

# **Southend Seafront Area Action Plan (DPD4)**

**Draft background information and  
evidence base**

## Contents

- A. Introduction – Background Technical Reports**
- B. Climate Change / Flood Risk**
  - 1. Condition of Sea Defences / Flood Risk
  - 2. Condition of Cliffs
  - 3. Renewable Energy
  - 4. Air Quality
  - 5. Water Quality
    - a) *Demand*
    - b) *Coastal Bathing Water*
    - c) *Transitional Waters*
- C. Nature Conservation and Biodiversity**
  - 1. Habitats and Species
    - a) *Habitat types – Species*
    - b) *Habitat types – Terrestrial*
    - c) *Species type*
  - 2. Developed Coast
    - a) *Population Densities*
    - b) *Demand for road travel*
    - c) *Demand for cycling*
    - d) *Pressure for coastal marine recreation*
- D. Public Realm and Open Space**
  - 1. Parks and Amenity Open Space
    - a) *District Parks*
    - b) *Local Parks*
    - c) *Important Amenity Open Space*
  - 2. Seafront Setting
    - a) *Green Belt*
    - b) *Special Landscape Areas*
    - c) *Open Estuary*
  - 3. Built Heritage
    - a) *Listed Building*
    - b) *Conservation Areas*
    - c) *Scheduled Ancient Monuments*
    - d) *Landmark Buildings*
    - e) *Design Award Winners*
  - 4. Green Grid
- E. Economic Development**
  - 1. Leisure and Tourism
    - a) *Attractions and Facilities*
    - b) *Hotels*
  - 2. Patterns of Employment and equality
- F. Housing Development**
  - a) *Dwelling Provision*
  - b) *Affordable Housing*
- G. Movement and Access**

## A. Introduction – Background Technical Reports

- 1.1 This document brings together in summary form key information relating to Southend Seafront. It is not definitive and may be added to over time.
- 1.2 The full evidence base and source of statistical information used to prepare the Seafront Area Action Plan 'Issues and Options Report' can be found in the following Technical Reports and Strategies:
  1. Area Profiles - Southend and Wards (2001 Census) March 2005
  2. Southend Annual Monitoring Report (LDF) – December 2005
  3. Environment Agency Indicative flood maps
  4. Southend on Sea Borough Council Shoreline Strategy Plan (1998) Mouchel Consulting Limited Volumes I, II & III
  5. Essex Shoreline Management Plan (1997) Southend-on-Sea Borough Council and Mouchel & Partners Ltd
  6. Policy Statement of Flood and Coastal Defence 2003-2008
  7. Natural England (January 2001) *Benfleet and Southend Marshes- European Marine Site: English Nature's advice given under Regulation 33(2) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994* Natural England
  8. Natural England (June 2000) *Essex Estuaries European Marine Site: English Nature's advice given under Regulation 33(2) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994* Natural England
  9. Natural England (May 2001) *Thames Estuaries European Marine Site: English Nature's advice given under Regulation 33(2) of the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994* Natural England
  10. Southend Local Biodiversity Action Plan (2003) Southend Borough Council
    - a. Southend's Local Action Plan - Annual Report for 2004
    - b. Southend's Local Action Plan - Annual Report for 2003
  11. Southend Conservation Areas Leaflets – Chapman's Lord, Clifftown, Crowstone, Eastern Esplanade, Leigh Cliff, Leigh, Leigh Old Town, Seafront, Shoebury Garrison, Shorefields, The Kursaal, The Leas
  12. Southend on Sea Register of Listed Buildings
  13. A Study of Open Space and Recreation in Southend on Sea – Final Report, Leisure and the Environment August 2004
  14. TGSE Green Grid Strategy: greening the gateway (2005) TGSE Green Grid Partnership
  15. Southend Commercial Seafront: Regeneration Principles (2005) EDAW
  16. Southend on Sea Town Centre: Implementation Plan and Financial Framework (2003) Burro Happold Part One & Two (*where relates to seafront*)
  17. Southend Fishing Strategy (2002) VantagePoint Consultants
  18. Provisional Local Transport Plan Transport Data Report 2003 – July 2004

- 19. Provisional Local Transport Plan 2006 to 2011: Review of Baseline Transport Conditions July 2005
- 20. Local Transport Plan 2006 to 2011 - Appendices A to C

- 1.3 The following is a summary of key information used to develop the issues and options that should be considered in formulation of planning policy for Southend Seafront.

## B. Climate Change / Flood Risk

### 1. Condition of sea defences / flood risk

- 1.1 **Flood risk:** Government policy emphasises the need for flood risk to influence the location of development, and for development plans to follow a 'sequential test' in relation to the level of flood risk, directing development away from areas at risk of flooding.
- 1.2 Current indicative floodplain maps identify a number of areas in the Borough to be 'at risk', mainly from tidal flooding. The following areas on the seafront fall within EA Flood Zone 3:
- Two Tree Island and land to north up to the base of Belton Hill
  - Leigh Old Town
  - Leigh Old town to Pier up to the back of the seafront road
  - inland area east of the Pier moving north east through Southchurch Park and Thorpe Hall Golf Course.
  - Inland area from Shoebury common through Gunners park
- 1.3 However, the current indicative floodplain maps do not take account of existing flood defences, which in Southend have been regularly and systematically improved to meet perceived levels of risk. Sea defences within the Borough are the responsibility of the Borough Council and their condition has been assessed as 'good' Grade 3. The level of actual risk, and the areas actually remaining at risk, are therefore likely to be much lower than is indicated by these maps.
- 1.4 As of December 2005, the Council's records and knowledge on this matter (which remain informal at the present time) indicate that no planning permissions were granted during the monitoring year contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on flood defence grounds. This position is reinforced by Environment Agency data for 2003/04, which also states that the number of planning permissions granted in Southend during that year contrary to the advice of the Agency on grounds of either flood defence was nil (High Level Target 12, Development and Flood Risk 2003/04, Environment Agency, January 2005).

### 2. Condition of Cliffs

- 2.2 The area represents the former and now abandoned south facing coastal marine cliffs of the Thames Estuary. Originally these marine cliffs would have been subject to active erosion of the toe by wave action. However, during the recent geological past, the development of estuary sediment would have provided some protection, more recently with the introduction of flood defences etc.
- 2.3 Extensive sampling of the cliff sub soil confirms that the make up is that found throughout the Thames estuary and basin. It forms, in general

terms, two distinct layers overlain by varying depths of made ground. London clay is the general term given to this type of material. It comes as a brown upper layer and is termed as weathered; this overlies a dark grey clay termed as unweathered. Between these layers is frequently found a damp softened thin band, which can be lubricated from the surface by water entering vertical fissures, these being derived from both seasonal "shrink - heave and down-slope movement. This softened band can cause reduced frictional stability which in turn might allow a rotational slip to occur. A rotational slip being the hallmark of London Clay.

- 2.4 In the absence of other factors, slopes in London Clay will degrade naturally to a stable angle, which is between 8-10 degrees. The cliffs fronting the estuary at Southend vary from 12-30 degrees. This infers that the cliffs are naturally unstable and would require man-made intervention that either lowers the angle or fixes the layers preventing deep seated movement. The clay layer moves down-slope continuously and this phenomena, known as creep, can be seen in many areas of the toes, where the soil is passing over the back edges of footpaths and showing its presence in trees and lamp columns moving from the vertical.

### **3. Renewable Energy**

- 3.1 The Borough of Southend-on-Sea is an already densely developed urban area with tightly drawn boundaries, and with an extensive foreshore which is of international, national and local significance for biodiversity. There is therefore little or no opportunity within the Borough for commercial scale electricity generation capacity from any source within its boundaries. No renewable energy megawatt capacity was installed during the monitoring year, and this situation is not expected to change in the short to medium term.
- 3.2 Clearly, however, regeneration and growth provide the opportunity, indeed the requirement, to promote the use of renewable energy sources in relation to new development in the town.

### **4. Air Quality**

- 4.1 The main issue surrounding air quality is the fact that increasing emissions from traffic on roads acts as a strong deterrent for many people to cycle or walk their journey as it creates an unhealthy travelling environment. This actively deters them away from more sustainable modes of transport towards increased car use.
- 4.2 Recent monitoring has indicated that levels of particulates (PM<sub>10</sub>) and nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) within the Borough are currently, 23ug/m<sup>3</sup> and 31ug/m<sup>3</sup> slightly below 40ug/m<sup>3</sup> which is the air quality objectives in the National Air Quality Strategy.

## 5. Demand for Water and Water Quality

### a) Demand

- 5.1 Water in the Borough is supplied by Essex Suffolk Water and water safety is the overall responsibility of the Drinking Water Inspectorate.
- 5.2 The Council's records and knowledge on this matter (which remain informal at the present time) indicate that no planning permissions were granted during the monitoring year (2004/05) contrary to the advice of the Environment Agency on water quality grounds. This position is reinforced by Environment Agency data for 2003/04, which also states that the number of planning permissions granted in Southend during that year contrary to the advice of the Agency on grounds of water quality was nil (High Level Target 12, Development and Flood Risk 2003/04, Environment Agency, January 2005).

### b) Coastal Bathing Waters

- 5.3 Southend-on-Sea has seven miles of award winning beaches and bathing waters including achievement of 4 International Blue Flag Awards in 2006. The majority of Southend's bathing waters meet EU Guideline standard and are recognised as being amongst the highest quality beaches and bathing waters in the country.

