



Essex GI Standards Framework and Guidance Consultation Report (2021)

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1. Introduction

Essex County Council, the University of East Anglian, Northumbria University and Environment Agency trialled Natural England's National Green Infrastructure Standards Framework (NGISF) from September 2020 to February 2021. Central Government's 25-year Environment Plan (2018) is the basis for Natural England's NGISF, that set out ten guiding principles for good GI.

As a result of Essex taking part in the trials, a draft Essex Green Infrastructure (GI) Standards was produced alongside supporting guidance. The Essex GI Standards have been developed by planners, policy and decision makers, other practitioners (from both public and third sectors) across Essex and academic experts from University of Northumbria and University of East Anglia. Over 30 of these professional practitioners attended three engagement workshops held between September and November 2020 called 'Making Better Planning for Better Placemaking and Place-Keeping'.

The Essex standards - similar to the National Framework of GI Standards - have nine Principles of Good GI, as well as identifying target measures and indicators to achieve quality and consistency in the provision, management, and stewardship of GI as an essential part of place-making and place-keeping for the benefit of people and wildlife. This includes supporting existing standards, such as Building with Nature, Livewell Development Accreditation, Accessible Natural Greenspace Standard.

These standards will have supporting tools, such as the Green Essex GIS StoryMap (to be made available later in the year) and the [NERC GI Planning Policy Assessment tool](#). They will help to strengthen GI policies, Local Plans and other strategic documents and embed GI into the Essex planning system and decision-making.

The aim is:

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

To help meet the following requirements key political hooks and drivers include:

- *Climate Emergency declarations* – numerous local authorities have declared.
- *NPPF, 2020 update* (paragraph 20d, 34, 98, 131, 154a, 174-5, 186), biodiversity net gain and duty to corporate.
- Shortcomings in GI policies / implementation (findings from national research).
- *Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy (2020)* produced in partnership with Essex LPAs and other stakeholders and some LPAs have developed district-wide GI strategies.

- Public health / active lives agendas; health & wellbeing strategies; Covid19 response etc highlights the importance for GI.

It outlines an approach that requires a change to the way we think about and value our green infrastructure and green spaces. With the aim to deliver key outputs / outcomes:

- Local Plans, Neighbourhood Plans, local GI Strategies, and other industry/local guidance, such as arboriculture (trees) that does not have statutory requirements, projects, and programmes to have stronger coverage, wording and GI policies.
- GI planning conditions will be identified and set for planning applications to adhere to and laid out in the Essex Design Guide.
- Better planning proposals, development, and project outcomes - with integrated GI and planned maintenance from the beginning and master planning.
- Overall – locally oriented, integrated, balanced response to points for the political hooks and drivers above.

The first stage of consultation run for a 9-week period between mid-May and 8th July 2021. This consultation enabled stakeholders to provide feedback on the draft Essex Green Infrastructure Standards and Guidance documents, to get an understanding of how these standards could support and be implemented and, whether these should become full standards (i.e., assessed and monitored) or just supporting guidance. The comments provided have been used to help to finalise the Essex Green Infrastructure Standards and Guidance and identify the next steps on how this will be implemented. A second round of consultation is anticipated to take place at the end of the year and will be presented to partners and Essex Planning Officer Association for sign off.

2. Part 1 – Consultation Responses

2.1. Do you support the nine principles and standards of the Essex Green Infrastructure Standards Framework and Guidance?

MAINSTREAMING AND INTEGRATION

Placemaking and Place-keeping policies in Local Plans recognise GI as a key delivery mechanism. GI functions and benefits are recognised and secured in key strategic documents and policies outside environmental chapters.

Table 1: Principles – Mainstreaming and Integration

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	6	29%
Agree	10	48%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	9%
Disagree	1	5%
Strongly Disagree	2	9%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 77% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with the mainstreaming and integration principle of the framework and guidance. 14% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the mainstreaming and integration principle of the framework and guidance. 9% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with the mainstreaming and integration principle of the framework and guidance.

EVIDENCE-LED

The planning, design and delivery of GI is evidence-led using natural capital and ecosystem service assessments, and GI GIS mapping to ensure appropriate place-based GI interventions are being implemented and enhanced.

Table 2: Principles – Evidence-led

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	7	33%
Agree	10	48%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	5%
Disagree	1	5%
Strongly Disagree	2	9%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 81% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with the evidence-led principle of the framework and guidance. 14% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the strategic goals of the framework and guidance. 5% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with the evidence-led principle of the framework and guidance.

MULTIFUNCTIONALITY

GI interventions are designed, planned and delivered to enhance multifunctionality and deliver multiple benefits to people and biodiversity in both rural and urban areas.

Table 3: Principles- Multifunctionality

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	9	43%
Agree	8	38%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	5%
Disagree	1	5%
Strongly Disagree	2	9%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 81% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with the multifunctionality principle of the framework and guidance. 14% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the multifunctionality principle of the framework and guidance. 5% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with the multifunctionality principle of the framework and guidance.

EARLY COLLABORATION AND ENGAGEMENT

There is early collaboration and engagement with all relevant stakeholders, partners and communities to support the delivery of effective and connected GI.

Table 4: Principles – Early Collaboration and Engagement

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	7	33%
Agree	10	48%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	5%
Disagree	1	5%
Strongly Disagree	2	9%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 81% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with the mainstreaming and integration principle of the framework and guidance. 14% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the early collaboration and engagement principle of the framework and guidance. 5% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with the early collaboration and engagement principle of the framework and guidance.

MANAGING DIFFERENT EXPECTATIONS

Differing views need to be identified early and managed effectively and in a transparent manner to secure both short- and long-term outcomes.

Table 5: Principles – Managing Different Expectations

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	6	29%
Agree	11	52%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	9%
Disagree	0	-
Strongly Disagree	2	10%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 77% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with the managing different expectations’ principle of the framework and guidance. 10% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the managing different expectations’ principle of the framework and guidance. 19% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with the managing different expectations’ principle of the framework and guidance.

HEALTH, WELLBEING AND SOCIAL EQUITY

GI is designed to meet different people’s needs (including physical and mental health), providing accessibility to GI, green spaces and local amenities, while ensuring GI is inclusive to all.

Table 6: Principles - Health, Wellbeing and Social Equity

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	9	43%
Agree	8	38%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	5%
Disagree	1	5%
Strongly Disagree	2	9%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 81% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with the health, wellbeing and social equity principle of the framework and guidance. 39% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the health, wellbeing and social equity principle of the framework and guidance. 19% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with the health, wellbeing and social equity principle of the framework and guidance.

