

COVID SAFE COMMUNITY BUILDINGS FUND



This fund is being managed by the Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) on behalf of Essex County Council (ECC) with grants of up to £15K available for capital and revenue projects.

The £1.5 million fund will support projects to help community buildings such as village halls, community centres and faith buildings put in place measures that reduce the transmission of the virus and help activities to resume safely.

Grants can be used to fund numerous projects including the examples below – the list is not limited to these projects:

- Implementing measures that manage visitors and/or create space for social distancing
- Adaptions to encourage users to resume activities in the community hall safely
- Enhanced communication, websites, marketing and signage to alert users to COVID safety on premises
- Costs associated with cleaning and sanitising premises
- Online/website booking systems to minimise contact between the hall and hirer and set out any COVID-related conditions for hire (i.e. capacity for events)
- Costs of semi-permanent awnings/canopies to extend use to outside areas
- Costs associated with adaptions to introduce flexible partitions to encourage more use in smaller groups.
- Fitting out storage areas so that group equipment can be separated and kept clean.
- Installation of equipment to improve hygiene or hand washing
- Costs associated with improving or installing ventilation i.e. repairing windows, air conditioning units; air purifying devices; external bi-fold doors

For an Application Form and Guidance Notes please [click here](#). Please note applications will be assessed on a weekly basis and a decision notified as soon as possible thereafter.

Please use the following email address: CovidCBFund@essexrcc.org.uk for any queries and to return your completed application. The application process is simple and straightforward to enable a quick turnaround as the funding **must be spent by 31st March 2022**.



Essex Climate Action Commission
Powering positive change

COMMISSION REPORT - NET ZERO: MAKING ESSEX CARBON NEUTRAL

The Essex Climate Action Commission are pleased to announce the release of their report [Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral](#) which contains information about each of the recommendations put forward by the Commission to Essex.

CLIMATE ACTION FUND



Essex County Council is offering grants of up to £20,000 to support voluntary and community projects tackling climate change in the county. The £500,000 Climate Action Challenge Fund, which is available until March 2023, was announced at the Essex Climate Action Commission's report launch event on 20 July. The fund has been created to support the Commission's 'Net Zero: Making Essex Carbon Neutral' report, which makes recommendations on how all organisations, businesses, local communities and residents can work together to make Essex net zero by 2050.

The Climate Action Challenge Fund will support voluntary and community sector organisations, community groups and schools in Essex can apply for up to £20,000 of funding to deliver activities that respond to key climate challenges in Essex.

To find out more about the Climate Action Challenge Fund, please visit: <https://www.essex.gov.uk/leisure-culture-local-heritage/culture-and-communities>

Funding is available until 31 March 2023 or until funds are fully allocated.

VIRTUAL MEET THE BUYER EVENT – 9th SEPTEMBER

Good Food Growth

Virtual Meet the Buyer

9th September 2021

9.30-12.30

Part of the Good Food Growth Project

Supported by:

SOUTH EAST LOCAL ENTERPRISE PARTNERSHIP

Essex Chambers of Commerce

East Sussex County Council

KENT

Time: 9:30am – 12:30

Bringing together Buyers and Suppliers. As the interest in local food, traceability and provenance continues to rise and consumers continue to redefine their relationship with food and drink this is an opportunity to bring suppliers and buyers together from across the South East

SUPPLIERS

Register now - All food and drink businesses based in Essex, East Sussex and Kent are eligible to **register** for free. Once registered you will be contacted and guided through how to use the online system to book appointments with buyers.

BUYERS - LAST FEW SPACES – BOOK NOW

If you are a buyer looking to extend your range of local products then there is still time to get involved. (We are particularly keen to hear from buyers in East Sussex or Essex)

How it Works: As a buyer you will have a dedicated meeting space, suppliers will be able to request a 10 min virtual appointment – you choose which to accept. Full support will be given to use the online platform. For further information please contact Jill Sargent Email: Jill.sargent@producedinkent.co.uk or call 01732 853170 to book your seat.

COMMUNITY GROUPS INVITED TO BID FOR FREE DEVICES



Voluntary and community groups, charities, higher education institutes and not-for-profit groups are invited to bid for free pre-owned Samsung Galaxy tab A tablets. These devices have been returned to factory settings and can be used by people with minimal technology skills and could be used to connect older people, people with disabilities, people with physical or sensory needs or to improve mental health.

Each organisation in the Essex County Council area can bid for up to 50 devices for the use by adults over 18. Bids will open from 1 August and close on 31 August 2021. Bidders should demonstrate how they would use the devices to promote one or more of the following:

- Digital inclusion
- Digital skills
- Prevent, reduce, delay social care need
- Tackle social isolation

An evaluation of the bids will be undertaken by a panel and successful bidders will be notified week commencing 20 September 2021.

Devices will need to be collected by the successful organisations from an agreed location and organisations will be required to provide a case study within three months illustrating how the devices have been used to benefit users.

Councillor John Spence, Essex County Council's Cabinet member for Adult Social Care and Health said: "This is a fantastic opportunity for organisations and individuals to benefit from technology which will really make a difference to your community. They could be used to reduce social isolation and loneliness or to improve digital skills. We would love to hear your ideas!"