Beach	Sampling year	Compliance
<b>Leigh Bell Wharf</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>Good</b>
Leigh Bell Wharf	2005	Excellent
Leigh Bell Wharf	2004	Good
Leigh Bell Wharf	2003	Excellent
<b>Southend Chalkwell</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
Southend Chalkwell	2005	Good
Southend Chalkwell	2004	Good
Southend Chalkwell	2003	Good
<b>Southend Jubilee</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>Good</b>
Southend Jubilee	2005	Excellent
Southend Jubilee	2004	Excellent
Southend Jubilee	2003	Good
<b>Southend Thorpe Bay</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
Southend Thorpe Bay	2005	Good
Southend Thorpe Bay	2004	Good
Southend Thorpe Bay	2003	Good
<b>Southend Three Shells</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
Southend Three Shells	2005	Excellent
Southend Three Shells	2004	Good
Southend Three Shells	2003	Good
Southend Three Shells	2002	Excellent
<b>Southend Westcliff Bay</b>	<b>2006</b>	<b>Excellent</b>
Southend Westcliff Bay	2005	Excellent
Southend Westcliff Bay	2004	Excellent
Southend Westcliff Bay	2003	Good

**c) Transitional Waters**

5.4 Of the two identified Transitional Waters in the Southend area that have been risked assessed against the objectives of the Water Framework Directive. The River Thames is the one relevant and significant to the Seafront Area Action Plan.

Transitional water name	Risk category	Water body type	Heavily modified water body	River basin district
<b>Thames</b>	<b>At risk</b>	<b>TW3</b>	<b>Provisional</b>	<b>Thames</b>
<b>Thames Typology results:</b>				
Salinity Category	Tidal Category	Area (hectares)	Latitude	Longitude
Polyhaline	Macrotidal	24737.00	51.48815	.63514
<b>Risk assessment results:</b>				
Point source pollution	Diffuse source pollution	Water abstraction and flow regulation	Physical or 'morphological' alteration	Alien species
At risk	At risk	Probably at risk	At risk	Probably at risk

Environment Agency

## C. Nature conservation and biodiversity

### 1. Habitats and Species

- 1.1 Key Sites of value to nature and biodiversity relevant to the Southend Seafront Area Action Plan include:
- RAMSAR site;
  - Site of Special Scientific Interests;
  - Special Protection Area (for Birds)/ Special Areas for Conservation (SAC) Marine / “Natura 2000”;
  - Leigh National Nature Reserve (part): and
  - Southend Foreshore Local Nature Reserve
- 1.2 Under the emerging legal requirements for Authorities under the Habitats Directive and by implication the Conservation (Natural Habitats &c) Regulations 1994, there is a legal requirement for Authorities to carry out an Appropriate Assessment of the policies and proposals in their Development Strategies to ensure that account is taken of the objectives of National and European designations, and significant adverse effects on the Benfleet and Southend Marshes European Marine Site are avoided. The scope and nature of the Appropriate Assessment will be determined at an early stage to inform the Area Action Plan as it is being considered.
- 1.3 The following information is taken from the Borough Council’s Local Biodiversity Action Plan 2003, the statistical information therein reflects that available at time of citation. The data has been updated by subsequent Annual Reports in 2003 and 2004. As such, these Reports also form part of this evidence base.
- a) Habitat Types - Aquatic**
- 1.4 ***Brackish lagoons or saline pond:*** A number exist in Southend on Sea. The most important examples occur at:
- Two Tree Island
  - Leigh Marshes
- 1.5 ***Intertidal mudflats and sandflat communities.*** The mudflats and sandflats exposed at low tide opposite Southend on Sea are known as Southend on Sea Foreshore. The Foreshore is part of a larger site called the Benfleet and Southend Marshes, which is the intertidal part of the Thames Estuary from Benfleet to Shoebury. Benfleet and Southend Marshes support internationally and nationally important populations of regularly occurring migratory bird species and internationally important assemblages of waterfowl. Southend on Sea Foreshore itself has the following designations:
- 1.6 ***Special Protection Area (SPA),*** as part of the Benfleet and Southend Marshes, this designation is under the EU Birds Directive, implemented in the UK by the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 and the

Conservation (Natural Habitats &c.) Regulations 1994. Special Protection Areas are of international nature conservation importance and there is an obligation on the UK Government to take measures to protect the habitats containing rare and vulnerable species and regular occurring migratory birds that are designated as SPA's. Benfleet and Southend Marshes qualify under Article 4.2 as a Wetland of International Importance by regularly supporting, in winter, over 20,000 waterfowl. The Marshes also qualify under Article 4.2 by supporting 1% or more of the international or national over-wintering populations of migratory waterfowl. In the 1991 SPA Citation these were identified as the following species (population totals quoted are based on a 5 year peak mean 1985/86 - 1989/90):

Internationally important populations

- Knot (*Calidris canutus*) 8,400 birds (2% East Atlantic Flyway)
- Dark-bellied brent goose (*Branta bernicla bernicla*) 7,200 birds (4% world population)
- Grey plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) 2,500 birds (1% East Atlantic Flyway)
- Nationally important populations
- Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*) 11,100 birds (3% UK population)
- Ringed plover (*Charadrius hiaticula*) 430 birds (2% UK population)

- 1.7 **Ramsar site**, as part of the Benfleet and Southend Marshes, designated in accordance with the 1971 Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention). Benfleet and Southend Marshes qualify under Criterion 3a by regularly supporting, in winter, over 20,000 waterfowl. The Marshes also qualify under Criterion 3c by supporting international important wintering populations of migratory waterfowl. In the 1991 Ramsar Citation these were identified as the following species (population totals quoted are based on a 5 year peak mean 1985/86 - 1989/90):
- Dark-bellied brent goose (*Branta bernicla bernicla*) 7,200 birds (4% world population and 8% of those wintering in the UK)
  - Grey plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*) 2,500 birds (1% East Atlantic Flyway and 12% of UK population)
  - Knot (*Calidris canutus*) 8,400 birds (2% East Atlantic Flyway and 4% of UK population)
- 1.8 **Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)**, as part of the Benfleet and Southend Marshes, designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. SSSI's represent the best examples of the UK's natural features and habitats.
- 1.9 **Local Nature Reserve**, designated under the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 for their nature conservation and recreational importance. Local authorities can declare Local Nature Reserves.
- 1.10 **Leigh National Nature Reserve**, part of the foreshore opposite Leigh-on-Sea, south and east of the eastern half of Two Tree Island is

designated as Leigh National Nature Reserve. The foreshore here has areas of Saltmarsh and Eelgrass beds.

- 1.11 **Southend on Sea Foreshore** is an incredibly rich ecosystem that contains and supports huge numbers of invertebrate fauna including Hydrobia snails, crabs, mudhopper crustaceans (*Corophium* sp.), molluscs (*Macoma*, *Cardium*, *Littoria*, *Rissoa* and *Theodoxus* sp.), and worms (*Nereis*, *Nephtys*, *Notomastus* and *Arenicola* sp.). Additionally algae (*Enteromorpha* and *Ulva* sp.) that colonises areas of suitable habitat across the mudflats also provides food for a variety of species. Whilst at first glance the foreshore may look very similar there are a number of different microhabitats or biotope classes that make up the intertidal mudflats and sandflats. Each biotope will have different levels of composition of sand, silt and shingle and support differing densities and types of invertebrate fauna that in turn will appeal to different wading birds and waterfowl. During the winter thousands of these wading birds and geese arrive from northern Europe and spend the winter months feeding on the mudflats on the foreshore as they become exposed between tides. It is possible that between 15,000 and 25,000 birds, consisting of between 15 and 17 different bird species, can be feeding on the foreshore at any one time. An annual bird count (during January or February) is undertaken across the whole foreshore and numbers recorded over the eight counting areas that make up the whole foreshore. Bird numbers may fluctuate from year to year but the following species occur in important numbers on Southend on Sea Foreshore:

Internationally important populations

- Knot (*Calidris canutus*)
- Dark-bellied brent goose (*Branta bernicla bernicla*)

Nationally important populations

- Grey plover (*Pluvialis squatarola*)
- Dunlin (*Calidris alpina*)
- Bar-tailed godwit (*Limosa lapponica*)
- Black-tailed godwit (*Limosa limosa*)

- 1.12 **Natural' lakes and ponds:** A number are found scattered over the borough of Southend on Sea. Most of these are found on land owned by Southend on Sea Borough Council. Large 'natural' ponds or lakes are not usually found on private land although new golf course developments often have water features designed now that may double up as potential sources of irrigation. Sites with important ponds or lakes, within or adjacent to the Seafront area, include:

- Gunners Park
- Southchurch Park (adj)

- 1.13 **Feedbed and marsh:** The current status and extent of reedbed in the borough of Southend on Sea is not known. Detailed surveying is required. Some sites are known to support small areas of reedbed. These include Southchurch Park East (adjacent to Seafront area) and Leigh Marshes.