INCREASED CONNECTIVITY

GI interventions are designed, planned and delivered and connected across multiple scales; from the wider landscape scale network to more local and neighbourhood scales including green corridors habitat and nature recovery networks to enhance connectivity for people, wildlife and habitats.

Table 7: Principles – Increased Connectivity

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	9	43%
Agree	8	38%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	5%
Disagree	1	5%
Strongly Disagree	2	9%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 81% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with the increased connectivity principle of the framework and guidance. 39% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the increased connectivity principle of the framework and guidance. 19% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with the increased connectivity principle of the framework and guidance.

STRONG POLICY WORDING AND COMMITMENT

Policy for GI is strongly worded with a commitment to positive action(s) as reflected in statutory plans and industry/local guidance and supported by incentives and clear guidance about what success looks like.

Table 8: Principles – Strong Policy Wording and Commitment

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	8	38%
Agree	9	43%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	9%
Disagree	0	-
Strongly Disagree	2	10%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 81% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with the strong policy wording and commitment principle of the framework and guidance. 10% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the strong policy wording and commitment principle of the framework and guidance. 9% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with the strong policy wording and commitment principle of the framework and guidance.

STEWARDSHIP

The long-term management and stewardship plans are identified at the early stage with the necessary funding and monitoring components in place.

Table 9: Principles - Stewardship

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	6	29%
Agree	11	52%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	9%
Disagree	0	-
Strongly Disagree	2	10%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 81% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with the stewardship principle of the framework and guidance. 10% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the stewardship principle of the framework and guidance. 9% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with the stewardship principle of the framework and guidance.

2.2. If you do not agree with the principles outlined in the Essex Green Infrastructure Standards Framework and Guidance, please explain why?

Table 10: Principles – Issues Raised and Action Taken.

CATEGORY	NOTES
ESSEX-BASED	Concerns that the Essex principles/standards do not build on existing Natural England principles and do not appear to be distinctly Essex-based. Noted that the standard could be used to provide suitable alternative nature greenspace in the parts of the County where recreational pressure threatens protected sites.
	Response: Following this consultation, the Essex GI Infrastructure standards framework and guidance will be linked to local nature partnerships and local nature recovery strategies. These will explore opportunity mapping that shall identify sites to protect and enhance.
DELIVERY OF STANDARDS	Concerns raised that whilst the document provides guidance on the use of Essex GI Standards, the standards themselves are quite difficult to “score” against and scoring could be subjective.
	Response: ECC are currently exploring how the Essex GI standards will be applied to planning applications. STANDARDS and guidance will be embedded into the Essex Design Guide and further local planning authority engagement will take place to support the application of these standards.
GARDEN COMMUNITIES	GI is an important element of place-making in Garden Communities. The North Essex Garden Community proposal was specifically mentioned.
	Response: ECC supports delivery of new housing growth which meets garden community principles and as progressed by local planning authorities via local plans. It is agreed that GI is an important element of place-making and policies should be designed to support the high delivery of GI and biodiversity net-gain across strategic developments. The nine principles outlined have been developed to support the delivery of this.

HOUSING NEED & GREEN BELT PROTECTION	Questioning the need for additional housing and concern over high housing targets and the realise of the green belt for development.
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Response: Housing targets are informed by government methodology on housing needs and as per adopted local plans. This process is outside of the scope of the ECC GI standards and framework guidance, but ECC will continue to work with local planning authorities regarding Green Belt measures and housing delivery targets.

FUNDING AND DELIVERY	Questions over the time and cost for the completion of preparing and assessing evaluations and, who will be responsible for the delivery of this.
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Response: It is anticipated there will be two approaches to the application of the guidance, a voluntary approach (where this is supporting guidance only) and a full standards approach. Under the full standard approach, for external verification, building with nature will be signposted to assess and monitor major developments (fees will apply). A monitoring programme and self-assessment will be developed.

WASTE INCINERATIONS	Concerns regarding the impact of waste Incinerations on residents and the environment.
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Response: Waste Incinerations does not fall within the remit of the Green Infrastructure standards framework and guidance. For more details on standards regarding waste, please see the adopted Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017)¹

ACCESSIBILITY AND LANGUAGE	Comments made that the language of the GI standards and framework guidance was inaccessible to the consultation audience. Connections to other guidance and strategies noted to over-complicate the issues raised.
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Response: Future consultations and workshops will be undertaken using language suitable for the target audience. Consideration is being made to the development of three guidance documents tailored to different audiences. Referencing to supporting guidance and strategies will remain and be outlined in a clear and consisted way.

2.3. Have we got the right principles and standards for Essex?

STANDARD ONE

“GI recognised as key delivery mechanism for Placemaking and Place-keeping. Functions and benefits are secured throughout key strategic documents”.

¹ [Minerals and waste planning policy: Waste Local Plan - Essex County Council](#)

Table 11: Standard One –Mainstreaming and Integration

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	5	24%
Agree	11	52%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	10%
Disagree	0	-
Strongly Disagree	3	14%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 76% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with Standard 1 of the framework and guidance. 14% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with Standard 1 of the framework and guidance. 10% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with Standard 1 of the framework and guidance.

STANDARD TWO

“GI planning, design and delivery is evidence-led using natural capital and ecosystem service assessments, and mapping”

Table 12: Standard Two – Evidence-led

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	7	33%
Agree	9	43%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	10%
Disagree	0	-
Strongly Disagree	3	14%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 76% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with Standard 2 of the framework and guidance. 14% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with Standard 2 of the framework and guidance. 10% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with Standard 1 of the framework and guidance.

STANDARD THREE

GI is designed and delivered to enhance multifunctionality and deliver multiple benefits.

Table 13: Standard Three – Multifunctionality

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	8	38%
Agree	7	33%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	2	10%
Disagree	1	5%
Strongly Disagree	3	14%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 71% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with standard three of the framework and guidance. 19% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with standard three of the framework and guidance. 10% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with standard three of the framework and guidance.

STANDARD FOUR

Early collaboration and engagement with all relevant stakeholders, for the delivery of effective and connected GI.

Table 14: Standard Four – Early Collaboration and Engagement

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	7	33%
Agree	9	43%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	5%
Disagree	1	5%
Strongly Disagree	3	14%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 76% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with standard four of the framework and guidance. 19% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with standard four of the framework and guidance. 5% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with standard four of the framework and guidance.

STANDARD FIVE

Identify and manage different views transparently to secure short- and long-term outcomes.

