

October 2019

# Walking Strategy: Consultation Report

Research and Citizen Insight

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## Introduction

Essex County Council recognizes the importance of walking both as a form of transport and as a leisure activity. The Walking Strategy is a response to the challenges and opportunities of walking in Essex, it outlines in detail the steps being taken to encourage walking at present and the direction that will be taken in the future.

A preliminary consultation was made available to stakeholders but due to the fact that over 90% (496) of the 541 were residents of Essex, we are combining the data from the preliminary consultation with the resident consultation which was made available to the residents of Essex. The only difference between the two consultations is that the resident one contained two additional questions - 'How would you prefer to travel and why?'

The strategy itself contains **three** sections:

**Section 1:** Explains why walking is important and explores the drivers for change.

**Section 2:** Sets the Essex Walking Vision – “Easy, Safe and a Normal part of our everyday lives” and how this can be achieved.

**Section 3:** Explains the monitoring regime we will adopt to assess the effectiveness of the Strategy and the Performance Indicators we will use to track progress. This section also outlines potential funding options.

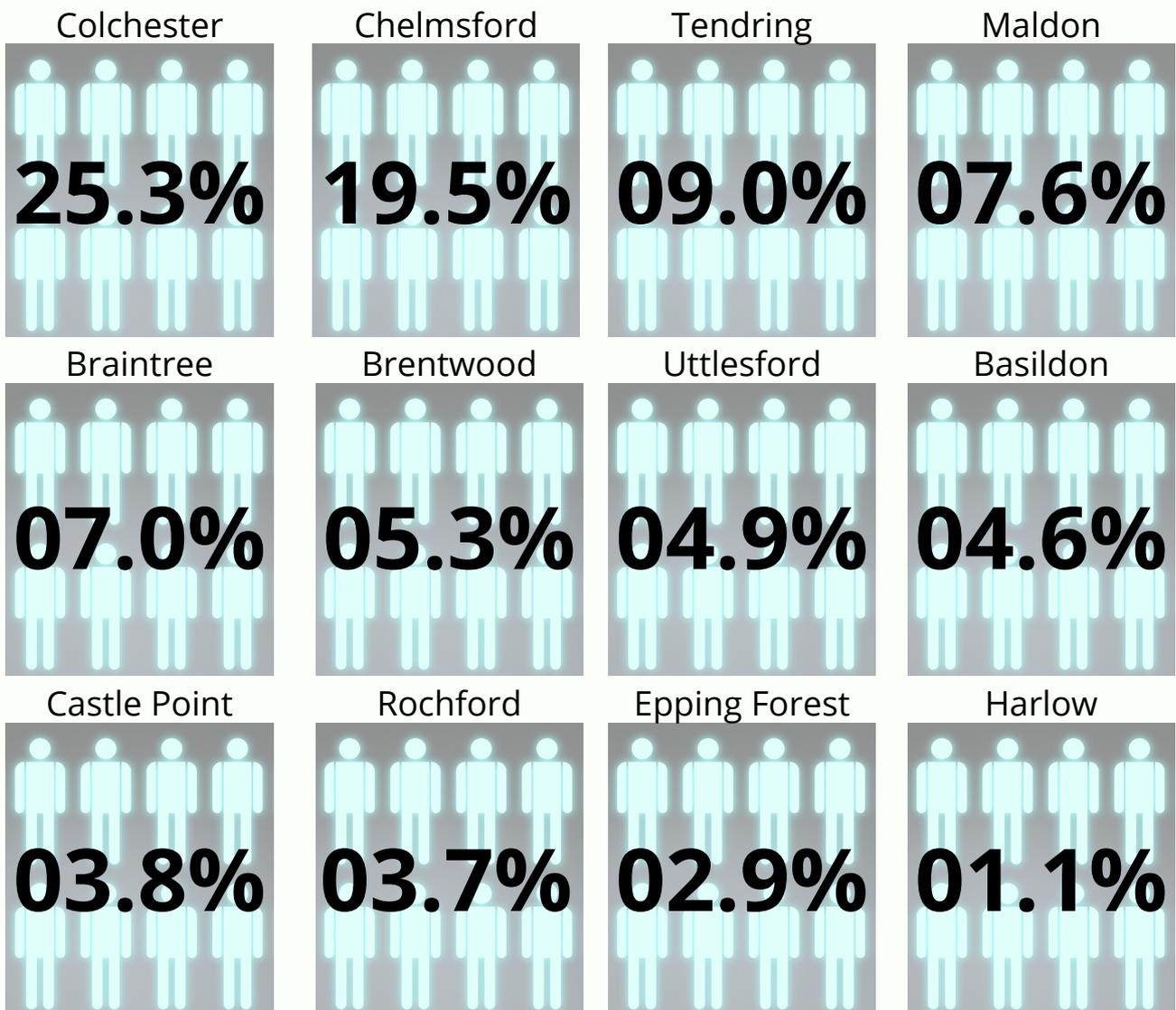
The preliminary consultation was published on 05 June 2019 and was open for 8 weeks closing on 31 July 2019, received 541 total responses. The resident consultation was published on ... and was open for ... closing on ... and it received a total of 343 responses, making the overall total of responses from both consultations 884.