- 1.14 **Rivers Streams and Drainage ditches:** There are a number of watercourses in Southend on Sea and many of these watercourses provide an important wildlife corridor function in the urban environment including Drainage Ditch – Southchurch Park East adjacent to the Seafront area.
- 1.15 **Saltmarsh:** Saltmarsh can be found to the south and east of Two Tree Island and its important conservation value can be recognised by its inclusion into an area (also including the local seagrass bed) that makes up the Leigh National Nature Reserve. Approximately 57.5 hectares of saltmarsh are believed to exist within the borough of Southend on Sea. A variety of specialist plants that are able to tolerate the harsh conditions and regular tidal inundations are found growing in the local saltmarsh. These include sea purslane (*Halimione portulacoides*), sea lavender (*Limonium vulgare*) and golden samphire (*Inula crithmoides*). Large numbers of waders and waterfowl also regularly use the saltmarsh as a safe roosting area during high tide. In recognition of this habitat's national and international importance the local saltmarsh is also included within the following conservation designations (as part of the Benfleet and Southend Marshes):
- Site of Special Interest (SSSI),
  - Special Protection Area for Birds (SPA), and
  - Ramsar site (Wetland of international importance).
- 1.16 Saltmarsh at Two Tree Island is believed to be under threat from 'coastal squeeze' and erosion is thought to be accelerating locally. Action, particularly from the local group of Essex Wildlife Trust and local Conservation Volunteers, has been undertaken to try to limit erosion and future loss. Monitoring of any changes to the extent of the saltmarsh is also being undertaken.
- 1.17 **Seagrass Beds:** Eelgrass can be found growing over a large area in an irregularly shaped 'patch' south east of Two Tree Island. This area is part of Leigh National Nature Reserve and is also part of Southend and Benfleet Marshes. Southend and Benfleet Marshes is a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), an internationally important wetland (Ramsar) site, a Special.
- 1.18 Protection Area (SPA) for birds and a candidate Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the European Habitats and Species Directive. The area also falls within Southend on Sea Local Nature Reserve.
- 1.19 Aerial photographs of the eelgrass bed at Leigh on Sea were available for a number of years. At this site *Zostera noltii* and *Zostera angustifolia* can be found growing together with *Z. noltii* predominant on free draining hummocks whilst *Z. angustifolia* favour the wetter depressions between the hummocks.

- 1.20 Flood damage in 1953 severely affected the bed, which had been decimated previously by the wasting disease between 1930-35. However, by 1977 it was reported that the bed appeared to have successfully recovered and expanded. Unfortunately no further information on this site has been published since 1977.
- 1.21 English Nature undertook site visits to the bed at Leigh on Sea during the late 1990's after concern was raised about the affects of cockle harvesting through the area. Whilst there did appear to be an immediate small scale impact, later visits showed areas subjected to cockle harvesting had been successfully re-colonised and covered with new growth. Longterm impacts are believed to be negligible, although any increase in the frequency of cockle harvesting should be monitored.
- 1.22 In addition to the main bed of eelgrass south east of Two Tree Island there are scattered and isolated plants occurring frequently on Southend on Sea foreshore where they may be found at low tide

**b) Habitat Types – Terrestrial**

- 1.23 ***Ancient and Veteran trees:*** The status of Veteran trees within the borough of Southend on Sea is unclear. A number of individuals are believed to exist and a number of mature trees can be found in locations that indicate historic boundaries or hedgerows. More detailed surveying is urgently needed.
- 1.24 ***Arable Land and Field Margins:*** Within the borough of Southend on Sea around 368 hectares is farmland, predominantly arable, none of which are in the Seafront Area. There is a large area of arable land to the west of the seafront in Hadleigh. It should be accepted that farmland within the borough of Southend on Sea is privately owned or leased. National initiatives, including grant schemes, may have greater impact on this habitat than any action Southend on Sea Borough Council may undertake.
- 1.25 ***Hedgerows:*** The current status and extent of hedgerows across the borough of Southend on Sea is unclear. A survey is needed to identify ancient and wildlife-important hedgerows in Southend. There are no particularly important examples of 'Ancient' hedges that have been identified as having historic value located in the Seafront area. However, other hedgerows, which are thought to be potentially good for ground flora and wildlife can be found at:
- Thorpe Hall Golf Course (adj)
  - Belton Hills Local Nature Reserve,
  - Gunners Park
- 1.26 ***Natural Grassland:*** Within the Seafront area there are several examples of unimproved grassland. The sites that do exist can be divided into the following categories

- 1.27 ***Herb-rich grassland*** (containing nationally scarce plants):
- Belton Hills Local Nature Reserve (*Dianthus armeria*, *Vicia bithynica*)
  - Shoebury Common, especially north of Shoebury Common Road and west of Waterford Road (*Rumex pulcher*, *Trifolium* spp.)
  - Grounds of Shoebury Coastguard Station (several rare grasses, *Trifolium* spp.)
  - Shoebury Old Ranges Nature Reserve (managed by Essex Wildlife Trust)
  - Shoebury, former MOD land and proposed extension to Gunners Park
  - Shoebury East Beach, especially cliff tops.
- 1.28 ***Grassland containing plants rare or localised in Essex:***
- Southend Cliffs (*Poa inferna*, *Salvia verbenaca*, *Anthriscus caucalis*)
  - Small area of grassland on north side of Eastern Esplanade, junction with Plasnewydd (*Saxifraga granulata*, *Salvia verbenaca*)
  - Gunners Park (*Oenanthe pimpinelloides* etc.)
- 1.29 ***Other grassland areas:***
- Leigh Cliffs
  - Thorpe Hall Golf Course (adj)
  - Grassland within Shoebury Barracks
- 1.30 ***Grassland of special importance to invertebrates:***
- Belton Hills Local Nature Reserve
- 1.31 ***Public Parks and Amenity Open Space:*** (See also Section on Public Realm) Southend on Sea, whilst very urbanised, has a range of parks and public open spaces. Some of these parks are the result of bequeathment to the people of Southend on Sea, and others are the result of purchase by the local authority. However the majority of Southend on Sea's parks and open spaces are isolated and increasing fragmented as 'natural' landscapes between sites are lost through development and land use changes. There are a number of parks and green open spaces in Southend on Sea, which may vary widely in their visual, recreational and wildlife quality. The often conflicting demands for usage space means that those that have 'good' recreational resources may not be necessarily that good for wildlife. Some examples of the largest parks in or adjacent to the seafront area include:
- Gunners Park
  - Southchurch Park (adj)
  - Southend Cliffs
- 1.32 ***Railway Embankments Habitats Statement:***
- "Southend on Sea Borough Council recognises that both railway tracksides and embankments are important habitats within their own right. Southend on Sea Borough Council also recognises that because of the built nature of the townscape within the borough of

Southend on Sea this habitat provides both a home and a safe route as a 'wildlife corridor' for the movement of wildlife. Further Southend on Sea Borough Council recognises the benefits of linking new 'wildlife corridors' with existing corridors such as railway embankments wherever this is practicable and appropriate.

- Southend on Sea Borough Council urges all land owners to undertake management or maintenance in an appropriate manner that both retains the rich diversity of the wildlife currently found on trackside land or embankments and encourages the development of increased wildlife diversity.
- Southend on Sea Borough Council recommends that discussions with local wildlife groups and the appropriate surveys are undertaken before any major landscaping schemes or engineering works are undertaken on this habitat.
- Southend on Sea Borough Council agrees to support actions, where practicable or possible, that will benefit the biodiversity of this habitat or provides its long-term protection."
- The c2c (London Fenchurch Street to Shoeburyness) line from Chalkwell Station westwards, lies within the Seafront area.

### c) **Species Type**

1.33 **Dark-Bellied Brent Goose** In 1997 the Essex population was estimated to be the following:

	% of global pop	% of national pop
Benfleet & Southend Marshes (3,819)	1.3	3.7
Blackwater Estuary (15,392)	5.1	14.9
Colne Estuary (4,907)	1.6	4.8
Crouch and Roach Estuaries (3,074)	1.0	3.0
Dengie (2,308)	0.8	2.2
Foulness (13,075)	4.4	12.7

1.34 Today, about 40% of the British population and around 16% of the global population of the dark-bellied brent goose is thought to be present at peak times around the Essex coast. The eelgrass bed that is found on the Southend Foreshore, south east of Two Tree Island, is an important feeding site for overwintering dark-bellied brent geese with peak numbers frequently occurring in late October. The local group of Essex Wildlife Trust regularly organises events at Two Tree Island to coincide with peak numbers of the bird. Two Tree Island provides an accessible site where this species may be readily observed.

1.35 Records of this species vary from year to year but in most years numbers are usually between 5,000 to 6,000 birds. These numbers equate to around 12% of the Essex population or around 2% of the world population. It appears that the numbers of overwintering brent

geese feeding at Two Tree Island are increasing gradually, in line with a general global increase in the population of this species.

- 1.36 **Skylark** Most skylarks are located in open grassland in Southend on Sea, predominantly along its borough boundary to the north where open land, playing fields, golf courses and allotment sites occur. The Skylark has been recorded on the other sites such as the Old Ranges at Shoeburyness. Any open grassland that is not cut frequently may have the potential to attract this species.
- 1.37 **Shrill Carder Bee:** Belton Hills Local Nature Reserve is thought to be the eastern edge of the population found scattered through south Essex. Initial identification of a single specimen on Belton Hills Local Nature Reserve by Peter Harvey in 2000 was followed by a detailed survey undertaken on the behalf of Southend on Sea Borough Council in 2001. The 2001 survey, part funded by English Nature confirmed the presence of this species on Belton Hills in compartments B, D, E and G. Belton Hills Local Nature Reserve has a dedicated site Management Plan. Since the identification of the shrill carder bee, the management plan has been reviewed and adjusted to reduce any conflict with the requirements of the species.
- 1.38 **Stag Beetle:** There are old records of males from the Southend area that may represent wanderers from a colony at Sheerness in Kent.
- 1.39 **Bats:** There are a small number of records of bats foraging in the Southend on Sea area. John Dobson kindly provided details of the most recent bat records for Southend on Sea as set out below:
- Serotine found dead in Priory Park (1983),
  - Brown long-eared bat found injured (1990),
  - Pipistrelle recorded foraging (1991),
  - Serotine roost found near to Priory Park (1994),
  - Brown long-eared bat found by member of public (1997), and
  - Serotine rescued from Southend Hospital and re-released after food and drink (2002).
- 1.40 Bats have also been noted flying at several parks and open spaces including Leigh Marshes.
- 1.41 Generally there is a lack of data about the number and status of bat species in Southend on Sea. The roosting and hibernation sites are unknown. It would appear that some parks with open water do support foraging bats.
- 1.42 **Cetaceans (Whales and Dolphins):** There are several records of cetaceans around the Essex coast. These are detailed in “The Mammals of Essex”(John Dobson, 1999).
- 1.43 **Dormouse:** Little is known about the current status of this species. What records occur for the dormouse are all based around Belfairs

Nature Reserve, which whilst not strictly in the borough is owned by Southend on Sea Borough Council.