Table 15: Standard Five – Managing Different Expectations

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	4	19%
Agree	10	48%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	14%
Disagree	1	5%
Strongly Disagree	3	14%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 67% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with standard five of the framework and guidance. 19% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with standard five of the framework and guidance. 14% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with standard five of the framework and guidance.

STANDARD SIX

GI is designed to meet different people's needs, providing access to GI, green spaces and local amenities. Ensuring GI is inclusive to all.

Table 16: Standard Six – Health, Wellbeing and Social Equity

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	8	38%
Agree	8	38%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	0	-
Disagree	1	5%
Strongly Disagree	4	19%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 76% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with standard six of the framework and guidance. 24% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with standard eight of the framework and guidance.

STANDARD SEVEN

GI interventions are connected across multiple scales; from the wider landscape to local and neighbourhood scales, including nature recovery networks.

Table 17: Standard Seven – Increased Connectivity

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	9	43%
Agree	7	33%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	5%
Disagree	0	-
Strongly Disagree	4	19%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 76% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with standard seven of the framework and guidance. 19% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with standard seven of the framework and guidance. 5% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with standard seven of the framework and guidance.

STANDARD EIGHT

Policy for GI is strongly worded with a commitment to positive action(s) and supported by incentives and clear guidance.

Table 18: Standard Eight – Strong Policy Wording and Commitment

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	9	43%
Agree	7	33%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	5%
Disagree	0	-
Strongly Disagree	4	19%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 76% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with standard eight of the framework and guidance. 19% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with standard

eight of the framework and guidance. 5% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with standard eight of the framework and guidance.

STANDARD NINE

The long-term management and stewardship plans are identified at the early stage, including funding and monitoring.

Table 18: Standard Nine – Stewardship

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	6	29%
Agree	10	48%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1	5%
Disagree	0	-
Strongly Disagree	4	19%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 77% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with standard nine of the framework and guidance. 19% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with standard eight of the framework and guidance. 5% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with standard nine of the framework and guidance.

2.4. If you do not agree with the standards outlined in the Essex Green Infrastructure Standards Framework and Guidance, please explain why?

Table 19: Standards – Issues Raised and Action Taken.

CATEGORY	NOTES
WASTE INCINERATIONS	Concerns regarding the impact of waste Incinerations on residents and the environment. Response: Waste Incinerations does not fall within the remit of the Green Infrastructure standards framework and guidance. For more details on standards regarding waste, please see the adopted Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017) ²
EXISTING GI PROTECTION AND NEW DEVELOPMENTS	Concerns that local plans result in the destruction of many natural habitats and just replace them with a few GI initiatives. Response: Housing targets are informed by government methodology on housing needs and as per adopted local plans. This process is outside of the scope of the ECC GI standards and framework guidance, but ECC will continue to work with local planning authorities regarding Green Belt measures, natural habitat protection and

² [Minerals and waste planning policy: Waste Local Plan - Essex County Council](#)

housing delivery targets. The Essex GI Infrastructure standards framework and guidance will support Local Nature Partnerships (LNP) and Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS). These will explore opportunity mapping that will identify natural habitats sites to protect and enhance.

ACCESSIBILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY

Comments made that the language of the GI standards and framework guidance was inaccessible to the consultation audience.

Response: Future consultations and workshops will be undertaken using language suitable for the target audience. Consideration is being made to the development of three guidance documents tailored to different audiences.

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN PRINCIPLES AND STANDARDS

Questions raised over the relationship between the principles outlined under 2.1 and the standards outlined under 2.3.

RESPONSE: The GI principles outlined under 2.1 are the core components needed for delivering better placemaking and place-keeping. These principles were then translated into 9 proposed GI standards for Essex as set outlined under 2.3. The GI Standards define the outcome that is required to ensure the GI Principles have been achieved. A clearer definition of principles and standards will be expanded upon within the guidance.

CONTRIBUTION TO AND INTERACTION WITH OTHER PLANS AND STRATEGIES

Questions raised regarding the relationship between the Essex GI Standards Framework and Guidance and NE Nature Recovery Plans, Statutory AONB Management Plans and Environmental NGO plans.

Response: The purpose of the Essex GI Standards and Guidance is to establish principles to secure good-quality GI and can assist in the improvement of planning policy, to help frame planning conditions for future planning applications; and shape project delivery in securing multifunctional GI in the long-term. These GI Principles and standards will further support the priorities set out by Nature Recovery Network, Statutory AONB Management Plan and Environmental NGO Plans to delivery wider environment benefits. Green Infrastructure provides an important delivery mechanism for dealing with the climate emergency, Post-Covid recovery plans, health and wellbeing and biodiversity decline. ECC propose to establish an Essex Local Nature Partnership (LNP) to facilitate partnership discussion about the natural environment as a system and to embed its value in local decisions, for the benefit of nature, people and the economy. To do this effectively the LNP will be an independent self-sustaining strategic partnership consisting of a broad range of stakeholders, including local organisations and businesses.

2.5. Are there any other principles and standards you would like included?

Table 20: Other Principles and Standards

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Yes	8	38%
No	13	62%

There were 17 responses to this part of the question. These responses have informed the development and progression of the GI Standards and Framework. Below is a summary of six major themes that emerged in response to this question and how we have acted on these.

Table 21: Other Principles and Standards – Issues Raised and Action Taken.

CATEGORY	NOTES
PROTECTION OF THE GREEN BELT	Concerns raised over the lose of Green Belt and other natural environments to new development.
	<p>Response: Housing targets are informed by government methodology on housing needs and as per adopted local plans. This process is outside of the scope of the ECC GI standards and framework guidance, but ECC will continue to work with local planning authorities regarding Green Belt measures, natural habitat protection and housing delivery targets. The Essex GI Infrastructure standards framework and guidance will support Local Nature Partnerships (LNP) and Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS). These will explore opportunity mapping that will identify natural habitats sites to protect and enhance.</p>
GREENHOUSE GASES AND CARBON SEQUESTRATION	More information provided on Greenhouse Gases and Carbon Sequestration, including one or two case studies of details of design, or planting for biodiversity and multifunctionality.
	<p>Response: Following consultation a brief summary on Greenhouse Gases and Carbon Sequestration will be referenced with potential links to signpost to further useful information. As the GI Standards Guidance develops more Essex related case studies will be added. We aim to test the standards on a selection of development sites and review the assessment with Planning Officers and developer that will result in case study examples of best practice. RSPB and NHBC Foundation have produced a useful guide on Biodiversity in New Housing Development (2021)- https://www.wildoxfordshire.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/05/NF89-Biodiversity-in-new-housing-developments.pdf</p>
GREEN INFRASTRUCTURE ALONGSIDE BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE	Noted that Green Infrastructure works alongside Blue Infrastructure. Although this is referred to in the multifunctionality element of the standards/principles, it is raised that this could be further reinforced.

