

# Ford

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case study



automotive sector

INVEST Essex case studies highlighting Essex companies who are leaders in their fields

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**Oliver Rowe,**  
Corporate Communications News Manager

**INVEST**  
Essex



Small and Medium  
Vehicle Centre



Essex County Council



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## Ford Britain's most popular car brand

**Ford**, based at four locations in Essex, has been Britain's best-selling car brand for over 30 years, and its commercial vehicles have been market leaders since 1965. The company currently sells around 440,000 cars and commercial vehicles each year and aims to be the ideal vehicle available for all motorists; including families carrying people and luggage, small car drivers, performance enthusiasts and van drivers.

To maintain its advantage, Ford concentrates on continual design development with increasingly high-tech feature content, offering competitive, fuel-efficient motoring and a combination of style and value that is increasingly drawing customers out of premium brands.

Essex plays an important part in Ford's operations with 9000 of the company's 13,000 UK employees based in the county. Oliver Rowe of Ford Britain Public Affairs explains, "The UK head office at Brentwood is responsible for marketing, sales and service of the Ford vehicle range, while the Dunton Technical Centre, near Basildon, leads on engine, transmission and complete commercial vehicle development for all future European products.

The Dagenham plant produces around a million diesel engines a year, from a 1.4 up to a high-performance V8 unit and forms a core element in Ford's European transport hub for parts and vehicles."

Ford's Dunton Technical Centre in Basildon has been responsible for developing many famous Fords including the Fiesta XR2, Escort Cosworth, Sierra XR4x4, Granada, Capri, Focus and Transit van. Its most recent development is the global all-new Fiesta which is selling successfully in markets throughout the world. Dunton is home to over 3,000 engineers with extensive research and development facilities, including high speed and special surface tracks, indoor laboratories, rolling roads, crash simulators and test cells.

"Essex has proved beneficial in terms of recruiting the high calibre of staff Ford need," says Oliver Rowe. "Dunton, for example, had very specific requirements for engineers with power train expertise when it became a centre of excellence. Many of the skills were available locally, but for specialists considering relocating, Essex's quality of life proved a very attractive proposition.

We also find that the Essex location encourages suppliers, contractors and other partners to co-locate here."

The Essex base is important for the company's manufacturing and distribution strategy. With its strategic position on the Thames, plus excellent motorway and rail connections, Dagenham is the UK and European transport hub of Ford with thousands of vehicles, engines and components passing in and out of it daily.

**"The new A13 has improved road links to the rest of the UK, while a deep water jetty and train spur give us plenty of options for distribution to other UK plants, as well as European and international sites via the River Thames, motorways, Channel Tunnel and rail links."**

Ford has been one of the outstanding success stories for the Essex business community, with its long track record of engineering excellence, product quality and market leadership.

INVEST Essex provides confidential advice and practical support to companies wanting to establish a presence or expand in the UK. We promote Essex as an outstanding business destination and help existing and potential investors make the most of our strategic location, thriving business environment, and quality of life.

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### Key



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