- 1.44 **Water Vole:** Records of water voles can be found in the Regional Biological Records Centre based in Southend Central Museum. Occasional reports from individuals and local wildlife groups indicate that some historic sites still have water voles present. During 2001 as part of the authority's biodiversity activities, a local ecologist Mr Mike O'Connor was employed to undertake a borough-wide survey for water voles on behalf of the Leisure, Culture and Amenity Services Department. The survey was supported with funding from English Nature and the Environment Agency. The results of this survey were published in early 2002. Briefly the report can be summarised as follows:
- The water vole population is small, no more than 60 adults.
  - The population is highly fragmented and consequently vulnerable, being divided between eight scattered stretches of waterway.
  - A lack of suitable habitat appears to be the principal factor that limits the population.
  - Competition with brown rats (*Rattus norvegicus*) may present a threat to some colonies, necessitating proactive pest control.
  - Habitat enhancement could be considered to be the most important method of expanding the current population.
- 1.45 The following sites in or adjacent to the Seafront area were identified as holding populations of breeding water voles in the 2001 survey:
- Two Tree Island
  - Southchurch Park (East) (adj)
  - Thorpe Hall Golf Course (adj)
- 1.46 The following site was identified as having had water voles present in the 2001 survey although they were not thought to be breeding:
- Shoebury Park
- 1.47 **Great Crested Newt:** There are a number of historic records for sites containing great crested newts. They include several private addresses in Leigh on Sea and Westcliff on Sea, two sites in Great Wakering and a recent report (unconfirmed) of their presence in Edwards Hall Park. Further field survey work is required to update existing knowledge of the status of this species in the borough. Within urban areas the great crested newt can be found utilising garden ponds. It is possible that in some parts of Southend on Sea garden ponds are the most important breeding sites. Further research is needed. Southend on Sea Borough Council, together with a local Amphibian and Reptile Group launched an annual Pond Survey in 2001, in order to encourage residents to record amphibians in their gardens. The results of the Pond Survey will be used to provide data on populations in private gardens
- 1.48 **Reptiles:** The current status of reptiles in Southend on Sea is unclear. Mr J. Cranfield, as local coordinator for the Essex Amphibian and

Reptile Group provided the following records for the Southend on Sea area up to 2002:

- Adder 2 records
- Grass snake 5 records
- Slowworm 13 records
- Viviparous lizard 9 records

- 1.49 It is thought that all species of reptiles in the Southend on Sea area are under-recorded. Key sites in Southend are thought to be Belfairs Nature Reserve, Belfairs Golf Course, Belton Hills, Two Tree Island, Edwards Hall Park and Shoebury Old Ranges. Allotments are thought to hold good populations of reptiles and it is possible other public parks and open spaces provide suitable habitat. It is believed that urban gardens may also support high numbers of reptiles, particularly slowworms, as might 'brownfield' sites (i.e. sites between different development schemes).
- 1.50 **Black Poplar:** The 2001 report recorded 10 mature trees on 5 sites around Southend on Sea, of these individuals two trees were identified as female. The sites within or adjacent to the Seafront area are as follows:
- Leigh Cliffs
  - Southend Cliff Gardens
- 1.51 During 2001 cuttings were collected from the two female trees growing at Jones Memorial Ground and Chalkwell Park respectively, together with cuttings taken from a female tree on the Squier family farm at Doggetts in Rochford. These cuttings were supplied to the Daws Hall Nature Reserve in Suffolk, where the Dedham Vale and Stour Countryside Project have established a clone bank for Essex and Suffolk specimens. Individual trees have been visited and a programme to propagate local trees has been started with the establishment of a local clone bank at the Southend Park's Central Nursery on Wakering Road. Unfortunately the female tree at Jones Memorial Ground was found to be dead in 2002 after a gradual decline through disease and surgery to remove affected branches.
- 1.52 **Deptford Pink:** The Deptford pink has been recorded at Leigh on Sea since 1860. This would appear to have been the earliest known location where this plant is still present today. The Belton Hills Local Nature Reserve itself has had Deptford pink recorded from 1974 although it is probable that it could always be found scattered across the Belton Hills area whenever suitable conditions allowed. Belton Hills Local Nature Reserve has two sites where plants have been recorded, the first immediately below Cliff House had two plants recorded in 1998 but the area appears to have become overgrown with elm suckers. In 2001 an area of scrub around this site was cleared and it is hoped this disturbance may encourage a reappearance of the species in this area. The second site on Belton Hills, to the east of a path and steps, was cleared of scrub and sown with Deptford pink seed in the early 1990's.

The re-introduced seed was gathered from plants grown in a private garden, from seed previously collected from Deptford pink plants on the nature reserve. The second site of Belton Hills has a small but persistent population of the Deptford pink. To encourage its continuation, clearance work was undertaken in 2000, which removed scrub immediately adjacent to the area that the plants could be found. Planned management operations over the whole reserve including phased scrub and tree removal should provide disturbance to the existing sward and may encourage new populations.

## **2. Developed Coast**

### **a) Population Density**

- 2.1 The Thames area is urbanised for 71% of its area and has also seen a slight increase in urbanization over the last decade (1%)<sup>1</sup>. This trend is expected to continue with the development of brownfield sites in particular under the Government's Thames Gateway Growth and Regeneration Agenda.
- 2.2 Within the Thames Gateway South Essex area the planned growth is set out in the draft East of England Plan and includes 55,000 additional jobs and 43,800 additional dwellings of which 13,000 jobs and 6,000 dwellings are proposed in Southend.
- 2.3 The coastline within Southend on Sea is heavily urbanised along its length. The exception is at the western end of the Borough on the border with Castle Point where the coastline is undeveloped (Two Tree Island).
- 2.4 The following data is for all seafront wards. These wards cover a greater area than that proposed for the Seafront Area Action Plan and include land within the Borough up to a distance of approximately 1km from coastline.
- 2.5 The total area covered by these wards up to 1km from the coastline is approximately 1787ha. This is 43% of the land area of the Borough. The population density within the coastal zone is 41 inhabitants per hectare. This compares with an average of 39 inhabitants per hectare for the Borough as a whole. Approximately 46% of the population of the Borough live within 1km of the coastline. The age structure of the population in the coastal zone indicates that 24% are aged between 0 and 20 and 23% are over 60 (age structure is a dimension of age related demands from user groups within population).

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Corine Land Cover (CLC) data based on satellite imagery 1990 and 2000. 'Built up land' is defined as the sum of all areas classified as urban fabric, industrial or commercial units, road and rail networks, ports and airports, and sites for mineral extraction, waste and construction.

Wards	Population	0 to 19	% age	60 plus	% age	Area ha	Density
<b>Total Southend</b>	<b>160, 257</b>	<b>39,162</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>38,218</b>	<b>24%</b>	<b>4131</b>	<b>39</b>
<i>Total Seafront</i>	<i>73,460</i>	<i>17,280</i>	<i>24%</i>	<i>16,879</i>	<i>23%</i>	<i>1787</i>	<i>41</i>
West Leigh	8,670	2067	24%	2,225	26%	237	37
Leigh	9,015	1956	22%	1,946	22%	133	68
Chalkwell	9,207	1672	18%	2,464	27%	161	57
Milton	8,990	1664	19%	2,220	25%	168	54
Kursaal	8,872	2367	27%	1,657	19%	126	70
Thorpe	8,715	1893	22%	2,607	30%	283	31
West Shoebury	10,017	2861	29%	2,149	21%	286	35
Shoeburyness	9,974	2800	28%	1,611	16%	393	25
<i>Seafront as a proportion of Southend</i>	<i>46%</i>	<i>44%</i>		<i>44%</i>		<i>43%</i>	