Response: The Essex Green Infrastructure Strategy (2020) definition for GI includes blue infrastructure features. Following the consultation, the guidance will be reviewed to provide more reference to blue infrastructure and make this relationship clearer.

IMPLEMENTATION,
MONITORING AND
DELIVERY

Noted that implementation should be carefully monitored to assess the effect the standards/principles have on the delivery of development.

Response: It is anticipated there will be two approaches to the application of the guidance, a voluntary approach (where this is supporting guidance only) and a full standards approach. Under the full standard approach, for external verification, building with nature will be signposted to assess and monitor major developments (fees will apply). A monitoring programme and self-assessment will be developed.

WASTE INCINERATIONS

Concerns regarding the impact of waste Incinerations on residents and the environment.

Response: Waste Incinerations does not fall within the remit of the Green Infrastructure standards framework and guidance. For more details on standards regarding waste, please see the adopted Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017)³

ACCESSIBILITY AND
LANGUAGE

Comments made that the language of the GI standards and framework guidance was inaccessible to the consultation audience.

Response: Future consultations and workshops will be undertaken using language suitable for the target audience. Consideration is being made to the development of three guidance documents tailored to different audiences.

2.6. Do you agree or disagree with the criteria of standards for development outlined?

STANDARD FOR ALL DEVELOPMENTS

Table 22: Standards – All Developments

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	4	19%
Agree	4	19%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	14%
Disagree	5	24%
Strongly Disagree	5	24%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 38% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with the 'all developments' criteria of the framework and guidance. 48% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed

³ [Minerals and waste planning policy: Waste Local Plan - Essex County Council](#)

with the ‘all developments’ criteria of the framework and guidance. 14% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with the ‘all developments’ criteria of the framework and guidance.

STANDARD FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS OF 10+ HOUSES

Table 23: Standards – Residential developments of 10+ houses

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	6	27%
Agree	8	36%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	3	14%
Disagree	0	-
Strongly Disagree	5	23%

There were 22 responses to this part of the question. 63% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with the ‘residential developments of 10+ houses’ criteria of the framework and guidance. 23% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the ‘residential developments of 10+ houses’ criteria of the framework and guidance. 14% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with the ‘residential developments of 10+ houses’ criteria of the framework and guidance.

STANDARD FOR RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENTS OF 0.5 HECTARES OR MORE

Table 24: Standards – Residential developments of 0.5 hectares or more

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	6	27%
Agree	7	32%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	5	23%
Disagree	0	-
Strongly Disagree	4	18%

There were 22 responses to this part of the question. 59% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with the ‘residential developments of 0.5 hectares or more’ criteria of the framework and guidance. 18% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the ‘residential developments of 0.5 hectares or more’ criteria of the framework and guidance. 23% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with the ‘residential developments of 0.5 hectares or more’ criteria of the framework and guidance.

STANDARD FOR 1,000+ SQUARE METRES FLOORSPACE FOR COMMERCIAL DEVELOPMENT AND MAJOR REGENERATION OR URBAN EXTENSIONS

Table 25: Standards – 1,000+ square metres floorspace for commercial development and major regeneration or urban extensions

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Strongly Agree	8	38%
Agree	6	29%
Neither Agree nor Disagree	4	19%
Disagree	0	-
Strongly Disagree	3	14%

There were 21 responses to this part of the question. 67% of respondents answered that they agreed, or strongly agreed with the ‘1,000+ square metres floorspace for commercial development and major regeneration or urban extensions’ criteria of the framework and guidance. 14% answered that they disagreed, or strongly disagreed with the ‘1,000+ square metres floorspace for commercial development and major regeneration or urban extensions’ criteria of the framework and guidance. 19% answered that they neither agreed, nor disagreed with the ‘1,000+ square metres floorspace for commercial development and major regeneration or urban extensions’ criteria of the framework and guidance.

2.7. If you do not agree with the criteria of standards outlined in the Essex Green Infrastructure Standards Framework & Guidance, please explain why?

Table 26: Criteria of Standards – Issues Raised and Action Taken.

CATEGORY	NOTES
ALL DEVELOPMENTS	Comments raise that the standards should be applied to all developments. If not by individual schemes, then by contribution to bigger schemes.
AFFORDABLE HOUSING AND OTHER EXCLUSIONS	Noted that there needs to be careful thought regarding 'exclusions', and equitability for different types of housing, for example, whether 10 affordable homes need to make the same types of contributions as 10 executive homes.

Response: Following this consultation, a clear criteria will be developed to tailor the guidance to smaller and larger development sites.

Response: Further consideration is required on ensuring the Essex Green Infrastructure Standards and Guidance does not cause exclusions and ensures equitable developments. There is an opportunity for a case study for innovative projects to be identified, with green infrastructure linked to affordable housing,

offering wider benefits to communities. Further engagement with planners, developers and other stakeholders is required to identify advice and potential actions.

NON-MAJOR DEVELOPMENTS	Comments made that minor developments (2/3 properties) may not be able to effectively apply standards and too many requirements could make these sites unviable. Questions over what guidance should be applied to smaller sites.
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Response: Following this consultation, a clear criteria will be developed to tailor the guidance to smaller and larger development sites.

0.5HA AND 10+ HOUSES	Comment that there is little distinction between Residential developments of 10+ houses and those of 0.5ha or more. Argued that it would be simpler to have just one criteria based on just the number or just the site area. Additional concerns raised over whether these smaller sites will result generate additional or better GI.
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Response: Following this consultation, a clear criteria will be developed to tailor the guidance to smaller and larger development sites.

WASTE INCINERATIONS	Concerns regarding the impact of waste incinerations on residents and the environment.
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Response: Waste incinerations does not fall within the remit of the Green Infrastructure standards framework and guidance. For more details on standards regarding waste, please see the adopted Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017)⁴

HOUSING NEED AND GREEN BELT PROTECTION	Questioning the need for additional housing and concern over high housing targets and the realise of the Green Belt for development.
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Response: Housing targets are informed by government methodology on housing needs and as per adopted local plans. This process is outside of the scope of the ECC GI standards and framework guidance, but ECC will continue to work with local planning authorities regarding Green Belt measures, natural habitat protection and housing delivery targets. The Essex GI Infrastructure standards framework and guidance will support Local Nature Partnerships (LNP) and Local Nature Recovery Strategies (LNRS). These will explore opportunity mapping that will identify natural habitats sites to protect and enhance.