The results of both surveys will help shape a further engagement piece that will inform the final version of the strategy.

# Are they a resident?

92.1% (815) of the 884 respondents are residents of Essex.

# Where are they from?



2.8% of respondents did not state where they live.

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# Findings

Colchester had the highest number of respondents with 244. Chelmsford and Tendring followed with 172 and 80 respondents respectively. Epping forest (26) and Harlow (10) had significantly lower response rates than any other location.

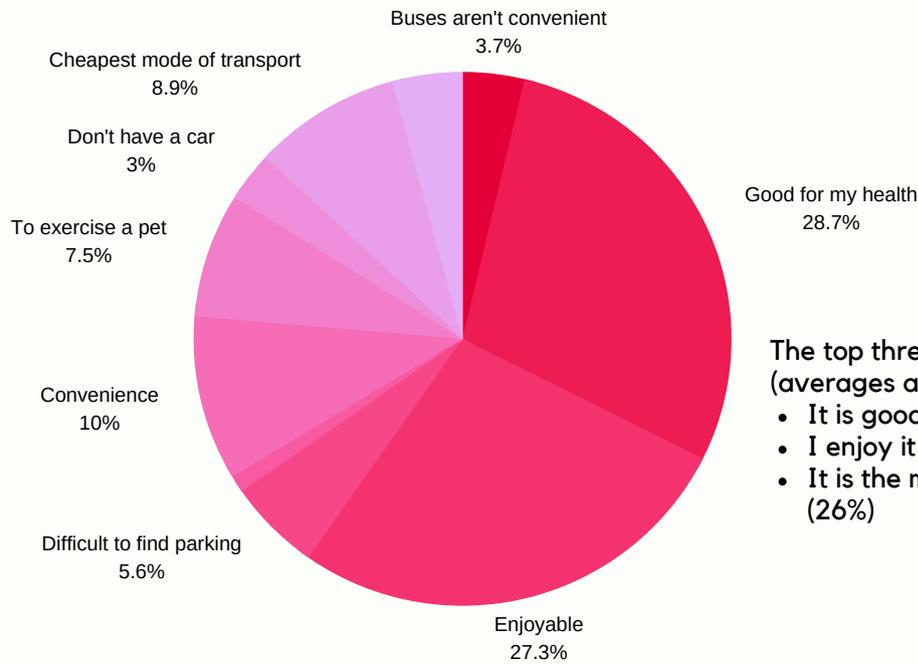
Over half of the respondents (598) stated that 'leisure' was the main purpose for walking with 286 stating they walk for functional reasons such as walking to work.

The main purpose for people walking is to enjoy green spaces with 602 out of 884 at least once a week and 220 of these being more than 5 times a week. This is closely followed by going to the shops with 546 people walking for this purpose at least once a week.