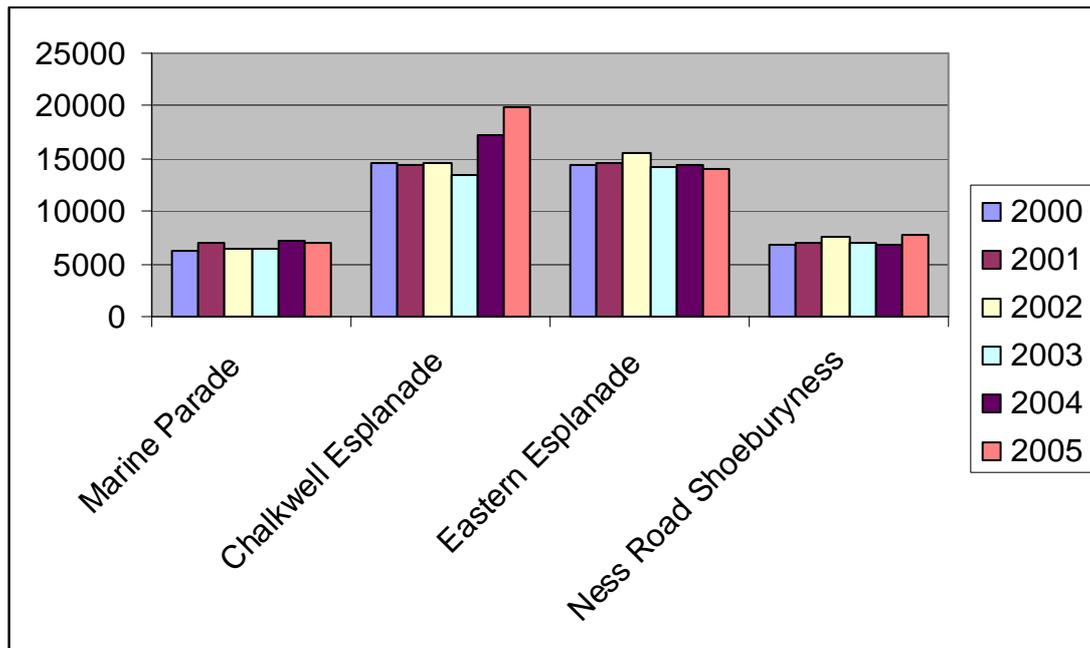
ONS 2001 Census

## b) Demand for road travel

### 2.6 Traffic Counts Average 7 Day Daily Flows 2000 – 2005 - Seafront Road

Road Number	7 Day Daily Average					
	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Marine Parade	6187	6929	6379	6463	7104	6923
Chalkwell Esplanade	14520	14484	14512	13386	17204	19941
Eastern Esplanade	14356	14592	15481	14285	14378	13951
Ness Road Shoeburyness	6786	7010	7637	7019	6908	7810

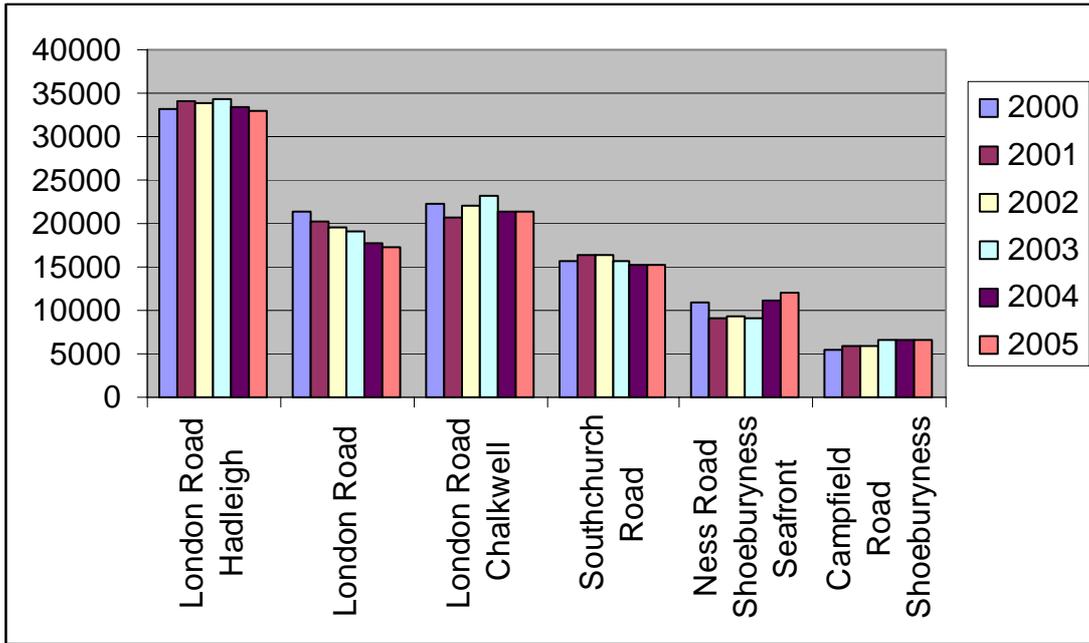
LTP Transport Data Report July 2004



## 2.7 Traffic Counts Average 7 Day Daily Flows 2000 – 2005 – up to 1 km from Foreshore (A13 and B1016)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
London Road Hadleigh	33137	34094	33883	34316	33343	33050
London Road	21357	20334	19532	19102	17710	17197
London Road Chalkwell	22191	20687	22014	23228	21261	21380
Southchurch Road	15785	16394	16285	15737	15193	15133
Ness Road Shoeburyness Seafront	10927	8996	9207	9177	11103	11953
Campfield Road Shoeburyness	5359	5899	5982	6649	6568	6671

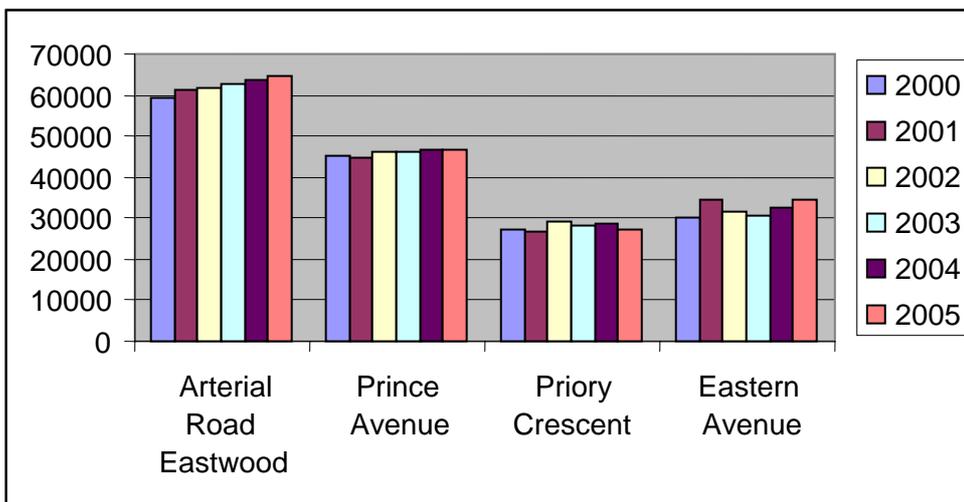
LTP Transport Data Report July 2004



2.8 Traffic Counts Average 7 Day Daily Flows 2000 – 2005 - Northern main route into and across northern part of Borough (A127 and B1159)

	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005
Arterial Road, Eastwood	59278	61363	61827	62647	63680	64861
Prince Avenue	45250	44825	45973	46423	46521	46441
Priory Crescent	27464	26824	29092	28418	28558	27420
Eastern Avenue	30213	34397	31711	30413	32792	34754

LTP Transport Data Report July 2004



## 2.9 Car Parks and Spaces in Seafront Area

Ref	Car Park	Type	Number of Spaces	Purpose
19	Fairheads Green	Sea front	211	Tourist
20	Western Esplanade	Sea front	607	Tourist
21	Belton Gardens North	Sea front	61	Tourist
22	Belton Gardens South	Sea front	49	Tourist
23	Shoebury East Beach	Sea front	2000	Tourist
24	Leigh Foundry	Sea front	11	Tourist
25	Shoebury Common North	Sea front	300	Tourist
26	Shoebury Common South	Sea front	750	Tourist
27	Thorpe Esplanade	Sea front	420	Tourist
28	Victoria Wharf	Sea front	16	Tourist
29	Eastern Esplanade	Sea front	120	Tourist
30	Southchurch Park (East)	Sea front	412	Tourist
31	Marine Parade	On street	31	Tourist
32	Belton Bridge	On street	24	Sh/SS/Com
33	Ness Road	On street	25	Sh/SS/Com
34	Thorpe Esplanade	On street	151	Sh/SS/Com
35	Eastern Esplanade	On street	75	Sh/SS/Com
36	Western Esplanade (West of Pier)	On street	111	Sh/SS/Com
37	Western Esplanade	On street	88	Sh/SS/Com
38	Chalkwell Esplanade	On street	141	Sh/SS/Com
39	Eastern and Thorpe Esplanades	On street	250	Sh/SS/Com
47	Shorefield Road	District	126	Mix

Source: Department of Enterprise Tourism and the Environment Records 2006

Key: SH – Shopping: Com – Commuting: SS – Short Stay: Mix – Mixture of purpose

## 2.10 Car Park Occupancy (key Car Parks) Weekdays in April and September 2004

Car Park	Total Available Spaces	Period of maximum occupation	Maximum Occupation Observed	% Maximum occupancy
<b>Ceylon Road</b>	58	13:00-15:00	38	66%
<b>Fairheads Green</b>	213	13:00-15:00	116	54%
<b>Shorefield Road<sup>2</sup></b>	126	21:00-23:00	129	100%
<b>Seaway<sup>3</sup></b>	495	12:00-15:00	124	25%
<b>Western Esplanade</b>	601	13:00-15:00 21:00-23:00	214 231	36% 38%

<sup>2</sup> Car Parks serves Cliffs Pavilion Theatre Venue

<sup>3</sup> Car Park also serves Town Centre

## Review of Baseline Transport Conditions Provisional LTP2 July 2005

## 2.11 Car Park Occupancy (key Car Parks) Weekdays in August 2004

Car Park	Total Available Spaces	Period of maximum occupation	Maximum Occupation Observed	% Maximum occupancy
Ceylon Road	58	12:00-13:00	37	64%
Fairheads Green	213	11:00-12:00	211	99%
Shorefield Road <sup>4</sup>	126	21:00-22:00	41	33%
Seaway <sup>5</sup>	495	15:00-16:00	403	81%
Western Esplanade	601	14:00-15:00	440	73%

