

Self-Assessment Summary:

Our vision is 'People in Essex living their lives to the fullest' and is set out alongside our outcomes in the [Adult Social Care Business plan 2024-30](#).

Our top three strengths:

- Excellent discharge outcomes and a strong home-first approach
- A committed and dedicated workforce that follow strengths-based practice
- A stable, diverse and high quality care market



Our current areas of focus:

- Improving our offer to carers
- Working to bring down waiting lists
- Strengthening co-production and how we capture and use people's lived experience



Our key challenges:

- Workforce capacity
- Pressures upon our mental health system
- Increasing demand and complexity, particularly in mental health and safeguarding



How we are performing against the CQC domains; this is summarised in the 4 sections below:



Theme 1: Working with People

There are 3 quality statements that cover: Assessing needs, Supporting people to live healthier lives, and Equity in experience and outcomes.

The key points we highlight include:

- The good outcomes Essex achieves for people, as evidenced by our ASC outcomes framework measures.
- A strong and well-established focus on strength-based practice, Home First, maximising independence and promoting inclusive employment; for example, we have low rates of permanent admission into residential care.
- Collaboration with partners in Integrated Neighbourhood Teams
- Reduced waiting times for assessments, reviews and Deprivation of Liberty Safeguards.
- The Essex Wellbeing Service, our high performing Care Technology service and improved Carers support offer.
- The work we are doing to make improvements to the availability of good quality, accessible housing and accommodation and to our online information on care and support.



Theme 2: Providing Support

There are 2 quality statements that cover: Care provision, integration and continuity, and Partnerships and communities.

The key points we highlight include:

- The 3 integrated care systems (ICSs) which are developing more joined-up approaches to prevention, supporting self-care and independence, and community support.
- 5 inclusive place-based alliances that bring together the NHS, public health, local Councils and Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) partners to promote shared goals and collaboration.
- Clear commitments within each system to a Home First ethos, multi-disciplinary Neighbourhood Teams and Population Health Management.
- Our large, stable, diverse care market that has good capacity and quality and strong relationships between the Council and its providers. This is supported by our clear Market Shaping Strategy and progress towards paying cost of care rates.
- A comprehensive and effective reablement offer and nationally recognised Connect Programme.
- Our focus on making improvements to support for the VCS and developing a more consistent model of Transfer of Care Hubs.



Theme 3: Ensuring safety

There are 2 quality statements that cover: Safe systems, pathways and transitions, and Safeguarding.

The key points we highlight include:

- How we prioritise work within Adult Social Care (ASC) and across our system to ensure robust and proportionate approaches to safeguarding.
- The high number of safeguarding referrals we receive and our work with partners to understand trends and improve processes to ensure quality and timely responses.
- Our commitment to the Essex Safeguarding Adults Board and its sub-committees.
- Our robust approach to managing risk in ASC and the Essex care market.
- Our focus on Making Safeguarding Personal and improving practice in support of this.
- Effective transitions planning between children's and adult's services.



Theme 4: Leadership and Workforce

There are 2 quality statements that cover: Governance, management and sustainability, and Learning, improvement and innovation.

The key points we highlight include:

- A stable and experienced senior officer and political leadership that provides an effective voice for ASC within Essex County Council and across our ICSs and alliances.
- Our robust business plan, which is refreshed annually, and effective financial management.
- Our strengths around workforce development and equality, diversity and inclusion, including the nationally recognised Essex Social Care Academy and lived experience led 'Quests' that are driving change for employees with protected characteristics.
- Our approaches to managing recruitment and retention, both of which remain a challenge.
- Information sharing arrangements that are in place with NHS partners and a robust information governance approach.
- Our work with people who draw on our services and other stakeholders to improve our offer of support and to develop a more consistent approach to co-production.

The full version of our self-assessment is available for our partners to read [on-line](#).