

ESTATES STRATEGY 2023-2028



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Foreword

The Essex Police Estates Strategy 2023-2028 sets out our shared ambition for the police estate over the next five years. It describes our ongoing commitment to provide a modern, flexible, energy efficient estate which enables officers, staff and volunteers to deliver an effective service and keep our communities safe.

Much has changed since our first Estates Strategy was published in 2018. The COVID-19 pandemic, the continued development of new technologies and social media as well as ever changing community demographics mean the way many crimes are committed, the tactics employed by criminals, the best response to combat those crimes and the way we all live and work continues to evolve.

Pleasingly, over the same period Essex Police continues to grow with police officer numbers now at their highest ever level. This means there are more officers to serve the people of Essex, to protect the vulnerable and to catch criminals, but they all need access to buildings and facilities which enable them to do their work to best effect.

As Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable we are committed to the continued development of police estate to deliver the most efficient and effective policing possible. Some of the changes we need to make may not be popular with everyone, such as the sale of some buildings with historical ties to the community. However, we must recognise as important as police stations are, it is

officers, staff and volunteers who keep our communities safe and we have a duty to ensure we get this balance right, developing a modern, flexible, environmentally conscious and affordable policing estate.

Visibility remains a key priority for Essex Police. We have invested in technology such as laptops, smaller hand-held computers and body worn video devices to help our officers and staff maximise the time they are able to spend on patrol, supporting victims and targeting criminals as opposed to being reliant on returning to a building. We have invested in our digital services for the public with live chat and on-line crime and incident reporting providing communities across Essex more and more choice about how to interact with the force.

We are thinking carefully about how space can be shared between agencies. For example, ten fire stations are regularly utilised as drop in facilities for operational police officers whilst on their patrols. A new police station will be built at Dovercourt, near Harwich, with construction due to start in 2024. Plans are also being finalised for a shared police and fire fleet workshop.

Our role – as Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner and Chief Constable – is to provide a police estate that enables officers, staff and volunteers to meet the needs of the people of Essex now and in the future. It is to ensure that we are visible, equipped and enabled to keep the county safe. This strategy is intended to do just that.

Strategic Context

The Estates Strategy is a key enabler in delivering on the Police and Crime Plan. Similarly, the Force Plan, the Chief Constable's plan to deliver operational policing in the county is dependent upon the estates from which the workforce operates.

Further investment in crime prevention

Preventing dog theft

Reducing drug driven violence

Preventing business crime, fraud and cyber crime

Protecting vulnerable people and breaking the cycle of domestic abuse

Improving safety on our roads

Reducing violence against women and girls

Encouraging volunteers and community support

Improving support for victims of crime

Supporting our officers and staff

Protecting rural and isolated areas

Increasing collaboration

STRATEGIC CONTEXT



Force Plan



Force Plan 2022/2025



How we work

- WE ARE PROFESSIONAL**
 - How we behave
 - How we learn
 - How we lead
 - How we work
 - How we look
- WE LEARN AND DEVELOP**
 - We innovate
 - We attract
 - We develop
 - We support
- WE ARE SKILLED, EQUIPPED & ENABLED**
 - We are data driven
 - We use technology
 - We are agile
 - We are efficient and effective, and we protect our environment
- WE VALUE DIFFERENCE**
 - We are inclusive
 - We respect people
 - We build community trust & confidence
 - We are anti-discrimination
- WE ARE COLLABORATIVE**
 - With other forces
 - With our partners
 - With communities
 - With each other







Main effort

- Victims**
- Violence**
- Vulnerability**
- Visibility**



OUR ESTATE VISION

To develop the Essex Police estate to ensure our officers, staff and volunteers are: visible, equipped and enabled in their mission to prevent and detect crime, keeping the people of Essex safe, now and in the future.

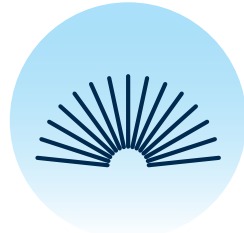


Core Principles

In delivering the Estate Strategy we will be guided by the following core principles:



Respond to the demands of policing in the 21st century



Make greater use of open plan, flexible and multi-purpose working spaces



Improve space utilisation thereby enabling a reduction in the overall estate footprint



Fully consider use of other public sector estate across Essex



Deliver energy efficient design solutions in line with our Carbon Management Plan



Be financially affordable, representing long-term value for the Essex taxpayers



Have buildings and spaces our officers, staff, volunteers as well as local communities can be proud of

How will we deliver?

