

NEWS RELEASE

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ESSEX COMMUNITY FOUNDATION WINS CASH INJECTION FOR ESSEX COMMUNITY GROUPS

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Hundreds of small charities throughout Essex stand to gain from a new £2 million injection of cash. The money is coming from the Government and will be distributed by Essex Community Foundation over the next three years.

There could be more to come if generous local businesses and wealthy families are willing to donate funds which will be topped up by the Government's newly launched Grassroots Grants programme. The idea is for Essex Community Foundation to create a £5 million endowment fund from which further grants to community organisations can be made in future.

Essex Community Foundation is calling on local people and businesses to back the Grassroots scheme, which will see the Government add 50% to all charitable donations destined for local communities.

The money is part of £130 million nationwide drive by the Government's Office of the Third Sector to support thousands of voluntary and community groups throughout England. Essex Community Foundation won the Government competition to distribute the £7 million Grassroots programme in Essex, Southend and Thurrock because of its expertise and its knowledge in identifying those small local charitable organisations best able to use the money to make a real difference.

Under the Grassroots Grants scheme, local people can nearly double the value of their donations if they give through a long-term endowed fund to be set up by Essex Community Foundation. Returns from the fund will then be used to ensure that further grants are available, particularly once the current Government funding programme runs out in March 2011.

Laura Warren, Chief Executive of Essex Community Foundation, said: "This is great news for Essex. As well as asking groups seeking funding to contact us, we are also urging individuals and businesses who want to put something back into the local community to consider using this scheme. The match funding enables big returns on donations so there has never been a better and more cost effective way to give."

National Community Foundation Network Chief Executive, Stephen Hammersley, explained the Essex Community Foundation had been chosen to manage the scheme locally because of "its expertise in revitalising local communities through effective charitable giving, its knowledge of the local area and its proven ability to ensure that money invested in the local communities makes a lasting difference".

Anyone interested in taking up the Grassroots Endowment Challenge or wanting to apply for a £5000 maximum grant should contact Essex Community Foundation 01245 355947 or look at the website: www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk

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For further information contact

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Notes to Editors:

Photo Caption:

Staff at Essex Community Foundation celebrate their win!

Pictured left to right (Back Row): Catherine Burton, Laura Warren OBE DL, Chief Executive, Andrew Clarke, Jo Murphy. Caroline Taylor, Jill Curd and Julia Williamson
(Front Row): Bob Sherer and Steve Mackenzie

Essex Community Foundation was set up in 1996 and has established a grants programme which has seen more than 2500 Essex based charities and community groups receive over £11million in grants. Funds are distributed on behalf of a wide range of donors who want their charitable giving to be accessible to local charities. www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk