

## NEWS RELEASE

Publication: August 2009



## COMIC RELIEF SUPPORTS LOCAL CHARITIES

121 New London Road,  
Chelmsford, Essex CM2 0QT  
T. 01245 355947  
F. 01245 346391  
general@essexcf.org.uk  
www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk

Friends of Disabled Bowlers are the first Essex based charity to benefit from Comic Relief's new funding programme which is now being managed locally by Essex Community Foundation. £6,135 has been awarded to buy specialist buggies to help members with disabilities take part in bowling.

Since 1985, Comic Relief has inspired the nation to have a laugh while raising cash to help change lives throughout the world.

There are many communities across the UK that face poverty, disadvantage and deprivation and Comic Relief is working with community foundations across the country, tapping into their local knowledge, to provide funding for a small grants programme to empower local people create lasting change in their communities.

Charities in Essex, Southend and Thurrock are being encouraged to apply for the next round of grant funding from Essex Community Foundation. Grants of up to £10,000 are available to support small, locally based charities and voluntary organisations that have a clear understanding of the needs of their community.

Caroline Taylor, Programmes Director at Essex Community Foundation said "We are delighted that Comic Relief is building on the success of the previous Sport Relief programme and has chosen to work with community foundations to deliver this grants programme." She added "The focus of this programme will continue to increase access to sport and exercise activities for disadvantaged people, but now, Comic relief will also fund voluntary and community groups that are increasing local services and building skills".

To discuss an application or for further information about the Comic Relief programme in Essex please contact the Foundation's grants team on 01245 356018 or visit their website [www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk](http://www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk) Grants of up to £10,000 are available and **deadline date for applications is 9 September.**

[Ends]

(222/08/09)

For further information contact

Caroline Taylor  
Essex Community Foundation  
Tel: 01245 356018 Fax: 01245 346391  
E-mail: [grants@essexcf.org.uk](mailto:grants@essexcf.org.uk)

Patron: Lord Petre, The Lord Lieutenant of Essex  
Chief Executive: Laura Warren OBE DL

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Registered in England  
Company No. 3062567  
Registered Charity No. 1052061

## Notes to Editors:

### Comic Relief – Grants Criteria

Projects should be run by people directly affected by the issues they are dealing with and priority will be given to small, locally based groups or organisations in areas of disadvantage that have a clear understanding of the needs of their community. This can also include “Communities of Interest” which cover a wider geographical area.

While groups will be using a range of activities specifically 50% of the available funding will go to sports projects that:

- increase access to sport and exercise for people who face social exclusion and isolation
- help people who are experiencing difficulties in their lives

The remaining funding will support community groups running projects that

- increase local services
- builds skills of local people
- increase community cohesion
- respond to local economic needs

This work can cover a small geographical area such as a housing estate or village, but we will also consider work covering a slightly larger area such as a town or borough where there is evidence of community involvement.

**Essex Community Foundation** was set up in 1996 and has established a grants programme which has seen over 3,500 Essex based charities and community groups receive over £14 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](http://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.

**Comic Relief** spends money raised by its fundraising campaigns, Red Nose Day & Sport Relief. There are still many communities in the UK that suffer from economic and social deprivation and the current economic climate may make this situation worse. This programme aims to empower local people enabling them to create lasting change in their communities. For more information visit [www.comicrelief.com](http://www.comicrelief.com)