We will drive the changes we need to see in our estate by:

- ✓ Utilising specialist external support and increasing the size of the internal estate team to ensure a complex, interdependent programme of work are managed effectively, the pace of delivery is maintained and the impact on operational delivery is minimised.
- ✓ Drive efficient, productive and agile working practices, improving space utilisation and reducing operating costs
- ✓ Explore opportunities to share with partners and other 'invest to save' options
- ✓ Take a flexible approach, tailoring the estate according to location and use
- ✓ Use the proceeds of the disposal programme to reinvest in the residual estate

The energy efficiency challenge

The 2018-2023 Estates Strategy recognised that the police estate was, in general, old, of poor quality by modern accommodation standards and inflexible due to the outdated design and building layout. It also highlighted the poor energy efficiency of much of the estate resulting in a high carbon footprint and inflated running costs.

What have we done?

The force has reduced the size of the overall estate. This has improved space utilisation and reduced both operating and reactive maintenance costs.

In total since 2016/17 capital receipts have been achieved totalling £35.167m, cost avoidance of £7.75m and revenue savings of £1.209m recurring (Capital Receipts and Revenue saving figures at 31st March 2022)

As a result, the force has been able to reinvest in the remaining estate including much needed refurbishment of the police stations in Southend and Chelmsford.

Where are we now?

As of the end of March 2022 the Essex Police estates consists of 52 sites with a further 17 leased properties.

With the notable exceptions of Southend and Chelmsford police stations, which have undergone extensive refurbishments, much of the estate presents challenges for modern policing. The number of buildings still exceeds our operational requirements and utilisation levels remain low as a result of improved technology and changing working practices.

The police headquarters in Chelmsford, is an amalgamation of many different styles and types of construction. Some parts of the site are in poor condition, have very poor rates of utilisation and are ultimately barely fit for purpose. The site costs approximately £1.8m per annum to operate. Following extensive consideration of the options, a modernised headquarters site within a reduce footprint has been agreed in principle.

All future development of our general office accommodation will be of flexible spaces to accommodate the changing needs of policing. Our specialist accommodation connected with areas like custody, forensics, technical investigation and specialist operations will continue to have an element of bespoke design.



ENERGY CHALLENGE

Which buildings could be disposed of in the future?

Currently there are eleven sites identified for possible future disposal over the next five years. Before any sale there will be careful consideration of the both the operational and community impact including seeking the views of local stakeholders.

The sites are:

- ▶ South Woodham Ferrers
- ▶ Billericay
- ▶ Sandon
- ▶ Feering
- ▶ Stanway
- ▶ Old Harlow
- ▶ Walton
- ▶ Ongar
- ▶ Tilbury
- ▶ South Ockendon
- ▶ Tolleshunt D'arcy



What will we do next?

The Estate Strategy has identified the following strategic projects as the priority for the next five years:



A new police station at Dovercourt on land adjacent to the existing fire station.



Consolidation of specialist operational capabilities at Boreham on land recently purchased by the force



A shared police and fire fleet workshop at Boreham.



A reduced but extensively modernised Essex Police Headquarters site in Chelmsford which will include control room and training functions.



A new, 21st century forensic testing facility to supporting crime investigation



The disposal of less efficient or underutilised sites.



Reinvest in and modernise our remaining estate – agile, greener and affordable.



Dovercourt Police Station

This will provide a new modern policing base in Harwich on the same site as Dovercourt Fire Station. An existing residential structure at the entrance to the site will be demolished and a new fit for purpose police station will be built on a collaborative site, enabling both ECFRS and Essex Police to effectively share space at Dovercourt Fire Station. This enables the disposal of Harwich Police Station which dates back to 1914. This will realise both capital funds for reinvestment and will remove the revenue running and repair costs of the building.



Boreham Purchase and utilisation

The Boreham site freehold was purchased in August 2021. With ownership, further investment plans are required for a more intensified use of the site. The investment will enable the release of other sites such as Sandon Dog Section. The future strategic plan of the Boreham site has several interdependencies; the planning process related to the disposal of the east side of Essex Police Headquarters for redevelopment and the collaborative ECFRS fleet workshop project.



Joint Fleet Workshop

This project is to develop a fully collaborative Police and Fire Fleet workshop on the Essex Police Boreham site. This forms part of a wider programme to design and develop collaborative and shared services in line with the statutory duty of emergency services to collaborate and provide efficiencies. Subject to a full business case and that this project progresses as planned, it is anticipated the new build will be completed in 2026.



Essex Police Headquarters

The HQ Site Development Project seeks to design the future Essex Police Headquarters remaining in the city of Chelmsford. This will be an enabler to the overall delivery of the estate transformation programme that is currently ongoing, with interdependencies to the other estate workstreams.



Durham House (Phase 2)

This project relates to works to Durham House and the relocation of specialist forensics teams and equipment from the headquarters site. These are enabling projects related to the headquarters development and are among several teams/premises which will require re-provision to facilitate the anticipated net receipt and the next significant step on the journey to releasing space at HQ.



