

NEWS RELEASE

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LOCAL CHARITY BENEFITS FROM LEADING INSURANCE BROKER

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Feering Good Companions is one of the first local charities to benefit from a grant from the Oval Community Fund. The organisation received £265 towards the cost of providing support and activities for local elderly people, thereby providing companionship and relieving some of the isolation that can be felt by people who are living alone.

Grants were also awarded to:

Parkinson's Disease Society Colchester - £300 towards the cost of providing information, advice and support to people who are suffering from Parkinson's Disease and their families.

Colchester Carers Centre - £182 to buy a range of portable sports equipment to be used by young carers who attend the centre which gives them some respite from their caring responsibilities.

Oval's headquarters for the Eastern Region is based in Witham. The company committed long-term support for local charities by establishing their endowed charitable fund with Essex Community Foundation in July 2007 when the office in Witham traded as FMW Risk Services. In December 2007 Oval acquired FMW Risk Services Ltd and the company now trades as Oval Insurance Broking Limited. Oval is a leading insurance broking, risk management and financial advisory group which provides advice to organisations and individuals throughout the UK and employs around 1300 people.

Staff at Oval have held a number of events, raising over £30,000 for their Fund. Peter Blanc is the Eastern Regional Managing Director. In handing over the cheque to Feering Good Companions he said "Our staff are local people and they wanted to be involved in something which would make a difference locally." He added "Working with the Foundation is enabling us to achieve this and these grants are just the beginning. As the Fund grows and we distribute money year on year, we will begin to see the impact that we are having".

The Oval Community Fund is managed by local grantmaking charitable trust, Essex Community Foundation. The staff at Oval have been fortunate to see their recent fundraising benefit from some "free money" thanks to the Foundation managing the Government's Grassroots Grants and Endowment Match Challenge. Under the Challenge, all corporate donations can be uplifted by 50% and all individual donations, if gift aided, can be almost doubled.

For more information about the Grassroots Challenge and Essex Community Foundation visit www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk or call Bob Sherer on 01245 355947.

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For further information contact

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Notes to Editors:

Essex Community Foundation was set up in 1996 and has established a grants programme which has seen around 3,500 Essex based charities and community groups receive £13 million 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

Community Foundations are independent charities committed to supporting projects that engage local people. Since the 1980s, a nationwide network of Community Foundations has developed, endorsed by many major public figures and leading companies.

There are 1000's of charities and voluntary groups working for the community to create a richer society for all. Community Foundations build endowed funds and make grants to these organisations.

- There are 55 local Community Foundations in the UK covering 94% of the population
- Collectively they manage endowed funds of circa £200 million
- In 2006/07 Community Foundations distributed grants totalling £75million.