15
Castle	14
New Town	13
Mile End	13

Source: Colchester Quarterly Economic Report January 2015

NOTE: Data for Colchester wards with lower numbers of NEETS was not available at the time.



### Appendix 3: Colchester's youth community assets: a preliminary list

Primary schools (n=61)			
All Saints Fordham	Baynards Tiptree	Birch Colchester	Bishop William Ward Colchester
Boxted Colchester	Chappel Colchester	Cherrytree Colchester	Copford Colchester
Dedham Colchester	Holy Trinity Eight Ash Green	Fingeringhoe	Friars Grove
Great Tey	Heathlands	Highwoods	Home Farm Colchester
Kendall Colchester	Langenhoe Colchester	Langham Colchester	Layer De La Haye Colchester
Lexden Colchester	Messing Tiptree	Mildene Tiptree	Millfields Wivenhoe
Monkwick Junior Colchester	Montgomery Junior Colchester	Myland Colchester	North School Colchester
Old Heath Colchester	Parsons Heath Colchester	St Andrews COFE Marks Tey	Stanway Colchester
St James Colchester	St Johns Colchester	St Johns Green Colchester	St Tereseas Colchester
Tiptree Heath	Willow Brook Colchester	Little Garth Colchester	Oxford House School Colchester
Stanway Fiveways	St Mary's Colchester	Kings Wode Hoe Colchester	Unity Primary Academy Colchester
Iceni Academy Colchester	Roach Vale Colchester	Gosbecks Colchester	Holmwood House Colchester
Brinkley Grove Colchester	Hazelmere Junior Colchester	Hamilton Colchester	Prettygate Colchester
Queen Boudica Colchester	St Laurence Rowhedge	St Michaels Colchester	St Thomas More Colchester
Broomgrove Junior Wivenhoe	St Georges New Town Colchester	Colchester High School	St Lukes Church Colchester
Mersea School Colchester			
Secondary schools (n=13)			
Colchester County High School for Girls	The Stanway School	The Gilbert School	Colchester Academy
St Benedict's Catholic College	St Helena School	Thurstable School	Thomas Lord Audley School
Colchester Royal Grammar School for Boys	Philip Morant School and College	St Mary's School (Indep School)	Colchester High School (Indep School).
Colne Community School			

Youth community and leisure facilities include			
Leisure World Cowdray	Town House Youth Centre	Colchester & EE Cricket Club	Colchester Arts Centre
Mercury Theatre	Firstsite (including YAK peer led youth group)	Colchester Rugby Club	Weston Homes Community Stadium
Leisure World Highwoods	Shrub End Sports and Community Centre	Performing Arts groups	Colchester YMCA
Scouts and Guide groups	Commercial gyms	Colchester Garrison sports	Youth clubs
Wifi hotspots	Bus routes		
Community centres include			
East and West Mersea	Tiptree	Marks Tey	Abberton and Langenhoe
Fingringhoe	Layer Queen Elizabeth Hall	Peldon,	Salcott cum Virley Village Hall
West Mersea Royal British Legion	Copford	St John's and Highwoods Community Centre	Oaktree Centre run by the St Anne's Community Hall Association
St. John's Church Hall and Community Centre	Aldham Village Hall	Boxted Village Hall	Chappel and Wakes Colne Village Hall
Duchy Barn Community Centre	Eight Ash Green Village Hall	Fordham Village Hall	Great Horkesley New Village Hall
Great Horkesley Old Village Hall	Great Tey Village Hall	Langham Community Centre	Mount Bures Village Hall
Wormingford Village Hall	Hythe Community Centre	Straight Road Community Centre	Greenstead Community Centre
Hythe Community Centre	Old Heath Community Centre	Rowhedge Village Hall	







Led by the University of Essex, the Catalyst Project received £2.2 million funding from HEFCE (Higher Education Funding Council for England) and is now monitored by the Office for Students (OfS).

We are using this funding to work with local public services to:

- Evaluation** Empowering public services to evaluate the impact of their work
- Risk Stratification** Using predictive analytics to anticipate those at risk and to better target resources
- Volunteer Connector Hub** Providing local volunteering opportunities for students

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