

## NEWS RELEASE

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## NEW FUND TO INVEST IN ESSEX CHARITIES

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A new Fund has been launched that will invest in the long term future of charities in Essex. The LAA Thriving Third Sector Endowed Fund has been set up with funding from the county's Local Area Agreement Partnership (LAA) to provide a stable source of funding for voluntary and community organisations in Essex.

Essex County Council is the first local authority in the country to secure a portion of the Government's Local Area Agreement (LAA) funding to specifically resource a healthy and thriving voluntary and community sector. The ground-breaking £2 million endowed LAA Thriving Third Sector Fund is being managed by Essex Community Foundation who is inviting proposals for funding from the first year's grants programme.

In the current economic climate, charities of all sizes are facing increased demand for their services, at a time when there is less money available to fund voluntary organisations to do their work. This Fund will invest in organisations which have a plan to overcome the barriers that hinder their own development and help them thrive.

Essex Community Foundation is working with a panel of executives from local charities and from Essex County Council to identify, and select, priorities for funding. Initially £100,000 will be available for distribution and multi-year funding may be considered for proposals demonstrating the greatest impact.

"This is an exciting opportunity for the voluntary and community sector to address the barriers and issues that prevent their development" says Caroline Taylor, Programmes Director at Essex Community Foundation. "Executives from local charities have set the criteria and will be deciding on the grant awards, so this is a real chance for the sector itself to drive forward its own change."

Essex Community Foundation is inviting proposals that set out new ways of working, such as partnerships and secondments, as well as developing skills in strategic thinking, negotiation, business development or marketing.

The deadline date for initial proposals to be submitted to the Foundation is 4 December. Guidelines can be found on the Foundation's website [www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk](http://www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk) or phone Caroline Taylor on 01245 356018.

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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 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 57 local Community Foundations in the UK covering 94% of the population
- Collectively they manage endowed funds values at circa £220 million
- In 2007/08 Community Foundations distributed grants totalling £66 million and funded 20,500 voluntary organisations and community groups