

Maldon District Rural Facilities Survey and Settlement Pattern

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Contents

1.0	Introduction.....	3
2.0	District and Parish Profile	3
3.0	Results and Analysis.....	7
4.0	Conclusion of Rural Facilities Study.....	8
5.0	Settlement Hierarchy	9

1.0 Introduction

- 1.1 A study of the availability of Rural Services and Facilities in the District is an important part of the evidence base for the development of the review of the Local Development Plan. This information provides an understanding of the way in which rural settlements and areas in the District function. This data, for all settlements within the district, provides an up-to-date baseline for the review of the settlement hierarchy and can be also used for future community / neighbourhood planning.
- 1.2 The survey assessed the community services and facilities in each settlement in the District. It also assessed their connectivity with its main towns of Maldon/Heybridge and Burnham on Crouch, as well as the towns/ villages of South Woodham Ferrers (in Chelmsford City) and Witham and Tiptree (in Braintree District) both in terms of vehicle connectivity and train services.
- 1.3 The last time the District carried out this exercise was in 2008, with the publication of the resulting study in 2011. That study gathered its information from the Parish Councils. This present study has been informed by a similar exercise with the District's 30 parish councils, as well as a desk top survey of each settlement and site visits; so is a more comprehensive analysis of the rural settlements in the District. The table outlining the details of the service, facilities and connectivity for the settlements of the District can be found on the Councils website at www.maldon.gov.uk

2.0 District and Parish Profile

- 2.1 It is important to clarify the present size of each settlement in relation to each other. This can be done by analysing the population of each. The population of the District has steadily grown since 2001 as set out below;

59,433	2001 census
63,700	2010 Office of National Statistics Population Projections
65,401	June 2021 Office of National Statistic mid-year population estimates

2.2 The District's population is expected to continue to grow continuously and steadily over the next 20 years and by 2043 is estimated to be 73,758, a 24.1% increase change from 2001. ¹

2.3 Set out below is a table with an estimate of the population of each settlement in the District as at July 2021. This is based on the growth that has occurred (completion of homes) since 2014 from the baseline 2001 census data and using an average household size of 2.26 people. The average household size is calculated from the total number of households in the District in each settlement in the 2001 census.

Settlement in order of population size	Population
Maldon	15551.48
Heybridge ²	8767.12
Burnham-on-Crouch	8753.54
Southminster	4601.96
Mayland	3886.64
Great Totham	2993.28
Tollesbury	2668.46
Wickham Bishops	1937.48
St Lawrence	1401.56
Purleigh	1327.5
Latchingdon	1408.24
Althorne	1195.16
Cold Norton	1155.5
Tillingham	1109.98
Tolleshunt D`Arcy	1075.9
Tolleshunt Knights	1061.64
Bradwell on Sea	860.74
North Fambridge	891.5
Tolleshunt Major	719.86
Goldhanger	699.2
Woodham Mortimer with Hazeleigh	665.86
Woodham Walter	543.3
Steeple	503.56
Little Totham	404.52
Mundon	359.52
Great Braxted	361.64
Asheldham & Dengie	281.34
Stow Maries	214
Little Braxted	172.26
Ulting	173.78

