

## OPERATION BUZZARD IS HERE TO TACKLE RURAL CRIME



Operation Buzzard is an initiative to coordinate all rural crime related operations in Essex. These operations will make best use of all specialist teams and help ensure that Essex Police is in the best position to tackle a range of rural crime offences. Crime in rural Essex can range from theft of agricultural equipment, vehicles, livestock or fuel through to hare coursing, poaching and burglary. It can be perpetrated by opportunist criminals or organised groups who travel the countryside specially targeting rural locations.

PC Long stated "Operation Buzzard gives us the opportunity to develop our response to rural crime with the assistance of new technologies such as the force drone which can help us gather evidence to crack down on offenders. But we also need the support of local residents, farmers and rural businesses to act as our eyes and ears on the ground and report any suspicious activity."

For more information [click here](#)

Source: Essex Police Website news

## VILLAGE OF THE YEAR COMPETITION 2017



It is that time of the year again!

Here is all you need to know on how to enter: The first step to entering the competition is submitting a brief profile of what makes your village special. It is an opportunity for you to tell RCCE about the organisations, events and activities that contribute most to community life where you live and/or about any new initiatives or future plans. Just provide RCCE with a short summary of what you feel are your village's strengths – it could be the village hall or local clubs and groups, support to village youth teams by local businesses, or community events, whatever you think makes your village special.

Please discuss the competition with your Council and look to involve others in the community in preparing your entry. The form can be completed by a member of the parish council, Clerk, community organisation or anyone you feel is appropriate and knows the village. RCCE changed the entry process for this longstanding competition last year, but it is still easy and free to enter and keeps to the ethos of celebrating and rewarding the enormous good work going on in Essex villages.

This is the only competition of its kind in Essex that focuses on the whole community rather than on the work of one particular organisation or amenity. RCCE will be looking to reward villages of all sizes that are doing most to enhance the quality of life for their inhabitants.

For the entry form and to view the guidelines please [click here](#)

For further information please contact: Sara Ward - [sara.ward@essexrcc.org.uk](mailto:sara.ward@essexrcc.org.uk) or 01376 574330.

## DON'T MISS OUT ON YOUR CHANCE TO VOTE ON 4th MAY



There is just over one week left to make sure you are registered to vote in May's county council elections and have your say on issues that directly affect your day-to-day life in Essex.

You could lose your right to vote if you miss the registration deadline.

It's easy to register and only takes five minutes online.

To apply to register to vote, visit [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](http://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote) before **Thursday 13 April**.

## LEADER – THE STORY SO FAR



£200,000 given to projects in the Essex Rivers Local Action Group area.

Following the launch of the EAFRD (European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development) LEADER programme, the Local Action Group covering the Essex Rivers area has now made four grants totaling almost £200,000. These projects will provide an additional 22 new jobs in rural areas and will allow growth of the businesses. Essex Rivers Local Action Group was set up to distribute EU funding to rural businesses and organisations in parts of Essex. The aim of the grant is to help boost growth and create jobs in the countryside and the group is made up of local representatives from rural businesses and public bodies. A prime example is Dan Hull's project:

### Dan Hull Prepared Foods Ltd



This is an exciting project to relocate the food preparation areas for Dan Hull Prepared Foods which has received a LEADER grant of £52,000. They are currently working out of small premises on the outskirts of Burnham on Crouch but still manage to supply their produce to East of England Co-Op, various farm shops and local stores and Selfridges. With the expanded preparation and cooking areas, they will be able to increase their range and supply other retailers including major national stores.

The business has only been running for three years and has a customer base of over 70 which are spread over several counties including Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk, Cambridgeshire, Hertford and London. The business has won three National Great Taste Awards for their liver parfait, steak pie and Chicken & pistachio terrine.

The project has a total cost in the region of £160,000 and will provide 12 new full time jobs. The new premises are in Danbury which is much closer to all road links and will enable the business to grow as well as feeding into other local businesses in the area.

