



SUPPORT FOR NEIGHBOURHOOD PLANNING - UPDATE



The current Locality [Grant Funding](#) and [Technical Support](#) programme for Neighbourhood Planning comes to an end on 31st March 2024.

From our experience of previous years, the deadline for new applications is likely to be the middle of January 2024. To make an application for funding you will need to have obtained quotes from providers and consultants so please think

about making a start on this now. If you would like any help or advice in making an application, please contact: jan.stobart@essexrcc.org.uk

We are hoping that further NP support will be available for 2024/25 and will let you know as soon as we hear.

TEN ESSEX VOLUNTARY GROUPS RECEIVE THE KING'S AWARD FOR VOLUNTARY SERVICE 2023: THE LARGEST NUMBER OF WINNERS FOR ANY NON-METROPOLITAN COUNTY IN THE UK.



Ten voluntary groups from across the county who work in the community have been honoured with the Kings Award for Voluntary Service (KAVS), the highest national award a voluntary group can receive in the UK.

The King's Award for Voluntary Service (KAVS) was originally created by the Late Queen as the Queen's Award for Voluntary Service (QAVS) in 2002 to celebrate The Queen's Golden Jubilee. The QAVS became the KAVS with the death of HM

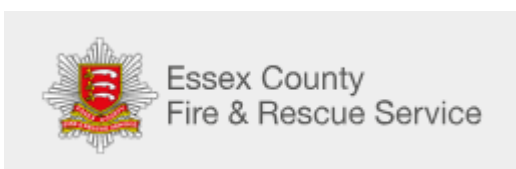
The Queen in 2022. Recipients of the KAVS are announced at the anniversary of The King's birthday on 14th November each year. Representatives of the winning groups receive the KAVS Award Crystal, and a KAVS Certificate signed by HM The King which provides a handwritten citation of the work of the group from His Majesty's representative in the County, the Lord Lieutenant, at a local ceremony. Two volunteers from the winning groups are invited to attend a garden party at Buckingham Palace in the summer of the following year, along with other recipients of this award from across the country.

The ten winning groups from Essex are:

African Families in the UK, Colchester Foodbank, Enterprise East Group CIC, Mollards Lane Sensory Garden, Parents 1st Essex, Refugee, Asylum Seekers and Migration Action, Saffron Hall Trust, SANCTUS, The One Love Project, University of Essex Students' Union VTeam

The ten groups are amongst 262 charities, local enterprises, and volunteer-led groups to receive the prestigious award this year across the UK. The number of nominations remain high year on year showing that the voluntary sector is thriving, and full of innovative ideas to make life better for those they support. To read the full article please [click here](#)

LEGISLATION UPDATE



From the 1st October 2023 there is an important change in Legislation regarding Fire Risk Assessments.

This is through the Building Safety Act 2022: Section 156. Put simply, the main changes are as follows:

FIRE RISK ASSESSMENTS – ALL non-domestic premises as well as the communal parts of residential buildings now **MUST** have a recorded (written, in some form) Fire Risk Assessment.

Previous criteria e.g., if you employ five or more persons, it's a licensed premises etc, no longer apply. It no longer matters how many people are employed, if you have a license, the size of the building/company etc, the Responsible Person MUST ensure there is a Fire Risk Assessment recorded in some form, as well as the Fire Safety arrangements for the building/premises.

Provision of information to residents

In residential buildings (e.g., let properties), the responsible owner must provide residents with information on the risks from fire within the building and fire safety measures provided to keep them safe.

Please see below links to these changes in full as well as to other Government guidance to assist the Responsible person.

Link to Building Safety Act 2022: Section 156:

[Fire safety responsibilities under Section 156 of the Building Safety Act 2022 - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fire-safety-responsibilities-under-section-156-of-the-building-safety-act-2022)

Link to Government guidance on responsibilities as the Responsible Person:

[Check your fire safety responsibilities under the Fire Safety Order - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/check-your-fire-safety-responsibilities-under-the-fire-safety-order)

Link to Government guidance on Fire Safety and responsibilities:

[Fire safety: guidance for those with legal duties - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fire-safety-guidance-for-those-with-legal-duties)

Link to Government guidance – Fire Risk Assessment 5 step checklist:

[Fire safety risk assessment: 5-step checklist \(accessible\) - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/guidance/fire-safety-risk-assessment-5-step-checklist-accessible)

To access the Essex County Fire and Rescue website please [click here](#).

AFFORDABLE HOUSING IN RURAL AREAS BOOSTED BY LAUNCH OF NEW SCHEME



Communities in rural areas are set to benefit from a new package of government funding designed to unlock affordable housing opportunities. The funding will pay for a network of Rural Housing Enablers – independent advisors who work with communities to support the development of affordable housing schemes. The advisors will help identify suitable development opportunities in communities, and support site owners and community representatives to navigate the planning system and create developments in rural areas that meet the needs of local people.

The scheme, which is being delivered by Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) on behalf of Defra, will help boost the supply of new, affordable homes across England. The first payments have been awarded to local partners, Cambridgeshire ACRE and Community Action Northumberland (CAN), with an additional £2.5 million set to enable the expansion of Rural Housing Enabler projects across England in the 2024/25 financial year. To find out more about the funding please [click here](#)

THE ESSEX LOCAL NATURE RECOVERY STRATEGY (LNRS)



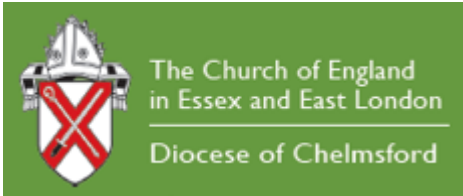
If you treasure the natural spaces of Essex and want to see wildlife thrive, you will want to stay up to date with the progress of the Essex LNRS.

With the creation of the Essex LNRS, everyone in Essex has the opportunity to share their views on the future of the environment in which we live. To ensure the Essex LNRS becomes an effective tool in developing partnerships and action plans that more effectively support biodiversity and encourage collective activity, collaboration and consultation are essential. So make sure you have your say.

You can stay up to date with how the Essex LNRS will be created and its progress by visiting the [Essex Local Nature Partnership website](#). Here you will find details of upcoming information events, recordings of recent webinars:

1. Parish/Town Council Webinar: Taking Action Today, Together
 2. Members of the Wider Public and Community Groups Webinar: Taking Action Today, Together
- FAQs and the chance to sign up to the Essex Nature Partnership newsletter for more regular updates.

PLOUGH SUNDAY - INVITATION



Everyone is warmly invited to celebrate Plough Sunday at Thaxted Parish Church, CM6 2PE, on Sunday 14th January 2024 at 11.00am. The Plough Sunday service is offered to support all those who work with the land. With the aim to lift the spirits in deep, dark January with God's blessing and the opportunity to enjoy good company and mulled wine. The Thaxted Morris Men will be

performing and there will be a grand Tractor Drive-Past courtesy of Essex Young Farmers! For more information, please contact Agricultural Chaplain, Revd Canon Janet Nicholls:

jnicholls@chelmsford.anglican.org

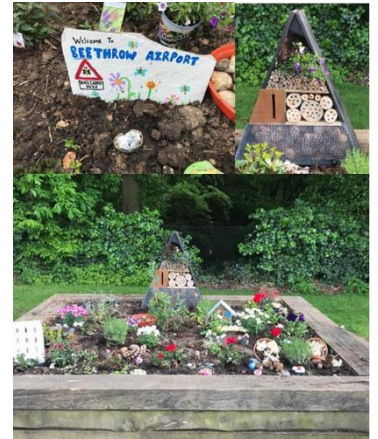
GROWING COMMUNITIES – BEE GOOD COMPETITION 2023 RESULTS



Winner - Coopersale and Theydon Primary School

Congratulations to the Eco Warriors Club! The amount of work the children had put into creating their Bee Good plot 'Bee-throw Airport' was

incredible and what a fabulous name! The outstanding work and commitment shown by the children was inspirational, not only have they studied about Bees but they have provided food and somewhere to live, a full package sanctuary that can be used for years to come



Runner up – Danbury Park Community School

The name says it all... 'Busy Bees Happy Place' the design of the plot was well thought out for the age group (Years 1 & 2) and one could see the final result would look amazing once in full bloom. Another example of outstanding work and commitment shown by the children – well done!

CARERS COMMUNITY FUND



The Carers Community Fund (CCF) is a one off £1.75 million grant programme that will support carers in Essex. There are 124,000 unpaid carers in Essex, but ECC estimate this number is far greater. A carer can be a child, young person or adult. They might be looking after a family member, partner or friend who would not be able to cope without their support. Research has indicated the need for

local community-based offers of provision for carers. These provisions should help carers to maintain their own health and wellbeing outside of their caring role.

Applicants will be able to apply for grants of between £1,000 and £30,000 for their local project.

Applications open on Tuesday 28 November 2023 and close on Tuesday 30 January 2024.

For further information please [click here](#).

CONGRATULATIONS! EALC WINS NALC STAR COUNCIL AWARDS - COUNTY ASSOCIATION OF THE YEAR 2023!



Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) have shared their fantastic news of being named Star National County Association of the Year 2023. The Great Dunmow-based association were chosen for their innovative, forward-thinking and ongoing development over the past year by the judging panel of the National Association of Local Councils (NALC). The organisation provides support, training, guidance, advice and grant funding opportunities for over 300 local town and parish councils across the county. The award was presented by Baroness Scott, of Needham Market, president of NALC, at a ceremony held recently in Westminster at the House of

Lords. For further information regarding this prestigious award please contact Sophie Wolker by email:

communications@ealc.gov.uk or on 01371 879722