

NEWS RELEASE

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HIGH SHERIFF REWARDS LOCAL CHARITIES

Guinness Independence at Home, Vange Junior Youth Club, Colchester SOS Bus and Home-Start Epping were among 60 community projects, charities and individuals to receive awards from the High Sheriff of Essex Diana Kemp-Welch. Grants totalling £63,974, and certificates, were awarded to fund projects and recognise the work being undertaken by organisations who are supporting local people and helping to make Essex communities safer from crime.

Since the High Sheriffs' Fund was established with Essex Community Foundation in 1997 it has distributed 290 grants to local charities totalling £198,460.

A special ceremony, sponsored by Essex County Council and organised by Essex Community Foundation, was held at the Fennes Estate, Bocking (5 March). Around 350 invited guests including the Chairman of Essex County Council, Cllr Gerard McEwen, Assistant Chief Constable, Carmel Napier, Chief Fire Officer, David Johnson and many past High Sheriffs of Essex attended the event.

Diana Kemp-Welch paid tribute to all the organisations represented at the event and also the Royal Anglian Regiment TA for supporting her fundraising challenge climbing 11 Munros in Scotland in 48 hours. She said "I have had a wonderful year of opportunity meeting so many voluntary groups and individuals who are all working so hard to enhance life in Essex communities. The High Sheriffs' Awards gives a great platform to be able to recognise them for their unstinting effort and commitment."

Steve Scruton, the leading radio personality from BBC Essex, compered the event. In his own professional style, Steve invited winners to receive certificates and cheques from the High Sheriff and talked to them about their work, helping the audience to gain a greater understanding of the varied activity that is taking place across Essex to make our communities safe from crime and the fear of crime.

Essex Crimebeat gives support to young people who come up with ideas to make their schools and living areas safer places to be. The special High Sheriffs' Shield was awarded to Beauchamps High School recognising the success of their Road Safety Key Ring project. The project was the idea of a group of year 10 students from the school and involves targeting younger students to raise awareness of the dangers of cycling and behaviour in cars.

The Essex County Fire and Rescue Shield, which recognises the work of an organisation's support of young people, was awarded to Teen Talk Harwich. Teen Talk offers a free, confidential befriending and information service and emotional support to young people who are experiencing difficulties in their lives with issues such as bullying, self-harm, homelessness, drugs, alcohol and relationship problems.



121 New London Road
Chelmsford
Essex
CM2 0QT
T. 01245 355947
F. 01245 346391

E. general@essexcf.org.co.uk
www.essexcommunityfoundation.org.uk

Cont ...

Patron: The Lord Lieutenant of Essex

Chief Executive: Laura Warren



The Volunteer Centre of the Year Award, launched at the Awards in 2002 by George Courtauld, was won by Accuro (Harlow Shared Care), which provides respite to children with disabilities and their families. The award recognises an organisation for the support, respect and training that it gives to its volunteers and includes a cheque for £1,000. Ruth Samways nominated the club. She said "I feel very much a part of the team and Accuro deserves recognition for their excellent practices, high quality support and thorough induction and training".

The Essex Police Cup was jointly won by Simon Willsher and Gillian Humphries for their strong and continued commitment to the volunteer training course of the Essex Experience. Richard Totten, the training course director, who nominated them said "Gillian's skill, dedication and outstanding personal qualities and Simon's experience as a Traffic Officer with Harlow Police and his ability to lead a team, made them very worthy candidates for recognition".

The High Sheriff's Cup was won by Inclusion Ventures based in Clacton for their work with young people aged 10-18 in North East Essex, in particular those who are socially excluded or at risk, to enable them to further their education and become responsible members of society.

The Essex Association of Boys' Clubs won the Essex County Council Bowl. The award recognises the Club's partnership work involved in delivering the Respect project which aims to divert young people from risks of criminality and lead them instead, into the Duke of Edinburgh's Award Scheme or involvement in a local Boys' Club.

The event ended with two young students, Kimberley Rowlands and Katie Attwater reading poems they had written as part of the Poems and Pictures schools project in Clacton.

The High Sheriffs' Fund is managed by Essex Community Foundation, an independent charitable trust investing and distributing funds to local charities on behalf of individuals, companies, trusts and public agencies throughout Essex. Since the High Sheriffs' Fund was established in 1993, it has distributed 290 grants to local charities, totalling £198,460, all helping to make our communities safer places to live and work.

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For further information contact

Laura Warren/Jo Murphy
Essex Community Foundation
Tel: 01245 355947 Fax: 01245 346391
E-mail: general@essexcf.org.uk

Notes to Editor:

Essex Community Foundation was set up in 1996 and has established a grants programme which has distributed over 2,500 grants totalling over £10 million to Essex based charities and community groups. 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

High Sheriffs' Awards:

Lists of awards and grants in each District are attached.