

NEWS RELEASE

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FOULNESS CHARITY BENEFITS FROM LOCAL GRANTMAKING TRUST

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The Foulness Conservation and Archaeological Society is one of the latest organisations to benefit from the Government's Grassroots Grants Programme managed by Essex Community Foundation. The charity received £1,265 to purchase a computer, scanner and printer and re-print a book which details the history of the enigmatic island and its many residents.

The Society, made up from local residents, will use the computer to help them record and catalogue the many photographs and documents that they possess or are loaned for future generations. The book re-print will allow visitors to the Foulness Heritage centre to purchase a detailed History of the Island and the profits can be ploughed back into further development of the centre.

Stephanie Sutton, Secretary and Trustee of the Society said "We are very grateful to Essex Community Foundation for this much needed grant." She added "since the loss of the village hall and the pub, the Heritage Centre has become a real focal point for the community."

Foulness Island was purchased by the MOD in 1915, principally for weapons testing so access to the island was restricted. In 2001, following discussion with the MOD, the Foulness Conservation and Archaeological Society were granted a 15 year lease to convert the former primary school into a Heritage Centre. Since then, the Centre has become a focal point for local study and given 'outsiders' a reason to visit the Island to learn more about its past. Visitors from as far away as the US have used the centre and the knowledge of the Island's residents to research their family histories.

The Foulness Heritage Centre is open to the general public on the first Sunday of the month beginning April through to October between 12 noon and 4pm. Visitors will be required to sign in at the security gate at Landwick in Great Wakering.

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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There has never been a better time to Give

The Grassroots Grants and Endowment Match Challenge is a Government funded programme designed to encourage local individuals and businesses to help build long-term endowed funds for their communities. As well as making £2 million available to award in small grants to grassroots groups across Essex, Southend and Thurrock, the Government will match every donation that is received by Essex Community Foundation from individuals and businesses.

For every £2 raised, the Government will add £1. The aim is to build a £5 million fund by March 2011 which will provide sustainable financial support for local charitable groups and projects.

If you would like to help the Foundation meet the Grassroots Challenge, please contact Bob Sherer on 01245 355947. You can also visit www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk for details.

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Notes to Editors:

PHOTO CAPTION

(1) Left to Right: Steven Mackenzie of Essex Community Foundation presents a cheque for £1265 to Stephanie Sutton, Peter Carr, Derek Everett and Bob Crump - members of the Foulness Conservation and Archaeological Society

(2) Visitors at the Foulness Heritage Centre.

ESSEX COMMUNITY FOUNDATION

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.

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Grassroots Grants

Grassroots Grants, funded by Office of the Third Sector (OTS) and administered by the Community Development Foundation (CDF), recognises the vital contribution these 'grassroots groups' make to improving our communities.

Over three years, Grassroots Grants will support the sector in building stronger, more active communities with two complementary approaches. An £80 million grants programme will make small grants available to grassroots groups across England. An innovative £50 million endowments match challenge will enable local funders to raise donations on a matched basis and invest them to sustain grassroots funding into the future.

Essex Community Foundation is delivering the Grassroots Grants programme in Essex. For more information visit www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk

The Community Development Foundation (CDF) is the Lead National Partner appointed to administer, support, monitor and evaluate Grassroots Grants on behalf of Office of the Third Sector (OTS).

CDF is the leading source of intelligence, guidance and delivery on community development in England and across the UK. Our mission is to lead community development analysis and strategy to empower people to influence decisions that affect their lives. For more information, go to www.cdf.org.uk

Office of the Third Sector

As part of the Cabinet Office, the Office of the Third Sector leads work across government to support the environment for a thriving third sector (voluntary and community groups, social enterprises, charities, cooperatives and mutuals), enabling the sector to campaign for change, deliver public services, promote social enterprise and strengthen communities. For further information, please go to www.cabinetoffice.gov.uk/thirdsector