For more information visit [Care Provider Information Hub - Latest Initiatives \(livingwellessex.org\)](https://www.livingwellessex.org) or email CareTecService@essex.gov.uk for an application form.

THE QUEEN'S AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE



The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (QAVS) is the highest award given to local volunteer groups across the UK. It was created in 2002 to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Queen's reign. It is the MBE for volunteer groups and is awarded for life.

Who is it awarded to?

It is awarded to exceptional groups of volunteers whose level of initiative and impact are truly exceptional. A successful group will normally have the following characteristics:

- **Volunteer-led:** The volunteers are in the driving seat, setting the direction for the group's work and spotting opportunities to develop it still further each year.
- **Exceptional compared with comparable groups:** This group is likely to be one of the best of its kind in the country.
- **Making a considerable difference locally:** The initiative of this group and the efforts of its volunteers have changed the situation dramatically for its beneficiaries.
- **Well-run:** There are high standards of governance, financial management and safeguarding.
- **Outstanding reputation locally:** The group has a high standing in the community and has an excellent reputation with beneficiaries, service providers and others.

Benefits to the group

QAVS are only awarded to the very best of hundreds of nominations each year. This is a badge of excellence and a real achievement for a group. It provides a big boost to the volunteers as well as great publicity for their work. Successful groups are presented with a crystal award and a certificate bearing Her Majesty's signature. They gain the right to use the QAVS logo on their stationery and other material. They are also invited to nominate two volunteers to attend a Royal Garden Party. The names of awarded groups are announced on 2 June in The Gazette and promoted widely elsewhere.

Nominations for The Queen's Award for Voluntary Service 2022 closes on 15th September 2021.

Nominations must be submitted using the online form at: <https://qavs.culture.gov.uk/>

The nomination form and letters of support must not be written or submitted by a volunteer, employee, trustee or anyone involved with the running of the group.

The Awards are published on **2nd June**, the anniversary of Her Majesty's coronation.

NATIONAL FARMERS UNION (NFU) – Essex update from Jake Richards



For the majority of Essex farmers, August is amongst the busiest of months as the annual combinable harvest is in full swing. Comparably to the last few years, it is likely that the 2021 harvest will be a few weeks later than usual as a result of the higher rainfall and cooler temperatures during July. We must also spare a thought for our horticulture and fruit growers in Essex who face a different challenge of an enormous deficit in the number of available fruit pickers for this year's harvest. In Essex we have the climate and the capabilities to be among the best fruit growers in the country which is a challenge when there are limited hands on deck to let production flourish.

A topic that is at the top of the agenda for the NFU in Essex are the plans for the new A12 between Chelmsford and Marks Tey. You have until the 12th August to respond to Highways England's public consultation on the new route and what it means for you as a resident and indeed a business owner. We are working closely with Highways England to ensure that members who are affected by the land take and indeed the potential restrictions on agricultural use of the road. If you are affected by the developments on the A12 please get in touch at jake.richards@nfu.org.uk .

With September around the corner there are a few late summer milestones that come around annually. The first being the parliamentary recess which is an ideal opportunity to get local MPs out into the countryside to discuss agricultural matters. This summer we have a number of meetings planned for NFU members to meet with their MP to explain the challenges of farming, the implications of the Agricultural Transition Plan and indeed to ask them to pledge their support for UK Farmers ahead of #BackBritishFarming day on the 15th September. The second milestone that coincides with stubble fields is the start of the hare coursing season. Hare coursing, of course being illegal and linked to serious organised crime, should be reported and treated properly. We're pleased to work closely with Essex Police on the response to hare coursing and would like to encourage rural communities to follow the advice:



What to do if you have issues with hare coursing on your land

1. Report every incident – if it's live 999, otherwise 101 or online (scan QR code using your smartphone)
2. Clearly state 'hare coursing'
3. Provide exact location (use what3words app)
4. Get photos or details of people and dogs
5. Get vehicle details – make, colour, registration
6. Be discreet. Approaching hare coursers may be inflammatory
7. Note down the crime reference number
8. Share intelligence with farmwatch, local whatsapp and speak to an NFU rep



For NFU members – we are currently formulating our Autumn and Winter programmes for members. If you have a topic or speaker that you would like to hear from, please contact jake.richards@nfu.org.uk or speak to your local Group Secretary.

Regards, Jake Richards





ESSEX COUNTY HARVEST SERVICE

Farming for our Future



**SUNDAY 26TH SEPTEMBER 2021
3.30PM AT CHELMSFORD CATHEDRAL**

All welcome

All are welcome to attend the Harvest Festival, it is a free event and does not require a ticket!
For further information please contact Canon Janet Nicholls, Rural Adviser & Agricultural Chaplain.
Email: jnicholls@chelmsford.anglican.org

FUTURE MEETING DATES

Essex Rural Partnership Future Meeting Dates

Date: Thursday 21st October 2021

Time: Start time: 10:30am until 12:30pm

Venue: TBC

This newsletter is produced and sent by Rural Community Council of Essex on behalf of the Essex Rural Partnership. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter in future please e-mail info@essexruralpartnership.org.uk with 'unsubscribe' as the email subject. Compiled and edited by Lizzie Rose, Rural Community Council of Essex. Rural Community Council of Essex Registered Charity No. 1097009. Company registered in England and Wales No. 4609624