BIODIVERSITY NET-GAIN	Question regarding how the Essex GI standards relate to Biodiversity Net Gain requirements.
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Response: The Essex Green Infrastructure standards will help strengthen GI policy and secure within new developments to strengthen Essex's green infrastructure. As

⁴ [Minerals and waste planning policy: Waste Local Plan - Essex County Council](#)

a result, will enhance ecological networks and contribute to the national targets for biodiversity net gain and species abundance. The standards enable local planning authorities and developers to have informed discussions with stakeholders about the appropriate level of multifunctional green infrastructure that should be provided to deliver locally relevant outcomes, such as climate change, biodiversity and environment net gains.

ACCESSIBILITY AND LANGUAGE	Comment made that the language of the GI standards and framework guidance is inaccessible to the consultation audience.
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Response: Future consultations and workshops will be undertaken using language suitable for the target audience. Consideration is being made to the development of three guidance documents tailored to different audiences.

2.8. How much of the draft principles and standards have you read prior to the consultation?

Table 27: How much of the consultation did you read prior to the consultation?

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
All of it	2	9%
Most of it	2	9%
Some of it	8	36%
None of it	10	46%

There were 22 responses to this question. 9% of respondents answered that they had read all of the draft principles and standards prior to consultation. 9% of respondents answered that they had read most of the draft principles and standards prior to consultation. 36% of respondents answered that they had read some of the draft principles and standards prior to consultation. 46% of respondents answered that they had read none of the draft principles and standards prior to consultation.

2.9. Please provide any other comments on the draft GI guidance.

Table 28: Other GI Standards Comments – Issues Raised and Action Taken.

CATEGORY	NOTES
MONITORING AND MEASURING	Requests for more information regarding how the Essex GI standard framework and guidance will be monitored and effectively measured.

Response: It is anticipated there will be two approaches to the application of the guidance, a voluntary approach (where this is supporting guidance only) and a full standards approach. Under the full standard approach, for external verification,

building with nature will be signposted to assess and monitor major developments (fees will apply). A monitoring programme and self-assessment will be developed.

BRIDLEWAYS AND HORSE RIDING

Noted that there is limited referencing to equestrians with recommendations made as to where the guidance should reference this with supporting evidence.

Response: Following the consultations the Essex Green Infrastructure Guidance will be reviewed and suggested recommendations made to help strengthen and make clearer guidance regarding bridleways will be added.

BLUE INFRASTRUCTURE

Comments note that there is little reference to how GI benefits flood risk, SuDs, drainage and the long-term sustainability of the site.

Response: Following the consultations the Essex Green Infrastructure Guidance will be reviewed and the multifunctional benefits of GI to delivery flood and water management will be expanded upon and signposted to further useful information.

ENVIRONMENT BILL AND BIODIVERSITY NET-GAIN

Question raised regarding how the guidance fits into the pending environment bill and will contribute to biodiversity net-gain. Questions regarding the use of biodiversity validation checklists.

Response: The Essex Green Infrastructure Standards was a result of our involvement within the trial projects for Natural England National Green Infrastructure Standards Framework. Government’s 25 Year Environment Plan includes a commitment to develop a National Framework of Green Infrastructure Standards. The emerging Environment Bill will put the 25-year Environment Plan into law and create a statutory framework for environmental principles.

The Essex Green Infrastructure standards will help strengthen GI policy and secure within new developments to strengthen Essex’s green infrastructure. As a result, will enhance ecological networks and contribute to the national targets for biodiversity net gain, species abundance and Local Nature Recovery. The standards enable local planning authorities and developers to have informed discussions with stakeholders about the appropriate level of multifunctional green infrastructure that should be provided to deliver locally relevant outcomes, such as climate change, biodiversity and environment net gains.

The guidance will include a reference that Local Planning Authorities can use their own biodiversity checklists for minor developments.

NON-STATUTORY DESIGNATED SITES

Comments that the GI Standards Framework and Guidance does not reference any non-statutory designated sites, such as Local Wildlife Sites. Recommendations that the guidance should encourage new GI sites to meet the selection criteria for non-statutory sites and should encourage a regular review of these sites.

Response: Following consultation the Essex Green Infrastructure Guidance will be reviewed to identify where reference to non-statutory designated sites can be incorporated and to include the suggestion recommendation. Essex Wildlife Trust to be consulted.

WASTE INCINERATIONS

Concerns regarding the impact of waste incinerations on residents and the environment.

Response: Waste incinerations does not fall within the remit of the Green Infrastructure standards framework and guidance. For more details on standards regarding waste, please see the adopted Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017)⁵

ACCESSIBILTY AND LANGUAGE

Comment made that the language of the GI standards and framework guidance is inaccessible to the consultation audience. Additional comments that the guidance is too long and should be further condensed to present the concepts in a more efficient way

Response: Future consultations and workshops will be undertaken using language suitable for the target audience. Consideration is being made to the development of three guidance documents tailored to different audiences, one of these is likely to be a condensed summary of the key concepts.

REFERENCING

Noted that the mitigation hierarchy and Natural England’s guidance on avoiding significant adverse effects from the ‘development alone’ upon Habitats (European) Sites could be referenced within the Essex GI Standards Framework Guidance.

Response: Following consultation the Essex Green Infrastructure Guidance will be reviewed to incorporate the reference to the mitigation hierarchy and Natural England’s guidance on avoiding significant adverse effects from the ‘development alone’ upon Habitats (European) Sites.

ENGAGEMENT WITH PARISH COUNCILS AND THE ELAF

Comment that Parish Council and the Essex Local Access Forum (ELAF) were not informed of the consultation

Response: A communication plan for the GI Standards Framework and Guidance is being developed. ECC aim to ensure that Parish Council and the Essex Local Access Forum are engaged in al further consultations.

⁵ [Minerals and waste planning policy: Waste Local Plan - Essex County Council](#)

2.10. Do you feel that these should become full standards (i.e., assessment/ accreditation of achievement and monitoring) or just supporting guidance?

Table 29: Do you feel that these should become full standards?

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Full Standards	10	45%
Supporting Guidance	7	32%
None of the above	3	14%
Other	2	9%

There were 22 responses to this question. 45% of respondents answered that they felt that these should become full standards. 32% of respondents answered that they felt that these should become just supporting guidance rather than full standards. 23% of respondents provided an alternative response.

Table 30: Full Standards – Reasoning.