## SERVICES FACE CUTS DESPITE COUNCIL TAX RISE



VITAL local services face further cuts – despite forthcoming rises in council tax. Council tax rises in 2017/18 will not bring in enough money to prevent further deep cuts to local services, said the Local Government Association.

LGA chairman Lord Porter said: "Services supporting the most vulnerable people in our communities are at breaking point. Many councils are increasingly unable to turn down the chance to raise desperately-needed money for social care and other local services next year. To read the full article please [click here](#)

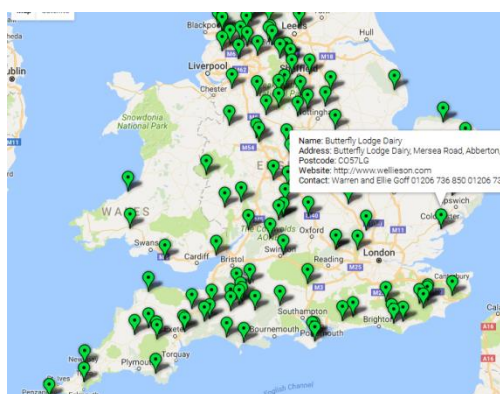
**BRITAIN'S BEST RURAL PLACES TO LIVE IN 2017 HAVE BEEN REVEALED IN THE LATEST ANNUAL QUALITY OF LIFE SURVEY. ESSEX IS IN THE TOP 25!**

| 2017 HALIFAX RURAL QUALITY OF LIFE RANKINGS - THE TOP 25 AREAS |                          |              |
|--|--------------------------|--------------|
| Local Authority Districts (LAD)                                | Region                   | Ranking 2017 |
| Orkney Islands   | Scotland                 | 1            |
| Wychavon   | West Midlands            | 2            |
| Derbyshire Dales   | East Midlands            | 3            |
| Hambleton  | Yorkshire and The Humber | 4            |
| Purbeck  | South West               | 5            |
| South Cambridgeshire   | East of England          | 6            |
| Chiltern   | South East               | 7            |
| West Oxfordshire   | South East               | 8            |
| South Hams   | South West               | 9            |
| South Oxfordshire  | South East               | 10           |
| Tonbridge and Malling  | South East               | 11           |
| West Dorset  | South West               | 12           |
| South Northamptonshire   | East Midlands            | 13           |
| Waverley   | South East               | 14           |
| Shetland Islands   | Scotland                 | 15           |
| Eden   | North West               | 16           |
| Malvern Hills  | West Midlands            | 17           |
| Mid Devon  | South West               | 18           |
| Rutland  | East Midlands            | 19           |
| Ryedale  | Yorkshire and The Humber | 20           |
| Richmondshire  | Yorkshire and The Humber | 21           |
| <b>UTTLESFORD</b>  | <b>EAST OF ENGLAND</b>   | <b>22</b>    |
| <b>MALDON</b>  | <b>EAST OF ENGLAND</b>   | <b>23</b>    |
| Monmouthshire  | Wales                    | 24           |
| Babergh  | East of England          | 25           |

The annual Halifax survey considers a number of measures. Each district is ranked according to a range of factors including education, crime rates, pollution levels and employment.

For the full listing please [click here](#)

**WHERE TO BUY MILK DIRECT**



Buying milk straight from the farm is one way to make sure crisis-hit dairy producers get a fair deal. Farmers Weekly has created a map of British farmers selling direct to the public – cutting out the supermarket or middleman. Some produce pasteurised milk, others sell raw or unpasteurised and a few have a wider dairy range to try.

To find a farm in Essex please [click here](#)

## RECYCLING MADE EASIER



Consumers are increasingly frustrated that they don't know which packaging can be recycled, or how. They're looking for clear and consistent on-pack guidance and expect their favourite brands and retailers to supply this information. The 'On-Pack Recycling Label' delivers a simple, UK-wide, consistent recycling message for use on both retailer private label and brand-owner packaging. Unlike other recycling labels the scheme is based on current local authority recycling services and reflects what CAN be recycled, and where. This enables more consumers to recycle more material correctly, more often. For more information please [click here](#)

Essex County Council Recycling for Essex [website](#)

## FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES

### EUROPEAN STRUCTURAL AND INVESTMENT FUNDS

A variety of funds under the [European Structural and Investment Funds](#) (ESIF) are currently available in different parts of the country. ESIF includes money from the European Social Fund (ESF), European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) and European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development (EAFRD).

