



ERP – THE LATEST NEWS



The future of the library service, a much valued resource for rural communities, took centre stage at the latest meeting of the Essex Rural Partnership (ERP) held at Essex Young Farmers Conference Centre, Little Waltham on 2nd April.

Cllr. Susan Barker, Essex County Council Cabinet Member for Customer and Corporate, whose portfolio includes libraries, spoke about the Essex Future Library Services Strategy before taking part in a wide ranging Q&A session with ERP members.

[Essex Future Library Services Strategy – Cllr Barker](#)

The public consultation on the future of the library service, which concluded in February, attracted over 21,500 responses, as well as 55 petitions with a total of 59,000 signatures. Following analysis of the responses, a final strategy will be presented to the ECC Cabinet in June.

Increasing community involvement in the management of libraries is an important part of the strategy. Community groups have until 18th June to submit an expression of interest and can do so via [this link](#). Over 50 expressions of interest have been received to date.

ERP members – Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) and Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) – have been actively working with Essex County Council to encourage communities to engage in this process. RCCE and ECC have organised two briefings this month for Village Halls on ‘Community Library Services and Outreach Library Services’. The second of these will take place on **Friday 24th May**, 10am at Keene Hall, Galleywood. There is still time to book by contacting sara.ward@essexrcc.org.uk

The ERP meeting focussed on a range of other topical issues with presentations on:

- [The Farming Community Network](#) – Philip Wilson, Regional Director (Eastern Counties).
- [Community Agents Essex ‘Home from Hospital’ service](#) – Brian Goodwin, Community Services Manager, RCCE.
- [LEADER programme update](#) – Beverly Davies, Essex Rivers LEADER Programme Manager, RCCE.
- [ECC Community Initiatives Fund](#) – Joy Darby and Louise Gambardella, EALC.
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Nick Shuttleworth, RCCE Executive Director, also reported that ERP would be embarking on a refresh of the current Essex Rural Strategy which expires in 2020. More details on this will follow later in the year.

COMMUNITY INITIATIVE FUND - EXCITING NEW FUND



A new fund was launched by Essex County Council (ECC) on 1 April 2019 and will be administered by the Essex Association of Local Councils (EALC) over a two year period.



This new fund includes various community grant schemes that have been funded by Essex County Council. This includes:

- the existing CIF
- Local Service Fund
- Local Connections Fund
- Cultural Development Grant

For the CIF, grants of up to £10,000 may be awarded for either a Capital or Revenue (not core costs) project. One off grant awards will be made in early September 2019.

Micro-grants of up to £500 are also available throughout the year and awarded twice a month. This fund excludes projects that deliver outside the administrative area of Essex County Council.

What does the CIF fund?

You can apply if you have a project that can:

- create, procure or develop new community assets
- enhance existing community assets
- enhance or develop initiatives that strengthen a community, including cultural initiatives
- develop local capability

Projects should highlight the benefit to the wider community and show that community engagement and co-production has occurred in the design and delivery of the project, demonstrating a real community need.

To find out more and how to apply please visit the [EALC website here](#)

UNLICENCED FELLING IN ESSEX



The Forestry Commission has reported an increase in the number of cases of illegal tree felling across East Anglia. The area of woodland felled without a felling licence increased from 9.48 hectares in 2013 -14 to 20.55 hectares in 2017-18. All reports of unlicensed felling are investigated by the Commission. The consequences of felling trees without a licence can be high, from prosecution, replanting the area of felled trees and 'making good' any damaged area, so it is important that landowners, Planners, developers and builders are fully aware of the regulations that exist. Felling Licences can also apply to any trees not situated in a woodland.

Woodlands contribute much to wildlife, landscape and local amenity. Most important are those classified as ancient woodlands i.e. woodlands known to have existed before 1600 AD. With many being centuries older. It is Government policy to refuse development that will result in the loss or deterioration of ancient woodland because of their high biodiversity, undisturbed heritage features and soils, which makes them

irreplaceable. This applies both to Ancient Semi Natural Woodland (ASNW) and Plantations on Ancient Woodland Sites (PAWS).

This is very important for Essex because the county has more ancient woodland than anywhere else in East Anglia but it also has more pressure for development than most other East Anglian counties. Essex also has many hundreds of veteran trees, not just in Epping and Hatfield Forests but across the county. A veteran tree is one that because of its great age, size or condition is of exceptional cultural, landscape or nature conservation value.

Trees should not be felled in advance of full Planning Approval being granted. Outline Planning permission does not mean trees can be felled before full planning permission is granted. A planning approval may include permission to fell specific trees on a development site, but where they are not included a separate Felling Licence must be applied for from the Forestry Commission. If pre-emptive tree felling is undertaken i.e before Full Planning Permission is granted, the felling will be investigated by Forestry Commission Woodland Officers. The Commission's advice is, if in doubt contact your local Forestry Commission Woodland Officer for help. See the links below.

In England, Felling Licences and permissions are granted by the Forestry Commission and are simple and free to obtain. Applying for a licence means that a number of relevant issues can be assessed for example whether European Protected Species, such as bats and great crested newts, have been considered. Advice can then be given by a forestry expert. The end result will be a successful and legal felling operation

For more information on the Forestry Commission, regulations, advice, grants and support on offer please visit:
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/forestry-commission>

A Felling Licence can also be applied for on-line at:
<https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-online-for-a-felling-licence>

ESSEX LOAN SHARK ORDERED TO REPAY £100,000

STOP LOAN SHARKS Intervention . Support . Education A loan shark from Essex has been ordered to repay more than £100,000 from his ill-gotten gains.