¹ Office of National Statistics Population Estimates published June 2021

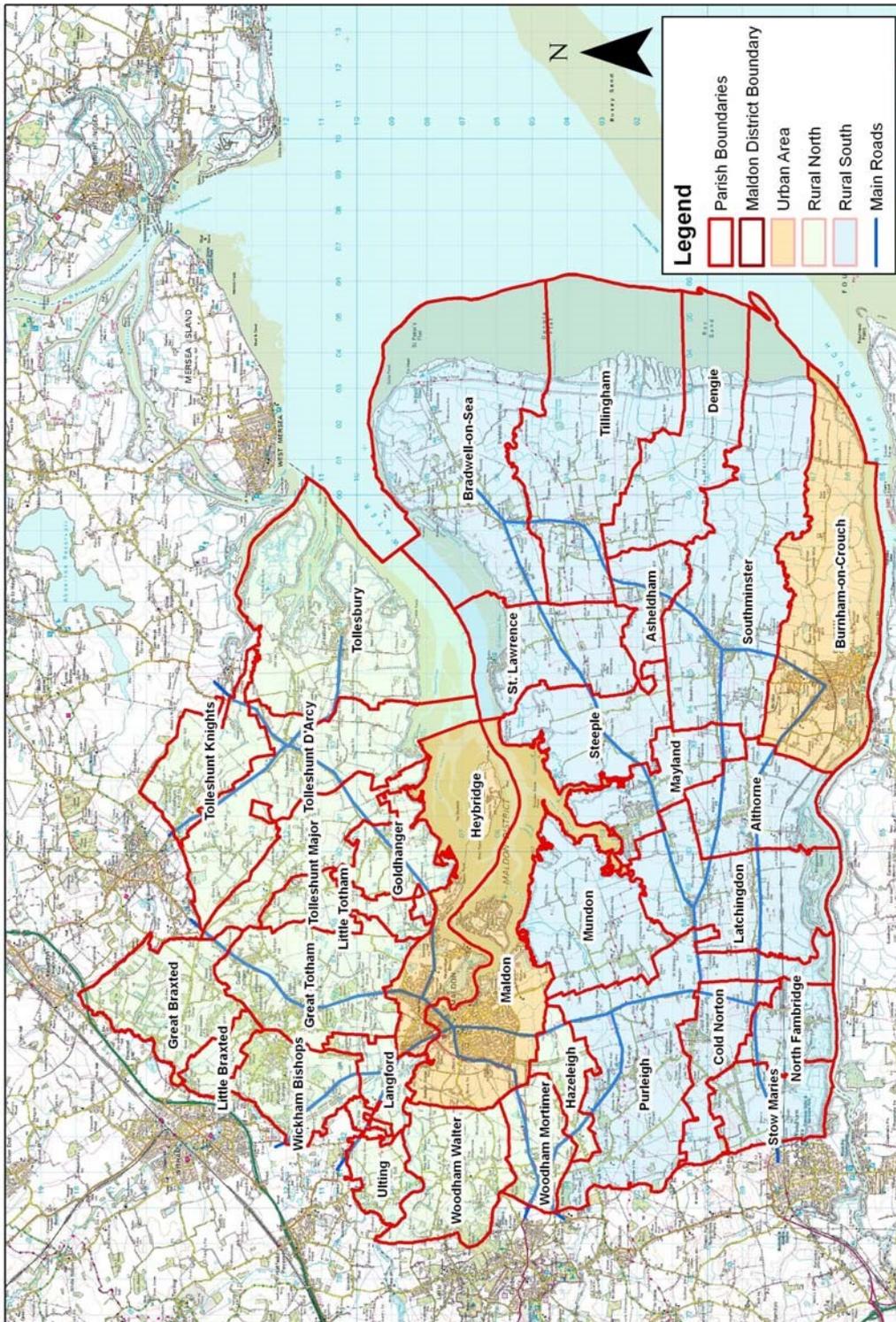
² This includes the population of Heybridge Basin which was formed as a distinct parish in 2020

Langford	192.64
Tiptree (only a few houses in Maldon District)	4.52

- Heybridge Basin as a new parish has an estimated population of 760 ³

³ Information from the Census 2001

Figure 1 – Map setting out the parishes in the Maldon District



3.0 Results and Analysis

- 3.1 Set out below is a summary of the results of the desktop and site survey of the service, facilities, and connections available in settlements within the District. Great Totham has been split into two separate settlements (north and south) because they are distinct in terms of geographical location.
- 3.2 The survey did not include Maldon/Heybridge and Burnham on Crouch. These settlements are already considered as towns and therefore they are considered to have the highest number of services and facilities of all the settlements. There has been no substantial loss of services and facilities in these settlements since 2008 that would mean the designation as a town would need to be reconsidered.

Service/Facilities/Connections	Results of 2021 Survey	% of the 35 settlements
Doctors surgeries	5	14.3
Pharmacies	3	8.6
Primary Schools	11	31.4
Grocery Shops	20	40.0
Other retail shops	22	17.1
Banks/building societies	0	0.0
Children`s playgrounds	25	71.4
Village Halls	26	74.3
Public Houses/cafes/restaurants (total number)	60	171.4
Post Offices	9	25.7
Hairdressers	10	28.6
Local Recycling Centres	10	28.6
Fire Stations	1	2.9
Library	1	2.9
Churches	38	108.6
Petrol Stations	4	11.4
Nurseries	12	34.3
Allotments (sites)	12	34.3
Youth Facilities (sites)	8	22.9
Sports fields	24	68.6
Indoor sports facilities (sites)	3	8.6
Open Space	21	60
Settlement has a railway station (excluding the towns)	3	8.6
Settlement with a commuter bus service	13	37.1
Settlement with a shopper`s bus service	27	77.1
Settlement has allocated employment land	7	20.0

Settlement is within 3 miles of an allocated employment site including Tiptree	22	62.9
Settlement within 15 minutes' drive of a main town including Witham, Tiptree and South Woodham Ferrers	22	62.9
Settlement within 15 minutes' drive of a railway station (including Witham, Hatfield Peverell, South Woodham Ferrers and Kelvedon)	31	88.6

- 3.3 It is difficult to make a comparison with the 2008 Rural Facilities Survey because that survey was not as comprehensive as the 2021 survey and only took into account information supplied by the parish councils, which was not verified. However, some basic comparison can be done on services at a parish, rather than a settlement level and this has shown some loss of services and facilities as set out below.

Service/ Facility	No of Parishes with service or facility		+/- Change
	2008	2021	
Post Offices	14	9	- 5
Parishes with shops (though it is unknown how this was measured in 2008)	16	14	- 2
Public houses	26	27	+ 1
Café/restaurants	9	7	- 2
Bank/building society	0	0	-
Doctors Surgery	7	5	- 2
Pharmacies	11	3	- 8
Churches	28	23	- 5
Village Halls	21	23	+ 2
Children's Play area	22	23	+ 1
Allotments	8	12	+ 4
Police Station	1	0	- 1

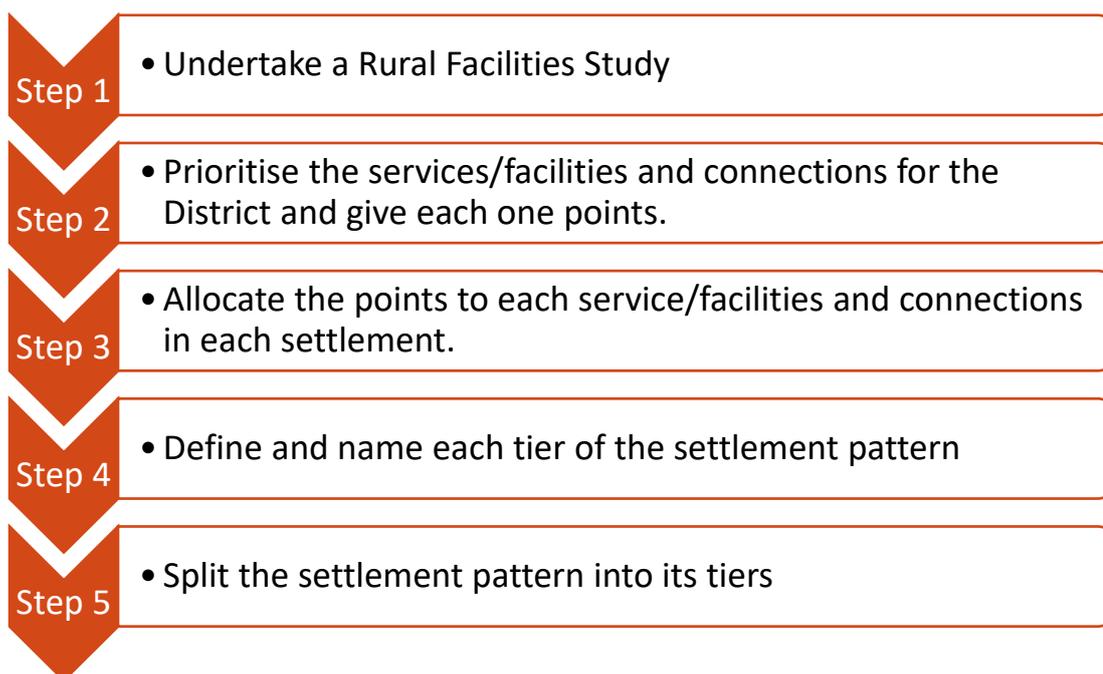
4.0 Conclusion of Rural Facilities Study

- 4.1 This study has shown that the settlements of the District have reasonable connectivity to the main towns of Maldon/Heybridge, Burnham on Crouch, South Woodham Ferrers, Witham and Tiptree with 62.9% of settlements being within a 15-minute drive of a main town, 88.6% within 15-minute drive from a railway station, 77.1% having access to a shoppers' bus service and 37.1% having access to a commuters' bus service. Though this varies across the District with the remoter rural villages having less connectivity.
- 4.2 Following this through, 62.9% of settlements are within 3 miles of an allocated employment site and have access to higher order retail facilities.

- 4.3 With regard to shops in the settlements, 40% have access to a grocery shop, whilst 17.1% have access to a shop which is not a grocery shop. The smaller number of other shops is not surprising for rural settlements as these are the ones that normally close first if demand reduces. 25.7% of settlements still retain a post office, though national closures have inevitably reduced this number from 2008.
- 4.4 The rural settlements appear to have good access to children's play areas, 71.4%, sports fields 68.6% and village halls 74.3%.
- 4.5 There has inevitably been some loss of services and facilities across the rural settlements; with the loss of 2 doctors' surgeries and it would appear as if pharmacies and post offices have been particularly affected with reductions across the settlements since 2008, with pharmacies standing out as a substantial loss locally. Pharmacies make up one of the four pillars of the primary care system in England, along with general practice, optical services and dentistry. Pharmacies have been moving toward a more advisory role on top of their dispensing role in community care. The individual pharmacy operated by a sole trader is reducing in number with more pharmacies being run by large multi-factor outlets. They are also using digital technology and delivery services to assist in dispensing. This could explain a withdrawal of services in more rural, low population areas to larger settlements. With regard to doctors' surgeries, larger surgeries which offer other health services which would have been carried out at a hospital previously means some drawing back of smaller rural doctors' surgeries or reduced hours, this could account for the losses in the District. Conversely there has been an increase in allotments since 2008 which may reflect the Council's priority to bring this type of infrastructure forward.

5.0 Settlement Hierarchy

- 5.1 The Rural Facilities Study as set out above is used as the foundation of establishing the District's Settlement Pattern. This is because it sets out what services and facilities each settlement has at a fixed point in time.
- 5.2 The hierarchy or pattern takes the Rural Facilities Study a step further and gives a categorisation of all the settlements in an area/district according to a number of factors including their relationship with other settlements, their accessibility, and the services and facilities available to their residents. There are a number of steps in the formation of a settlement pattern, as set out below.



5.3 In regard to Step 2 above. On the 21st and 23rd June there were two all Member workshop in which Members held discussions around what they considered important in terms of services, facilities and connectivity for a sustainable settlement in the District. It was noted that all services had a degree of importance and it was a difficult task for Members to prioritise, however doctors, schools, employment, shops and connectivity were considered to be the top priority.

5.4 Points were applied to the services, facilities and connectivity information from the Rural Facilities Study, using the information gathered on the 27th May 2021. Set out below is a table setting out the points for each service, facility and connection.

Type of service and facility	Points
Doctors	8
Schools – primary	8
Connectivity to services (bus) shopper service	8
Connectivity to services (bus) - commuter service	8
Connectivity to services (rail) connectivity	8
Allocated Employment area	8
Shops for basic day to day needs	8
Distance from allocated employment land or employment site/park- 3 miles (this is also the distance ECC support children walking to school)	5
other shops	5

Post Office	5
Indoor sports facilities	5
Playing fields/sports facilities outdoors	5
Halls/meeting places	5
Nursery education	5
Pubs/cafes/restaurants	3
Play facilities - children's play	3
Recycling centres	3
Allotments	3
Youth facilities	3
15 mins drive from railway station	3
15 mins drive from a designated town	3
Bank/building society	2
Pharmacy	2
Dentist	1
Police Station	1
Ambulance Station	1
Fire station	1
Library	1
Church	1
Petrol Station	1
Hairdressers/beauty/health services	1
Public open space	1

- 5.5 The points were then totalled up for each settlement in the District. It is not surprising to find that the largest settlement in terms of population and number of services, facilities and connectivity comes out at the top of the list of settlements and the smallest find themselves at the bottom.
- 5.6 The next step in the process is the categorisation of the settlements into groups or tiers. In this case the list of settlements has been split into 5 tiers; towns, large villages, medium villages, small villages and hamlets/open countryside.
- 5.7 It is important to define each tier within the Settlement Hierarchy and a broad definition of each tier of the hierarchy has been created and is set out below.

Town	A defined settlement with a range of community services and facilities which provide services for the town's own needs as well as provision for some of the needs of smaller villages within their immediate sphere of influence. Typically, a town will have a designated Town Centre and High Street, a secondary and primary school, a range of premises for business use, employment opportunities and a doctor/medical facilities. They serve a wide catchment area and contain good public transport links.
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Large Villages	These provide a range of facilities for their own needs and provide for some of the needs of smaller villages within their immediate sphere of influence. Typically, the facilities available include at least one convenience store, a primary school, a nursery. They may include a doctors/medical facilities have either a commuter/shopper's bus service available and/or train connection, be within 15 minutes' drive of either a main town and/or employment area and have a range of community facilities.
Medium villages	These settlements have reasonable connectivity and could provide either a commuter/shopper's bus service or train service. They may provide some essential services such as shop, post office or primary school, and may provide some job opportunities for their residents, they also may provide basic services for neighbouring hamlets and smaller villages, but in the main they look to towns and large villages to provide a greater range of community facilities, including medical facilities. They, in general have a smaller range of community facilities than the towns or large villages.
Small villages	There are smaller villages of differing sizes, which have a limited range of services or facilities. Though connectivity of these settlements is reasonable with some access to commuter/shopper bus services and train connectivity, very few have schools, food shops, or employment opportunities although most have places of worship, village halls and a public house. Residents would have to look to higher order settlements to meet the vast majority of their everyday needs.
Open Countryside	This includes hamlets and isolated groups of houses. These may have very limited facilities such as a church or a public house. There are also single dwellings and small isolated groups of houses in the District with in the main no facilities. Residents would have to look to higher order settlements for all of their everyday needs.

5.8 This exercise creates a Settlement Pattern. This is a what is called a "policy off" baseline for the Local Development Plan Review which can be used in a number of ways;

- to monitor the success or failure of policies in a Local Development Plan (LDP);
- it can be used throughout the LDP as a golden thread to describe how policies are to be applied across different settlements.
- it sets a baseline along with the Rural Facilities Study to monitor the continued sustainability of settlements and the gain and loss of services and facilities.

5.9 The Settlement Pattern is not an absolute indicator of where growth could be allocated in the LDP Review as it is the policies in the plan which should do that after consideration of a broader range of evidence and evaluation of options. It is also not an indicator of the present day success or failure of a settlement in terms of sustainability. It is, at a basic level, a snapshot in time.

5.10 As explained earlier, Maldon/Heybridge and Burnham on Crouch are already the Main Towns. Set out below is the Settlement Hierarchy 2021 from Large Villages down to Open Countryside.