CATAGORY	NOTES
SMALLER DEVELOPMENTS	Supporting guidance is mostly likely more appropriate for smaller developments and full standards for large strategic developments.

Response: Following this consultation, a clear criteria will be developed to tailor the guidance to smaller and larger development sites.

DISTRICT, CITY AND BOROUGH COUNCILS	Essex GI Standards Framework and Guidance should remain guidance at a County level. Local Planning Authorities could choice to adopt the Essex GI Standards as SPD or use this to support the development of second-tier authority GI standards.
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Response: It is anticipated there will be two approaches to the application of the guidance, a voluntary approach (where this is supporting guidance only) and a full standards approach A support program will be developed as part of further stakeholder engagement to help with the implementation whether as an SPD or more statutory.

FULL STANDARD	Concerns raised that guidance will not be used if not implemented as full standards (four responses). Notes that this could be implemented as a phased approach (one response).
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Response: It is anticipated there will be two approaches to the application of the guidance, a voluntary approach (where this is supporting guidance only) and a full standards approach. Under the full standard approach, for external verification, building with nature will be signposted to assess and monitor major developments (fees will apply). A monitoring programme and self-assessment will be developed.

WASTE INCINERATIONS	Concerns regarding the impact of waste incinerations on residents and the environment.
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Response: Waste incinerations does not fall within the remit of the Green Infrastructure standards framework and guidance. For more details on standards regarding waste, please see the adopted Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017)⁶

ACCESSIBILTY AND LANGUAGE	Comment made that the language of the GI standards and framework guidance is inaccessible to the consultation audience.
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Response: Future consultations and workshops will be undertaken using language suitable for the target audience. Consideration is being made to the development of three guidance documents tailored to different audiences.

2.11. If this becomes a full standard, how should these standards be achieved?

Table 29: How should full standards be achieved?

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Self-Assessment	3	18%
External Assessment with Assessor for Versification	6	35%
Both	8	47%

There were 17 responses to this question. 18% of respondents answered that they felt that self-assessment should be used for these to become full standards. 35% of respondents felt that external assessment with assessor for versification should be used for these to become full standards. 47% of respondents felt both approaches should be used.

Table 30: How Full Standards should be Achieved – Reasoning

CATAGORY	NOTES
SCALE OF DEVELOPMENT	Self-assessment could be used for smaller developments and External Assessment can be used for strategic sites.

Response: Following this consultation, a clear criteria will be developed to tailor the guidance to smaller and larger development sites.

⁶ [Minerals and waste planning policy: Waste Local Plan - Essex County Council](#)

EXTERNAL ASSESSOR	Questions raised over who the assessor would be. Noted that Local Planning Authorities, Parish Councils and/or the association of local councils could do the assessing.
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Response: It is anticipated there will be two approaches to the application of the guidance, a voluntary approach (where this is supporting guidance only) and a full standards approach. Under the full standard approach, for external verification, building with nature will be signposted to assess and monitor major developments (fees will apply). A monitoring programme and self-assessment will be developed.

BUREAUCRACY	Questions over the time and cost for the completion of preparing and assessing evaluations.
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Response: It is anticipated there will be two approaches to the application of the guidance, a voluntary approach (where this is supporting guidance only) and a full standards approach. Under the full standard approach, for external verification, building with nature will be signposted to assess and monitor major developments (fees will apply). A monitoring programme and self-assessment will be developed.

ACCOUNTABILITY	Need confirmation on how the self-assessments will be checked and how developers will be held accountable.
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Response: Following this consultation, a monitoring program will be identified for the delivery of the GI standards framework and guidance.

RESOURCING	Need to confirm that there are enough resources to deliver the chosen approach.
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Response: Following this consultation, a clear criteria will be developed to tailor the guidance to smaller and larger development sites. It is anticipated there will be two approaches to the application of the guidance, a voluntary approach (where this is supporting guidance only) and a full standards approach. Under the full standard approach, for external verification, building with nature will be signposted to assess and monitor major developments (fees will apply). A monitoring programme and self-assessment will be developed.

WASTE INCINERATIONS	Concerns regarding the impact of waste incinerations on residents and the environment.
---------------------	--

Response: Waste incinerations does not fall within the remit of the Green Infrastructure standards framework and guidance. For more details on standards regarding waste, please see the adopted Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017)⁷

⁷ [Minerals and waste planning policy: Waste Local Plan - Essex County Council](#)

ACCESSIBILITY AND LANGUAGE	Comment made that the language of the GI standards and framework guidance is inaccessible to the consultation audience.
<p>Response: Future consultations and workshops will be undertaken using language suitable for the target audience. Consideration is being made to the development of three guidance documents tailored to different audiences.</p>	

2.12. Do you agree or disagree that this should be voluntary process?

Table 31: Should this be a voluntary process?

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Yes	2	11%
No	8	42%
Not Sure	9	47%

There were 19 responses to this question. 11% of respondents answered that this should be a voluntary process. 42% of respondents felt that this should not be a voluntary process. 47% of respondents were unsure.

Table 30: Voluntary Process – Reasoning

CATAGORY	NOTES
ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION	Concerns over whether making this voluntary will result in effective environment protect and help meet the challenges from climate change and the biodiversity crisis.
<p>Response: It is anticipated there will be two approaches to the application of the guidance, a voluntary approach (where this is supporting guidance only) and a full standards approach. Under the full standard approach, for external verification, building with nature will be signposted to assess and monitor major developments (fees will apply). A monitoring programme and self-assessment to be explored and developed as part of further stakeholder engagement.</p>	
ACCOUNTABILITY AND UPTAKE	Concerns over how developers can be held accountable if this is a voluntary process. And, whether this will result in widespread uptake.
<p>Response: Following this consultation, a monitoring program will be identified for the delivery of the GI standards framework and guidance. This will be explored through further stakeholder engagement.</p>	

<p>PLANNING POLICY</p>	<p>If voluntary, Local Planning Authorities can guide developers towards the guidance. Without it being a full ‘standard’, developers are not required to adhere to it – so then it is reliant on planning policy wording. Resourcing for this will need exploring.</p>
<p>Response: The aim is for the Essex Green Infrastructure Standards and Guidance to be added to the Essex Design Guide. The standards can be used to help strengthen policy wording and coverage for GI within Local Plans when they are being updated. The Green Infrastructure and Sustainable Team at Essex County Council are reviewing and providing responses to Local Plans and other policy documents. The team are keen to work with Local Planning Authorities to provide a level of support going forwards.</p>	
<p>WASTE INCINERATIONS</p>	<p>Concerns regarding the impact of waste incinerations on residents and the environment.</p>
<p>Response: Waste incinerations does not fall within the remit of the Green Infrastructure standards framework and guidance. For more details on standards regarding waste, please see the adopted Essex and Southend-on-Sea Waste Local Plan (2017)⁸</p>	
<p>ACCESSIBILITY AND LANGUAGE</p>	<p>Comment made that the language of the GI standards and framework guidance is inaccessible to the consultation audience.</p>
<p>Response: Future consultations and workshops will be undertaken using language suitable for the target audience. Consideration is being made to the development of three guidance documents tailored to different audiences.</p>	

2.13. Do you think you can apply the standard/guidance to your own work?

CAN THIS GUIDANCE BE APPLIED TO YOUR OWN WORK?