Paul Gladman, 55 from Chelmsford, was handed a six month prison sentence, suspended for two years with a six-month curfew after admitting illegal money lending at an earlier hearing. Following a confiscation hearing at Chelmsford Crown Court on 28th September, Gladman was ordered to pay back £60,315 under the Proceeds of Crime Act. The legislation stops criminals benefiting financially from their crimes. In addition to the confiscation order, the loan shark was also ordered to pay £40,000 in prosecution costs. The case against Gladman was brought by the Illegal Money Lending Team (IMLT) after officers, working in partnership with Essex County Council's Trading Standards and Essex Police, searched his home and business premises in Maylandsea and seized almost £6,000 in cash and documents containing evidence of illegal money lending. Prosecutor Stuart Jessop told the court that the loan shark had been running his illegal money lending business since June 2015. A financial investigation into Gladman's illegal activities revealed he was charging victims up to 50 per cent interest on loans and adding penalty surcharges for late and missed payments. During the time he was running the illegal scheme, he issued 185 loans and collected more than £106,000 from approximately 50 victims.



GREEN ESSEX STRATEGY



Essex County Council have produced a draft Green Essex Strategy that raises the importance of developing quality green infrastructure and green spaces across Essex to accompany planned growth in the county over the next twenty years. Green infrastructure is made up of natural and semi-natural assets and habitat types, of green and blue spaces, and of other environmental features that maintain and enhance ecosystem services.

It provides multi-functional benefits integral to the health and wellbeing of our communities and to the ecology and economy of the county. Green infrastructure is often referred to as a network of these natural and semi-natural assets and spaces, which are joined together connecting urban and rural areas and are habitually strategically planned.

Green infrastructure for this strategy includes the following assets:

- Parks and gardens
- Natural and semi-natural open spaces
- Ancient Woodlands
- Reservoirs, lakes and ponds
- Coastal features
- Waterways (watercourses)
- Greenways (Public Rights of Way, footpaths, cycleways and tracks, byways, bridleways)
- Outdoor Sport Facilities (Sport pitches)
- Open spaces and premises (Educational premises open space and sport pitches)
- Cemeteries and churchyards
- Allotments, community gardens and city farms
- Agricultural land and meadows
- Public realm/civic spaces (urban greening - urban and street trees, road verges, green walls, sustainable urban drainage and natural flood management)



The strategy aims to take a positive approach to enhance, protect and create an integrated network of high-quality green infrastructure in Essex. Just as importantly, it will help ensure funding opportunities are maximised in the delivery of multi-functional natural assets which will provide a range of benefits, including

- helping mitigate the impact of climate change
- improving public parks, play areas and other green spaces,
- the development of greenways (e.g. Public Rights of Way)
- enabling active travel and recreational opportunities
- contributing to the attractiveness of a place to attract new businesses to the area.

It outlines an approach that requires a change to the way we think about and value our green infrastructure and green spaces.

For further information please [click here](#) To access the survey please [click here](#)

Essex Police Update – GTRET Sgt Paul Downes



Unauthorised encampments are down, 26 as opposed to 74 of the same period last year. Our Section 61's are at 19% and we are starting to see a change in behaviour at some of the encampments with fewer incidents of anti-social behaviour. The reduction may be down to our robust approach in

relation to management and we have recovered numerous stolen caravans from unauthorised encampments. They have usually passed hands several times, or at least the paperwork reflects this, so no prosecutions to report at this time. Any recently stolen caravan would likely result in arrest but not so when the theft is years old with paperwork attached. It still appears to be having an impact as we have seen a reduction so far in the amount of anti-social groups. I'm hopeful that it will remain the same for the rest of the year.

We have recovered over 70 vehicles since the beginning of the year, most of which were stolen. This comprises a mixture of chippers, trailers, tele handlers, cars, caravans and horse boxes.

TWITTER: FOLLOW GTRET THE ESSEX POLICE RURAL TEAM: @EP_GTRET

Find out the latest by following GTRET and their day to day role helping to keep rural Essex a safer place to live. We salute you and thank you!

REMINDER – OPFCC NEWSLETTER LINK



To subscribe to the newsletter the PFCC's office launched recently to keep communities engaged and informed about their activities. [Please click here](#)

Note: Look out for the confirmation email which will tell you that your subscription has been successful.

FULL ERP MEETING DATES For 2019

Date: Tuesday 8th October

Time: Start time 11am – 2pm

Venue: Essex Young Farmers Conference Centre, Whitbread's Farm Lane, Chelmsford CM3 3LQ

BADGER SETTS CHECKED



Tackling badger persecution is a UK wildlife crime priority. Essex Police work with all Essex badger protection groups to protect badgers and their setts. The work is based on the intelligence led UK wide police operation to gather evidence of this type of crime, identifying and targeting offenders.

All Essex badger protection groups work tirelessly to stop badger persecution and let police know the location of badger setts across the county. Police regularly check the badger setts to make sure they have not been disturbed. They also call at homes, farms and other rural businesses to explain their work, asking people to be vigilant and report any suspicious activity.

PC Andy Long, The Essex Police Rural Crime Officer said "Working with the various badger protection groups in Essex and local communities enables us to gather intelligence and evidence in order to catch and prosecute these offenders"

You can follow the work of Essex Police tackling Rural Crime on Twitter @PcAndyLong and @EssexPoliceUK

We encourage anyone who has any information about Rural or Wildlife Crime, or have any suspicions, to contact us on 101. Alternatively to remain anonymous contact Crimestoppers on 0800 555 111



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Compiled and edited by Lizzie Rose, Rural Community Council of Essex. Rural Community Council of Essex Registered Charity No. 1097009. Company registered in England and Wales No. 4609624