SETTLEMENT NAME	OVERALL POINTS TOTAL	Broad list of services and facilities (see main table for full list)
Large villages		
Southminster	220	School, doctors, shop, nursery, other shops, commuter and shoppers bus service, allocated employment land, railway station, 15 mins from a town, pharmacy, children's play, youth facilities, halls, pubs, library, outdoor sports, recycling point, post office, allotments
Tollesbury	180	School, doctors, shop, nursery, other shops, commuter and shoppers bus service, allocated employment land, pubs, pharmacy, bakery, children's play, open air swimming, halls, recycling point, post office, allotments, etc
Maylandsea	170	School, doctors, shop, nursery, other shops, shoppers bus service, 15 mins from a town, pubs, church, children's play, halls, outdoor sports, 15 mins from a railway station, post office
Latchingdon	126	School, shop, other shop, nursery, commuter and shoppers bus service, allocated employment land, 15 mins from a town, petrol station, hall, outdoor sports, 15 mins from a railway station, post office, allotments
Wickham Bishops	101	Shop, other shops, nursery, commuter and shoppers bus service, 15 mins from a town, sports facilities, hall, children's play, library, outdoor sports, post office
Tillingham	99	School, doctors, shop, nursery, shoppers bus service, 15 mins from a town, fire station, pub, church, children's play, hall, outdoor sports, 15 mins from a railway station, recycling point, post office, allotments
Tolleshunt D'Arcy	82	School, shop, nursery, commuter and shoppers bus service, hall, 15 mins from a town pub, outdoor sports, recycling point
Great Totham South - clusters with Great Totham North	75	School, shop, other shops, nursery, commuter and shoppers bus service, hall, 15 mins from a town, outdoor sports, post office

Cold Norton	70	School, shop, nursery, shoppers bus service, 15 mins from a town, hall, outdoor sports, 15 mins from a railway station, allotments
Purleigh	70	School, shop, nursery, shoppers bus service, 15 mins from a town, pub, halls, children's play, outdoor sports, 15 mins from a railway station, allotments
Medium Villages		
Bradwell On Sea	69	School, shop, shoppers bus service, pubs, hall, children's play, outdoor sports, recycling point, post office, church, allotments
Althorne (this may need re-evaluating as the shop and restaurant have reopened)	68	Shoppers and commuter bus service, rail station, within 15 min drive of a town, halls, children's play, outdoor sports, recycling point, church, POS
Woodham Walter	64	School, shop, commuter and shoppers bus service, within 15 min drive of a town, hall, 15 mins from a railway station, children's play, recycling point, church, allotments
St.Lawrence	62	Shopper bus service, shop, hall, 15 mins from a railway station, children's play, recycling point, post office, pubs, church
Langford	58	Shop (part time), Shopper and commuter bus service, employment land, within 15 min drive of a town, hall, church
Tolleshunt Knights	52	Shopper and commuter bus service, hall, POS, church, children's play, outdoor sports, churches, recycling point
North Fambridge	52	Shopper bus service, rail station, within 15 min drive of a town, pub, children's play, hall, recycling point
Heybridge Basin	51	Shopper and commuter bus service, employment land, within 15 min drive of a town, pubs church
Steeple	49	Shopper bus service within 15 min drive of a town, pubs, children's play, hall, 15 mins from a railway station, church
Goldhanger	49	Shopper bus service, within 15 min drive of a town, pubs, hall, church, recycling point, allotments
Small Villages		
Tolleshunt Major	40	Employment land, pub, hall, church, children's play
Great Totham North - clusters with Great Totham South	40	Shopper and commuter bus service, other shop, allotments

Little Totham	37	Within 15 min drive of a town, church, recycling point.
Great Braxted	35	Hall, church
Ulting	31	Shopper and commuter bus service within 15 min drive of a town
Hamlets/Open Countryside		
Woodham Mortimer	26	Shopper and commuter bus service, 15 mins from a railway station
Stow Maries	26	Church, pub, 15 mins from a railway station
Dengie	25	Shoppers bus service, 15 mins from a railway station
Mundon	24	Church hall, 15 mins from a railway station, pub
Old Heath Road, Southminster	23	15 mins from a railway station
Asheldham	20	Shoppers bus service, 15 mins from a railway station
Hazeleigh	17	Shoppers bus service, 15 mins from a railway station, pub
Little Braxted	16	
Bradwell Waterside	11	Shoppers bus service, pub
Cock Clarks	10	15 mins from a railway station, pub