Review of Baseline Transport Conditions Provisional LTP2 July 2005

**c) Demand for cycling**

## 2.12 Average flows along seafront cycle route – Automatic Monitoring

Location	Year	Annual Average Daily Flow				7 day %age change from 2000
		7 Day	5 Day	Saturday	Sunday	
Seafront Cycle Route west of Victoria Road	2000	177	143	183	133	
	2001	228	208	244	315	+ 28.8
	2002	243	216	266	361	+ 37.3
	2003	276	242	296	423	+ 55.9
Thorpe Esplanade Cycle Route, east of Walton Road (installed 2001)	2000	#	#	#	#	
	2001	176	156	228	229	#
	2002	222	195	241	335	+ 26.1
	2003	256	221	273	416	+ 45.5
Shoebury Common Road, west of Waterford Road, Shoeburyness	2003	182	154	200	309	#

LTP Transport Data Report July 2004

**d) Pressure for coastal and marine recreation**

## 2.13 Within the Seafront area there are:

**1.30.17** Yacht/Boat Clubs**1.30.2** 3 public slipways**1.30.3** 1200 mooring sites<sup>4</sup> Car Parks serves Cliffs Pavilion Theatre Venue<sup>5</sup> Car Park also serves Town Centre

## D. Public Realm and Open Space

### 1. Parks and public amenity space

#### a) *District Parks* in the Seafront Area include:

<i>Name</i>	<i>Primary Function</i>	<i>Secondary</i>	<i>Area</i>
Belton Hills/ Marine Parade Gardens	Informal recreation	Formal	25.5 ha
Southend Cliffs	Informal recreation	Formal	9.1 ha
Southchurch Park (Note Adjacent to Area Acton Plan)	Informal recreation	Formal	12.5 ha
Gunners Park (Note: Outline planning permission to realign/relocate park)	Informal recreation	Formal	34 ha

1.1 The Borough Council's Parks' Strategy has adopted a catchment area with a radius of 1.2 km for District Parks, which means that anybody living inside this distance is likely to have to walk no more than 30 minutes to get to such a Park.

1.2 In applying this catchment to existing parks, the radii take into account the ease of walking within an urban environment, but not major impediments such as railway embankments and dual carriageways. Such impediments will clearly have a local impact upon accessibility, so any mapping exercise can only be used as a very general guide. It shows, however, that with regard to the seafront, although much of the central part of the Seafront is within the catchment of at least one District Park there are other small areas in the east and west that do not lie within any catchment. However these areas identified as lacking easy access to a large park within the Borough are within easy reach of the seafront and associated important local parks and amenity open space and comparable facilities outside the Borough such as Hadleigh Castle Country:

#### b) *Local Parks in or adjacent to the Seafront area*

Southchurch Park East	Informal Recreation	12.5 ha
Leigh Cliffs Garden	Informal Recreation	3.1 ha
Thorpe Bay Gardens (East)	Informal Recreation	2.5 ha
Shoebury Common	Informal Recreation	4.6 ha
Shoebury East Beach	Informal Recreation	4.6 ha

**c) Important Amenity Open Space/Neighbourhood Parks within or adjacent to the Seafront Area include:**

Leigh Marshes+	21.1 ha
Undercliff Gardens	0.6 ha
Cliff Garden	
The Shrubbery	1.1 ha
Chalkwell Esplanade+	1.3 ha

*(Note: + The principle function of these areas is the provision of formal sports facilities however they have a close relationship with nearby residential development and perform an amenity open space function on a regular basis)*

- 1.3 All of the above areas of public open space are joined by the seafront road, promenade and cycle route which provides an exciting platform for the Council's 'green grid' initiative and will be a key element of the public realm strategy in the Seafront area.

## **2. Setting of Seafront**

### **a) Green Belt**

- 1.4 The metropolitan Green Belt surrounds the Borough of Southend on Sea and there are small areas which fall within the administrative area and as such tightly abut the built up area. Within the Seafront Area Action Plan boundary there is approximately 157ha of Green Belt. This is at Leigh-on-Sea and covers Belton Hills and Two Tree Island and extends westwards across the Borough boundary into Hadleigh Castle Country Park.

### **b) Special Landscape Areas**

- 1.5 Within the Borough and identified in the current adopted Borough Local Plan is the Hadleigh Marshes Special Landscape Area defined by Essex County Council as having a high quality landscape resulting from a combination of natural features such as vegetation cover and relief. The current Essex and Southend Replacement Structure Plan (Policy NR4) considers that these areas should continue to be areas where conservation or restoration of existing character should be given high priority.
- 1.6 Policy NR4 is a saved policy in the Draft East of England Plan (see Appendix E, page 250). However, it would only be saved until such time as a DPD provided local policy guidance in which case its local application would be repealed. When the RSS Proposed Changes are published, EERA propose to consult strategic planning authorities (inc. ECC & SoS) to clarify again which SP policies should be saved - they will then make formal application to DCLG/GO-East for this to be agreed and done under the legislation.

**c) Open Estuary**

1.7 The quality of the seafront environment and its general appearance are instrumental in determining the resort's image and attractiveness for visitors. They influence investment decisions for tourist and leisure development. They also help determine its amenity value as a recreational and leisure resource for residents and need to be retained or enhanced. Except in Leigh Old Town, the area of seafront south of the seafront road and the Chalkwell-Leigh towpath has a predominantly open and undeveloped character which enables extensive views across the foreshore. This character is enhanced by the adjacent public open spaces and gardens. It has produced a relaxed atmosphere in many parts of the seafront which complements the lively and commercialised Central Seafront Area.

1.8 Outside the Central Area some limited development has occurred south of the road and towpath mainly in respect of beach sales kiosks, beach huts and boat racks in order to cater for recreational needs. Some of these facilities are of a poor quality and need to be upgraded.

**3. Built heritage**

**a) Listed Buildings and Buildings of Local Architectural or Historical Interest** See Appendix 1 and 2

**b) Conservation Areas**

1.9 There are 11 Conservation Areas within the Seafront Area Action Plan. They are:

<i>Conservation Area</i>	<i>Approved Appraisal</i>
▪ Chapman's lord Conservation Area	yes
▪ Clifftown Conservation Area	yes
▪ Crowstone Conservation Area	yes
▪ Eastern Esplanade Conservation Area	yes
▪ Kursaal Conservation Area	yes
▪ Leigh Conservation Area	
▪ Leigh Cliff Conservation Area	
▪ Leigh old Town Conservation Area	
▪ Shoebury Garrison Conservation Area	yes
▪ Shorefields Conservation Area	
▪ The Leas Conservation Area	

**c) Scheduled Ancient Monuments** within the seafront area

- Cold War Defence Boom, Pigs Bay, Shoeburyness
- Defended prehistoric settlement at Shoeburyness (Danish Camp)
- World War II cassion, West Knock Sandbank, Shoeburyness

**d) Landmark buildings**

- Pier
- Palace Hotel
- Pier Hill
- Royal Terrace
- Argyll House /Palmeira Mansions
- Kursaal
- Cliffs Pavilion
- Crowstone House

**e) Design Award Winners**

- Pier Entrance - Council Design Award Winner 2003, RIBA East Spirit of Ingenuity Architecture for Tourism Winner 2003, RIBA East Spirit of Ingenuity Heritage Award Runner up 2003
- Pier Hill - RIBA East Spirit of Ingenuity Architecture for Tourism 2005 Commendation, Institute of Civil Engineer Regional Merit Award, The Celebrate Awards Local Transformation Awards Finalist 2005
- Pier Lifeboat Station - Council Design Award Commendation 2001
- 60 Undercliff Gardens - Council Design Award Winner 2002
- 36 Undercliff Gardens - Council Design Award Commendation 2004
- Outlook Flats Shoebury Garrison - Council Design Award Winner 2005
- Chapel Quarter A & The Stack refurbishment Shoebury Garrison - Council Design Award Commendation 2005
- Allcoat House 27 Westcliff Parade - Council Design Award Conservation Commendation 2005
- Cliffs Pavilion Extension - Council Design Award Commendation 1994
- Kursaal - Council Design Award Conservation Commendation

**4. Green Grid**

- 1.10 This is a long-term project to develop a network of open spaces and green links throughout Thames Gateway South Essex. The Thames Gateway designation provides an exciting opportunity for regeneration in this area, and a desire for change. A radically enhanced image for South Essex, a fresh perception and environmental improvement are essential to this process of change. The aim is to:
- embrace diversity of wildlife habitats and landscapes in town and countryside
  - connect new communities with existing neighbourhoods, the regenerated riverside, local attractions and the countryside, providing improved "access to all"
  - conserve and enhance existing green space and links
  - create high quality new green space and links in areas of opportunity and need
  - contribute to flood management, improved air and water quality and noise abatement

- create a sense of place through enhancement of landscape character and heritage
- enhance the image and confidence in South Essex as a quality place to live, work and invest
- engage all communities in the planning, management and celebration of the network
- plan and promote the network as part of a sustainable transport system
- promote the network for recreation and tourism, education and healthy living

1.11 Greengrid is being developed within the Thames Gateway South Essex area, an area of over 400 sq km broadly to the south of the A127 and the A13. Nearly 600,000 people live in South Essex but it is home to important areas of wildlife and open space too.