Table 31: Should this be a voluntary process?

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Yes	9	43%
No	0	-
Not Sure	12	57%

There were 21 responses to this question. 43% of respondents answered that guidance could be applied to their own works. No respondents felt that they definitely could not apply the guidance to their own work. 57% of respondents were unsure if the guidance could be applied to their work.

⁸ [Minerals and waste planning policy: Waste Local Plan - Essex County Council](#)

HOW CAN THIS GUIDANCE BE APPLIED?

Table 32: How can this guidance be applied

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Local Plans	8	17%
Supplementary Planning Guidance	7	15%
Green Infrastructure Strategy or equivalent	7	15%
Neighbourhood Plans	5	10%
Industry/ local guidance such as arboriculture	3	6%
Project planning and delivery	5	10%
Development Plans	7	15%
Decision-making	6	12%

There were 21 responses to this question. 17% of respondents answered that guidance should be applied by local plans. 15% of respondents answered that guidance should be applied by supplementary planning guidance. 15% of respondents answered that guidance should be applied by a green infrastructure strategy or equivalent. 10% of respondents answered that guidance should be applied by neighbourhood plans. 6% of respondents answered that guidance should be applied by industry/ local guidance such as arboriculture. 10% of respondents answered that guidance should be applied by project planning and delivery. 15% of respondents answered that guidance should be applied by development plans. 12% of respondents answered that guidance should be applied by decision-making. Other responses to this question include:

Selected responses

“AONB Management Plans”

“Nature Recovery Plans”

“Blue Infrastructure/ Flood Risk/ SuDS guidance”

“Housing Developers”

2.14. Do you think you would need help or support to implement the GI standards/Guidance?

IMPLEMENTATION

Table 33: Support Implementing the GI Standards / Guidance

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Yes	14	70%
No	2	10%
Not Sure	4	20%

There were 20 responses to this question. 70% of respondents answered that they would need support in implementing the GI Standards/Guidance. 10% of respondents answered that they would not need support in implementing the GI Standards/Guidance. 20% of respondents were unsure.

GUIDANCE

Table 34: Guidance for Implementing the GI Standards / Guidance

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
1:1 Meetings	4	10%
Workshop with others	12	32%
Training	14	37%
Self-guided resources	8	21%

There were 38 responses to this question. 10% of respondents answered that they would prefer one-to-one meetings. 32% of respondents answered that they would prefer a workshop with other guidance users. 37% of respondents answered that they would prefer training. 21% of respondents answered that they would prefer access to a self-guided resource (i.e., written guidance, writing sections/policy, reviewing for strength of GI wording and coverage in documents). Other responses to this question included comment that *“the main issues are likely to be having sufficient staff resources to review applications in larger local planning authorities”*

3. Part 2 - Demographic Information

3.1. Which area do you represent?

Table 35: Area of Respondents

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
Basildon	2	7%
Braintree	3	10%
Brentwood	0	-
Castle Point	3	10%
Chelmsford	3	10%
Colchester	2	7%
Epping Forest	0	-
Harlow	1	3%
Maldon	0	-
Rochford	0	-
Southend-on-Sea	1	3%
Tendring	1	3%
Thurrock	2	7%
Uttlesford	1	3%
County Wide	4	13%
Not Answered	7	23%

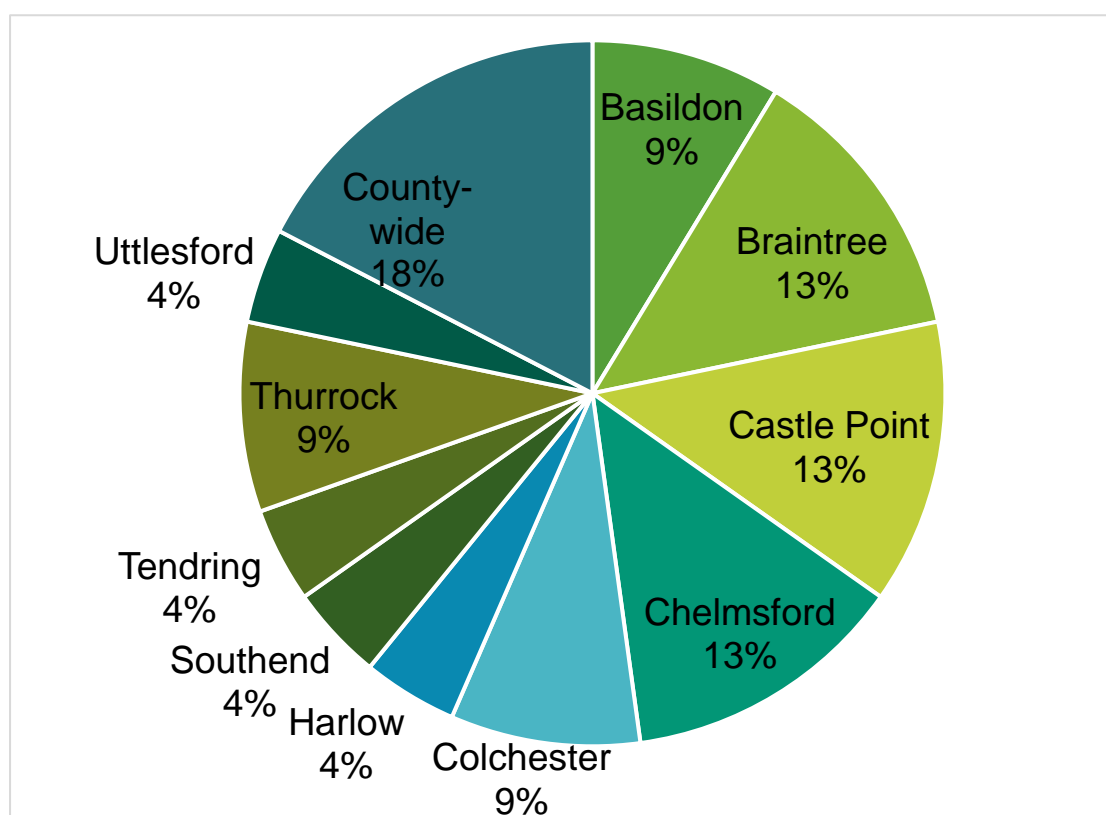


Figure 1: The areas and the percentage of respondents they represent

Other responses to this question include:

Selected responses

“Suffolk SuDS/ Floods Team”

“Essex's two AONBs (Dedham Vale-part of Colchester and Tendring) and Coast & Heaths (part of Tendring)”

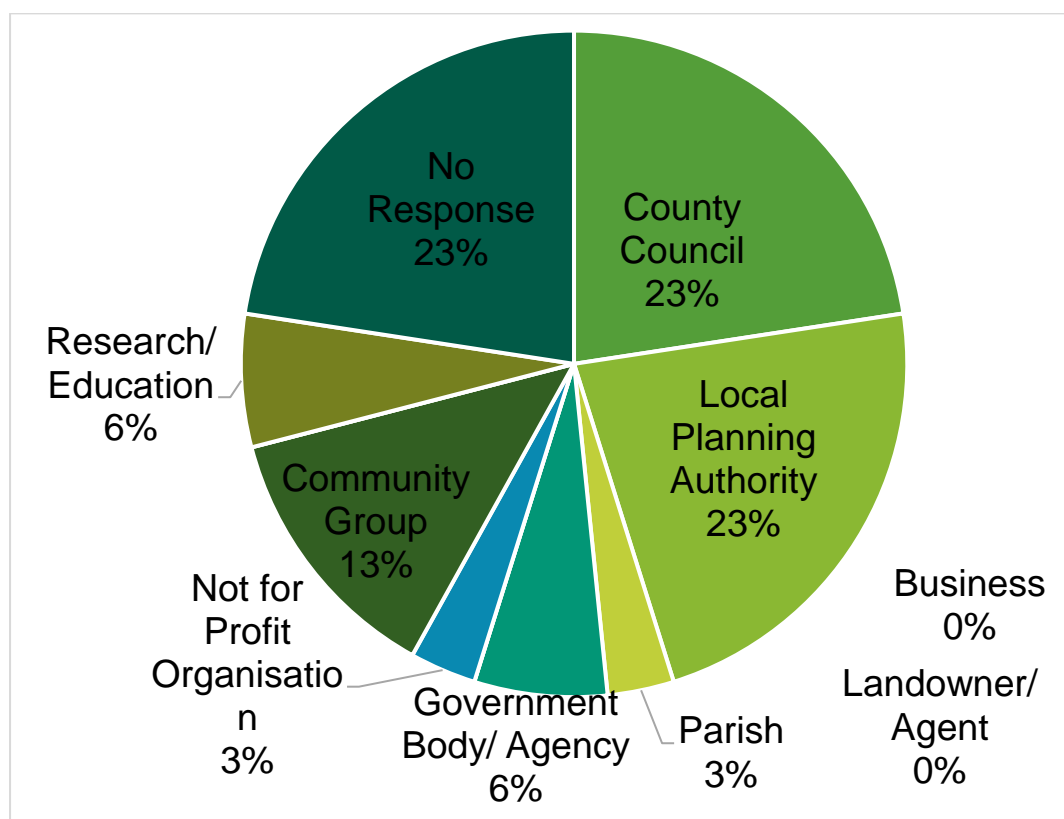
“Natural England”

3.2. Please tell us from which sector you are responding as.

Table 35: Sector of Respondents

OPTION	TOTAL	PERCENT
County Council	7	23%
Local Planning Authority	7	23%
Parish	1	3%
Government Body/ Agency	2	7%
Business	0	-
Not for Profit Organisation	1	3%
Community Group	4	13%
Landowner/ Agent	0	-
Research/ Education	2	7%
Not Answered	7	23%

Figure 2: The sectors the respondents represent



4. Key Conclusions and Next Steps.

4.1. Conclusions

A total of 37 individual responses were received for the GI Standards Framework and Guidance consultation. 81% of those who provided a response agreed or strongly agreed with the nine principle and standards of the Essex GI Standards Framework. 74% of those who provided a response agreed or strongly agreed that we have the right principles and standards for Essex.

Seven key themes have been identified from across the wider consultation responses. These, and the actions that are outlined to be taken in response to the comments provided, are summarised in the table below.

Table 36: Key themes

THEME	ACTION
ACCESSABILITY AND LANGUAGE	Future consultations and workshops to use language suitable for the target audience.
INFORMATION LEVEL	Clear definitions and guidance that is broken down to tailor each of the key community groups.
TRUST	Accountability and responsibilities for delivery to be clearly outlined.
ENFORCEMENT	Further stakeholder engagement and guidance to develop a support programme for the delivery of the GI Standards.
PARTNERSHIP	Further collaboration and interaction with external and internal partners and with other plans and strategies.
COMPLEXITY	Exploration and information on specialist habitats and the relationship between these and GI multifunctionality.
PROTECTING NATURE	Development of Local Nature Partnerships and Local Nature Recovery Networks.

4.2. Next Steps

The responses received from the consultation have supported the development of an action plan to progress the Essex GI Standards Framework and Guidance forward. It is expected that further engagement on the updated guidance will take place late 2021.

Table 37: Draft Essex GI Standards Framework and Guidance Action Plan

DATE – 2021	ACTION
01.09.21 - 20.09.21	Undertake case studies of site assessment to test the GI standards
01.09.21 - 14.09.21	Review and edit guidance based on consultation feedback.
16.09.21	Internal meeting to review revised Standards guidance and identify additional content
5.10.21	Final draft of consultation report published
W/C 17.09.21	Further updates to guidance
W/C 05.10.21	Review case study test site assessments with LPAs for feedback and highlight gaps.
14.10.21	Incorporate planners/ developers views within the guidance
19.10.21	Internal review
W/C 01.11.21	Further and final edits to guidance document
W/C 08.11.21	Draft non- technical visual Guidance
30.11.21	Focused stakeholder engagement – Details TBC Workshops – Example of themes monitoring and evaluation, Support/training.
17.12.21	Final internal review of the guidance document.
TBC	Develop support program/ training
2022	Launch

This information is issued by:

Essex County Council, Green Infrastructure

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The information contained in this document can be translated, and/or made available in alternative formats, on request.

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