In Essex the funding is available through the [South East Local Enterprise Partnership](#) and there are currently various calls open. These include:

#### Under [European Regional Development Fund \(ERDF\)](#):

- [Research and Innovation](#) (priority axis 1) - up to £9,600,000 of funding available
- [SME Competitiveness and Growth](#) (priority axis 3) - up to £17,500,000 of funding available
- [Supporting a shift towards a low carbon economy](#) (priority axis 4) - up to £6,980,000 funding available

#### Under [European Agricultural Fund for Rural Development \(EAFRD\)](#):

Rural tourism – up to £2.6million available

Food processing – up to £3.7million available

Business development (micro and SMEs) – up to £2million available.

## PRINCE'S COUNTRYSIDE FUND

The Prince's Countryside Fund provides more than £1m in grants each year to projects across the UK. Grants of up to £50,000 are available for innovative projects that will provide a lasting legacy to the individuals and communities they seek to benefit.

The Prince's Countryside Fund seeks applications to support activity that results in a long-term positive impact on rural communities by helping the people that live and work in the countryside. The grant programme currently aims to tackle the following key rural issues:

- To improve the prospects of viability for family farm businesses
- To sustain rural communities and drive economic vibrancy
- To support aid delivery in emergency and building resilience

The Fund is open for applications twice a year. The next round of applications will be open from 13th March - 13th April 2017. Please [click here](#)

## TESCO BAGS OF HELP – TESCO AND GROUNDWORK

The money raised from the 5p bag charge in Tesco stores in England, Wales and Scotland is being used to support community participation in the development and use of open spaces. Projects that will get the green light as a result of the funding will include volunteer training, physical improvements of open spaces, equipment purchases, community events and sports and leisure activities.

Administration of the local funding is being managed by the community charity Groundwork.

Bags of Help is always open to applications from community projects. Groundwork assesses all of the applications received to ensure they are eligible. This is followed up by Tesco shortlisting groups who decide which projects go forward to the in-store vote. Three local community projects will be voted on in Tesco stores each month across Tesco regions throughout England, Scotland and Wales. In each region, the project that received the most votes from all stores in their region will receive a grant of up to £5,000. The second placed project receives up to £2,000 and third placed up to £1,000. Every year, over 7000 projects will receive funding through this scheme.

Please [click here](#)

## HEALTHY PACKED LUNCH PLOT WINNERS ANNOUNCED!



Following a fantastic response from Essex schools and community organisations the judging has finished and RCCE are pleased to announce 2017's winners. The entries received were amazing with some fabulous ideas for a healthy packed lunch. It was clear to see the children put a lot of effort and thought into their entries, including some who made their personalised packed lunch so they were tried and tested!

Congratulations to the worthy winners but also to all the children who took part in the competition, it proved very hard for the judges to choose the winners from so many exceptional entries!

### SCHOOLS CATEGORY



Danbury Park Primary School

*Runner up no 1* - Writtle Infant School

*Runner up no 2* - Holly Trees Primary School

### SPECIAL SCHOOLS CATEGORY



Thriftwood School – Joint winners

*Runner up* - Shorefields School

## ORGANISATIONS



1<sup>st</sup> Eight Ash Green Brownies

*Runner up* - 1<sup>st</sup> Wickham Bishops Brownies

A number of highly commended certificates will also be issued throughout the entries.

### FULL ERP FUTURE MEETING DATES 2017

**Date:** Wednesday 24th May 2017

**Time:** 2pm – 5pm

**Location:** The Essex Young Farmers Centre, Whitbreads Farm, Chatham Green,  
Chelmsford CM3 3LQ

**Theme: Rural and Environmental Crime**

**Date:** Monday 25th September 2017

**Time:** 2pm – 5pm

**Location:** TBC



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