1.12 Existing and proposed elements of Greengrid strategy relevant to the Seafront area include:

- Sustrans Cycle Route No
- Seafront promenade
- Parks and Gardens
- Significant urban spaces
- Access to significant attractions - destinations
- Access to the Countryside

## **E. Economic Development**

### **1. Leisure and Tourism**

- 1.1 Southend is the closest seaside resort to London. Whilst it has always traditionally attracted the day visitor market, in common with many other British seaside resorts, it has been affected by national tourism trends including the decline in the longer stay holiday market as overseas holidays have grown in popularity and availability. At the same time, there has been significant growth in the short stay market, and many towns and cities have been actively courting this market and enjoyed considerable success. Southend has not, however, benefited from the growth in the short stay market.
- 1.2 The total number of visitors to Southend increased from 4,634,000 in 1998 to 6,397,400 in 2002. However, the majority of visitors are day visitors (95%) and a very small proportion continue to be overnight visitors (5%).
- 1.3 Direct, indirect and induced business turnover totals £255 million supporting about 6,200 jobs (16% of total employment in the Southend Borough area). Tourism is hugely important to the economic well being of the town.

#### **a) Attractions and facilities**

- 1.4 Southend offers a range of facilities and opportunities for the tourist and leisure visitor. Existing tourist and leisure attractions include:
- Southend Pier- built in 1889, the world's longest pleasure pier at 1.34 miles with a restored railway, boat trips and a RNLI Centre with a viewing tower;
  - Adventure Island- rides and attractions including roller coaster, Log Flume and Jungle Safari, go-karts, dodgems and Adventure Golf;
  - Kursaal- 10 pin bowling, games arcades, casino and historical displays;
  - Sealife Centre- tropical fish and deep water tanks;
  - The Golden Mile amusement arcades;
  - Cliff Gardens- slippage in 2003 has made some of the area unstable and the Victoria bandstand has been removed but the gardens remain a popular venue;
  - Museums and Galleries- Beecroft Art Gallery, Prittlewell Priory, Southchurch Hall Museum and Focal Point Gallery;
  - Planetarium and Discovery Centre;
  - Shopping- the town has a range of retail outlets, mostly on the High Street. The range and quality of retail provision is, however, limited and has been affected by the development of the Lakeside Regional Shopping Centre;
  - Casinos- there are three existing casinos on the seafront (Westcliff Casino, Spielers Casino and the Rendezvous Casino
  - which forms part of the Kursaal entertainment complex);

- Other Entertainment- a number of restaurants, nightclubs and
- bars, a multi-plex cinema, two theatres and the Cliffs Pavilion,
- the town's largest events venue;
- Events- a number of spectator events are organised including
- the Southend Airshow which takes place on the seafront over the May Bank Holiday weekend. It attracts over half a million people each year.

1.5 Adventure Island, the Pier and the Sealife Centre are the main visitor attractions on the seafront. Adventure Island and the Sealife Centre are under the same management and occupy sites leased from the Council. Both are popular seasonal attractions. The Cliffs Pavilion is a successful theatre and concert venue and is ranked ninth amongst the list of provincial theatres in the country. The Cliff Gardens is one of Southend's unique selling points but is now in need of an estimated £9-£34 million of expenditure to address problems of slippage and to secure its future. To the east of the Pier are the amusement arcades, bars and nightclubs of the 'Golden Mile'. These are very popular on Friday and Saturday evenings, but have become difficult to manage at peak times and the focus of anti-social behaviour. The Kursaal has been refurbished and provides a range of facilities including snooker, bowling, a casino, eating, drinking and amusement machines but is isolated from the rest of the seafront due to its enclosed environment.

1.6 In general, whilst the seafront and town centre have a number of attractions, the overall range and quality of the tourism and leisure offer is limited. This affects the ability to attract a wider and higher spending share of the visitor market.

1.7 Within about a 10-15 minute walk from the seafront are the following facilities. Southend has a new eight screen Odeon Cinema which is situated at the northern end of the High Street opposite Southend Victoria Station. This facility has led to a shift in the focus of the evening economy away from the seafront which has become more dominated by nightclubs and seasonal entertainment facilities. A Civic Quarter has developed on Victoria Avenue based around the Civic Offices. This area includes Southend Museum, the main Library, and the Planetarium and newly opened Discovery Centre which are located within the museum.

**b) Hotels**

1.8 A key component of the short break market is the provision of a range of appropriately priced hotel accommodation. If Southend is to become more attractive to the overnight visitor market, it will be necessary to improve the range and quality of hotel accommodation.

1.9 Southend currently has 40 hotels and guest houses and 505 rooms with accommodation ranging in quality up to 3 stars. There are no three or four star hotels in the town centre. With the exception of the Travelodge, most hotels are independently owned and operated.

1.10 Hotel supply is characterised by small hotels and bed and breakfast type establishments. The majority are situated close to the seafront and have fewer than 30 guestrooms. They are typically of a two star standard or below. There are no quality four star hotels at present. The principal hotels include:

- The Westcliff Hotel,
- Travelodge,
- Roslin,
- The Balmoral,
- Erlsmere,
- The Tower Hotel,
- Camelia,
- Premier Travel Inn (Thorpe Bay) and
- Premier Travel Inn (Strawberry Fields)+
- The Essex County+,

*(Note + outside seafront area)*

1.11 The main clientele for these hotels comprise the business traveller visiting Southend's major employers. Given the current range of accommodation it is considered unlikely that senior management currently stays in Southend.

1.12 The East of England Tourism Board in 2002 produced a study on the Economic Impact of Tourism for Southend. The total number of staying visitors is estimated to be 282,400 of which 15% are from overseas. The staying visitor spend is estimated as £30 million. This compares to the 6,115,000 day visitors with an associated spend of £170 million.

#### Room and Occupancy Rates - Average Room Occupancy (All Week) %

District	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	2004 Average
East of England	47	51	57	56	57	67	66	70	71	62	54	46	59
Essex	46	51	55	46	53	61	60	62	65	61	55	46	55
Southend- on-Sea	49	62	60	68	65	74	63	48	55	59	65	45	59

*The occupancy figures below been provided by the East of England Tourist Board 2004.*

1.13 The average occupancy rate in 2004 was almost 60%. This was approximately 4% higher than for Essex as a whole. However, it is below both Bournemouth and Brighton where occupancy rates are closer to 70% based on a larger hotel stock.

1.14 HHL Humbert's Hotel Study identified a potential demand for up to 458 further bedrooms. It is considered that there could be considerably more demand over the medium term if Southend is able to re-position itself and to become a more attractive venue for staying visitors. There

are a number of developments in the pipeline including the conversion of the Palace Hotel (150 rooms) and a new hotel on the former gas works site (60 rooms). Other recent ideas have included the development of a hotel on the Pier. Overall the proposals for new hotel accommodation are encouraging but what is apparent is the continuing lack of mid and upper-market branded hoteliers, and whereas this is not unique to Southend, the town will be unable to alter visitor perception without their support. However, it would appear Southend is not yet on the radar screen of these operators. Neither do there appear, as yet, to be any proposals to improve the quality of the accommodation provided by the existing independent operators – the niche hotels that could potentially attract the more affluent younger market and those who like to be at the forefront of ‘discovering’ new places.

- 1.15 The University of Essex and Octagon Assets are bringing forward refurbishment of the Palace Hotel. The planning application that has been approved proposes its conversion by the University of Essex, Southend into a conference centre running professional courses, together with the refurbishment of the hotel to provide 150 rooms. This is a key project for the seafront area as it also involves the refurbishment and upgrade of the ground floor accommodation. This will begin to set a new tone for this area of the commercial seafront that is critical to its future re-positioning and re-branding as a leisure and tourist destination. There is a critical requirement for expansion of the business tourism market.

#### Development Pipeline - Hotels

<i>Scheme.</i>	<i>Rating</i>	<i>No. Rooms</i>
Travel Inn (Strawberry Hill) extension		22
Gas Works site	4 Star	60
Essex County extension	3 Star	8
Palace Hotel	tbc	150
Maitland House		56
Esplanade House		60
Land between Southchurch Ave and Pleasant Road		100

#### Comparison of Key Indicators

<i>Tourist/Leisure Indicators</i>	<i>Southend</i>	<i>Bournemouth</i>	<i>Brighton</i>
Day visitors	6.0 million	3.8 million	6.8 million
Day Visitor Value	£170 million	£164 million	
Staying Visitors	280,000	1.36 million	1.2 million
Estimated Staying Visitor Value	£30 million	£62 million	£218 million
Theatres	2	2	8
Night Clubs	9	10	19

Casinos	2	2	4
Cinemas(total screens)	8	9	16

- 1.16 In assessing the performance of Southend, a comparison has been undertaken with Bournemouth and Brighton based on a number of key indicators. Whilst of a similar size and retail ranking to Bournemouth, it is considered that Southend should aspire to more closely mirror Brighton which is a much larger centre. Significantly, however, at the present time Southend is struggling to match Bournemouth, a resort of more comparable size, in terms of a number of the key indicators.
- 1.17 Whereas Bournemouth has a far larger primary catchment area, it has 1.6 million fewer day visitors but approximately 1 million more staying visitors per annum. The key for Southend is to capture more staying visitors by increasing its attraction to that market, through the provision of more and better quality hotels and a wider range of visitor attractions.
- 1.18 In particular the retail offer in Bournemouth is much more varied than Southend. There are three department stores in addition to Marks & Spencer (Southend has one), as well as a good range of mass market multiples and a number of up-market independent retailers. Fashion multiples range from Bon Marche and Pilot to Jaeger and Austin Reed with a focus on middle and upper quality retailers. The department stores also include quality fashion. Retailers to have expressed an interest in acquiring units in Bournemouth include speciality retailers Fired Earth, Cargo Homeshop and Lakeland, as well as fashion retailers such as Warehouse, Kookai, Zara, Republic, Viyella and Karen Millen. This offer is absent from Southend. A large proportion of requirements for space in Bournemouth are from sports/leisurewear operators, including Blacks, Lillywhites, Murphy & Nye Sailwear and Free Spirit. This is an obvious key target market for Southend in the future if the leisure offer can be developed to crystallise consumer demand for these products. There is also strong demand from café/bar/restaurant operators. Southend is not experiencing similar levels of demand at the present time.
- 1.19 The Bournemouth International Centre (BIC) is a facility for conferences, exhibitions, entertainment and events. Owned and managed by Bournemouth Borough Council, the BIC is undergoing a £25 million refurbishment. Bournemouth is a nationally recognised convention destination. The renovation and remodelling of the Palace Hotel will provide Southend with some conference facilities.