On average 77% of Essex residents walk for more than 15 minutes. The average across Essex for only walking 15 minutes or less is approximately 19.3% with 30% of Tendring residents as the highest value and 10.6% of Brentwood residents as the lowest.

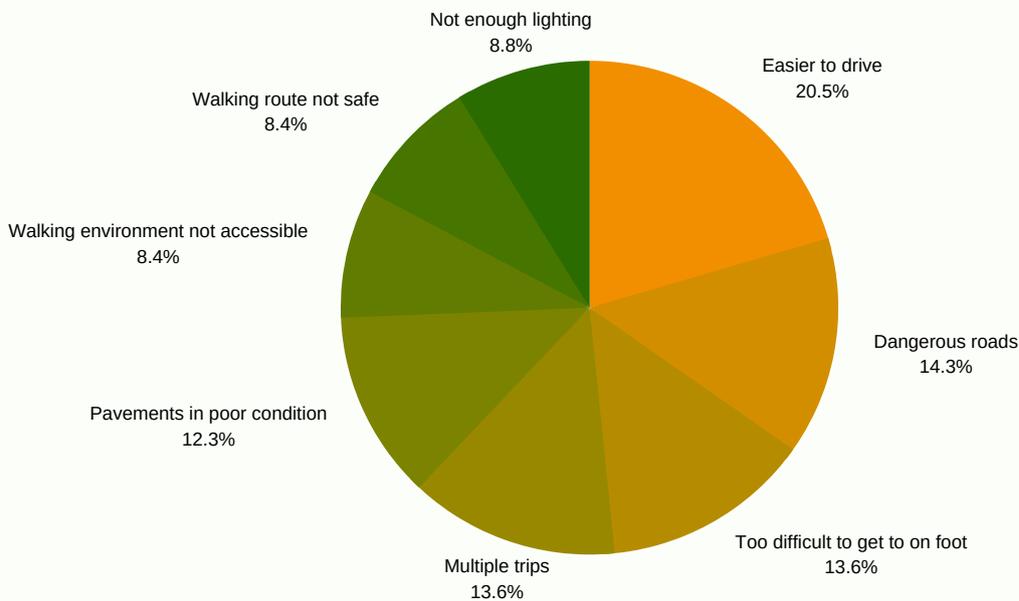
For 10-15 minute distances, 728 out of 884 residents would walk rather than use other modes of transport such as driving.

# Findings cont.



The top three motivations for walking are (averages are approximate):

- It is good for my health (75%)
- I enjoy it (72%)
- It is the most convenient way to travel (26%)



The top three barriers which prevent people from walking are: it is easier to drive (7.1%), the roads are too dangerous (5.0%) and joint third at 4.8% it is too difficult to get to my destination and I have to do multiple trips. It is interesting to note that Epping Forest residents do not indicate any barriers which prevent them from walking.

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We asked residents 'what would encourage you to walk more?' 52.8% said better maintained footways while 30.5% said more green infrastructure but there were 20.7% that said none of these as they already walk a lot which suggests at least 20% of Essex residents are satisfied with the amount of walking they already do. There was an option to comment 'other' reasons as to what would encourage people to walk more with the most mentioned 'other reason' being less cyclists on footways.

When looking at the results from preferred mode of transport - it is worth noting that this question (and why?) only appeared in the resident consultation. The only time people prefer to walk over drive alone is when going to the doctors (preferred by 5%) or to enjoy green spaces, where 51% of respondents would rather walk to enjoy green spaces.

However, the option to drive alone is overwhelmingly preferred when travelling to work/school (preferred by 18%) and when visiting family/friends (preferred by 27%). It is interesting that 26% of people stated that their motivation for walking is because it is the most convenient way to travel however the top barrier which prevents people walking was 'it is easier to drive'.

Colchester, Chelmsford, Rochford and Uttlesford said their top barrier was that it is easier to drive. Colchester and Chelmsford it is easier to drive due to the size of the area and residents have to do multiple trips in one go. However in Rochford and Uttlesford this is due to cyclists using pavements, making walking unsafe and the speed of vehicles - residents said they would like more traffic calming measures in place.