### **Summary**

- 1.20 The performance of the seafront reflects a number of key weaknesses which must be overcome if the image and perception of the area is to change in the future:
- Lack of overall strategy/vision;

- Recent projects developed in isolation
- Poor quality environment, public realm and design, particularly to the east of the Pier;
- Limited public spaces and landscaping along promenade;
- Lack of Identity and distinctiveness;
- Failure to build on assets;
- Relatively low property values resulting in challenging viability;
- Poor linkages to the railway stations, travel centre and retail core;
- Conflict between pedestrian and vehicular movement;
- Condition and under-utilisation of key features- the Pier, band stand, Cliff Gardens and jetty;
- Range and quality of tourist and leisure facilities;
- Limited range and quality of hotel accommodation to attract the short stay visitor.

## **2. Patterns of employment and equality**

- Percentage of employment by economic sector
- Percentage of part time employment
- Employment in fisheries and tourism

<p><b><i>See Area Profiles for Southend and Seafront Wards (March 2005) 2001 Census</i></b></p>
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## Unemployment rates Historical Trends September 2005- September 2006 (Seafront Wards)

	Sept-05	Oct-05	Nov-05	Dec-05	Jan-06	Feb-06	Mar-06	Apr-06	May-06	June-06	July-06	Aug-06	Sept-06	Change in unemployment rate
<b>Rate (%)</b>														
Chalkwell	2.8	2.7	2.8	2.9	3.1	3.0	3.3	3.3	3.3	3.1	3.0	2.9	3.1	0.3
Kursaal	7.7	7.6	7.3	7.6	7.8	8.8	8.7	8.6	8.3	8.0	7.9	7.8	8.1	0.4
Leigh	1.6	1.5	1.7	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.9	1.8	2.0	1.8	1.8	0.2
Milton	5.5	5.6	6.0	6.1	6.2	6.3	6.4	6.3	6.3	6.2	6.1	5.9	6.2	0.7
Shoeburyness	2.7	2.8	2.6	2.7	2.8	3.1	3.2	3.4	3.3	2.9	2.8	2.6	2.5	-0.2
Thorpe	1.9	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.1	1.9	1.9	1.8	1.7	1.6	-0.3
West Leigh	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.2	1.1	1.2	1.2	1.0	1.1	1.1	1.0	1.0	0.0
West Shoebury	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.4	2.4	2.4	2.5	2.4	2.3	-0.1
<b>Southend</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.3</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>2.9</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>0.1</b>
<b>Southend Objective 2 Area*</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.0</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>4.6</b>	<b>4.4</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>4.3</b>	<b>4.1</b>	<b>4.2</b>	<b>0.2</b>
East England Region	1.7	1.7	1.8	1.8	1.9	2.0	2.1	2.0	2.0	2.0	2.0	1.9	2.0	0.3
England	2.3	2.3	2.3	2.4	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.6	2.6	2.6	0.3

Source Nomis/ONS

Southend Objective 2 Area includes, Kursaal, Milton, Shoeburyness, St. Luke's, Thorpe, Victoria &amp; West Shoebury Wards

Rate (%) - Residence-based proportions express the number of claimants resident in an area as a percentage of the working age population resident in that area

## Claimant Count September 2005 – September 2006 (Seafront Wards)

	Sept-05	Oct-05	Nov-05	Dec-05	Jan-06	Feb-06	Mar-06	Apr-06	May-06	June-06	July-06	Aug-06	Sept-06	Change in number of claimants
<b>Number of claimants</b>														
Chalkwell	152	149	151	159	167	162	181	181	181	170	163	157	170	18
Kursaal	419	411	396	412	425	477	474	466	449	437	431	425	442	23
Leigh	92	85	95	105	115	112	111	111	105	102	110	100	100	8
Milton	312	315	340	341	347	354	362	357	355	350	342	331	347	35
Shoeburyness	170	175	160	165	172	194	199	213	207	179	174	162	157	-13
Thorpe	90	98	98	95	98	97	94	102	92	91	85	83	78	-12
West Leigh	52	53	57	57	60	56	58	59	51	56	56	52	50	-2
West Shoebury	137	147	149	148	138	146	150	141	141	136	145	141	134	-3
<b>Southend</b>	<b>2,681</b>	<b>2,746</b>	<b>2,781</b>	<b>2,814</b>	<b>2,953</b>	<b>3,052</b>	<b>3,108</b>	<b>3,083</b>	<b>2,987</b>	<b>2,883</b>	<b>2,896</b>	<b>2,726</b>	<b>2,799</b>	<b>118</b>
<b>Southend Objective 2 Area*</b>	<b>1,576</b>	<b>1,598</b>	<b>1,633</b>	<b>1,646</b>	<b>1,681</b>	<b>1,786</b>	<b>1,800</b>	<b>1,807</b>	<b>1,750</b>	<b>1,697</b>	<b>1,691</b>	<b>1,610</b>	<b>1,638</b>	<b>62</b>

Source: Nomis/ONS. Updated figures that may vary from previous monitors

Southend Objective 2 Area includes, Kursaal, Milton, Shoeburyness, St. Luke's, Thorpe, Victoria & West Shoebury Wards

Rate (%) - Residence-based proportions express the number of claimants resident in an area as a percentage of the working age population resident in that area

## F. Housing Development

### a) Dwelling provision

- 1.1 Most of the seafront area including the frontage onto the River is residential. The exception is the Central Seafront area where land uses are more commercial and leisure orientated.
- 1.2 Residential Development progress toward meeting the provision set out in the Core Strategy DPD (submission) for the Seafront area has been rapid and may be summarised as follows.

#### ***Summary Assessment of adequacy of housing supply***

Total Required Core Strategy DPD 2001-2021	2001-2005 Phased Total	2001-2005 Completions	Ahead or Behind 2001/5 Phased Total	Outstanding at 2005	Residual Amount to be Found by 2021
400	80	168	88	198	34

#### ***Summary Completions Seafront Area 2001 - 2005***

Ward	2001 - 2002 Completions		Ward	2002 - 2003 Completions		2003 - 2004 Completions		2004 - 2005 Completions		2001 - 2005 TOTAL	
	Gross	Net		Gross	Net	Gross	Net	Gross	Net	Gross	Net
Chalkwell	1	1	Chalkwell	24	24	0	0	0	0	25	25
Leigh	2	0	Kursaal	0	0	11	11	108	108	121	119
Milton	0	0	Leigh	0	0	1	0	0	0	1	0
Shoebury	0	0	Milton	2	1	0	0	2	2	4	3
Thorpe	2	1	Shoebury	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	1
			Thorpe	19	18	1	0	2	2	22	20
			West Leigh	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
<b>Total</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>112</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>168</b>

**b) Affordable Housing**

**1.3 Summary of Completions Seafront Wards - Private and Affordable Housing Completions and Density of Development (dwellings per hectare) 2001-2005**

Wards <sup>6</sup>	2001-2002			2002-2003			2003-2004			2004-2005		
	Private	AH	dph	Private	AH	dph	Private	AH	dph	Private	AH	dph
<b>Chalkwell</b>	35	0	#	0	0	#	4	0	30	3	0	53
<b>Kursaal</b>			#	38	0	#	12	10	100	212	61	147
<b>Leigh</b>	34	0	#	35	0	#	21	0	74	6	0	75
<b>Milton</b>	21	8	#	39	0	#	112	0	152	43	0	74
<b>Shoeburyness</b>	8	34	#	29	12	#	72	0	27	106	0	60
<b>Thorpe</b>	5	24	#	43	0	#	3	0	28	3	0	18
<b>West Leigh</b>	#	#	#	8	0	#	15	0	57	32	0	74
<b>West Shoebury</b>	#	#	#	0	0	#	1	0	60	2	0	150
<b>Total</b>	103	66	#	192	12	#	240	10	#	407	61	#
<b>Total Southend</b>	<b>234</b>	<b>116</b>		<b>372</b>	<b>12</b>		<b>297</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>488</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>79</b>

<sup>6</sup> Seafront wards cover a greater area than that which lies within Seafront Area Action Plan area. Data not comparable with data in adequacy of housing supply table

## **G. Movement and Access**

### **1) Accessibility**

#### **a) Access to bus routes**

1.1 The whole of the Seafront area east of the Pier up to and including Shoeburyness and an area at the western end of the Seafront at Leigh are within 400m of bus routes with 4-9 services per hour. The area west of the Pier up to Leigh is not within 400 metres of bus routes with 4-9 services per hour. All of the seafront area is within 1 mile of a station

#### **b) Accessibility Planning**

1.2 See Local Transport Plan and its supporting Accessibility Strategy 2006-2011 March 2006

### **2) Accidents and Casualties**

1.3 See Local Transport Plan and its supporting documents

### **3) Air Quality**

1.4 See Climate Change and Flood Risk

### **4) Traffic Counts, Cycle Counts, Car parks and occupancy**

1.5 See Nature Conservation and Biodiversity