

THE ESSEX RURAL PARTNERSHIP STRATEGY LAUNCH - A GREAT SUCCESS

Respecting our Past, Embracing our Future: A Strategy for Rural Essex



A Strategy for Rural Essex setting out a fresh partnership vision for the county, which will help shape rural policy in Essex at a critical time for our countryside, rural communities and businesses. The new strategy is centered around value and respect for the rural environment with rural communities fully contributing to and benefiting from a healthy, prosperous and connected county. In Essex we have over 350 miles of coastline and 72% of the county is classified as rural. We support around 22,500 business and industries based in rural Essex with over 350,000 residents living in rural communities, which is why we think this strategy is so important to the people of Essex and the surrounding counties.

THE LAUNCH

Over 80 partners gathered at Chelmsford City Racecourse on 28th July, to launch 'Respecting our Past, Embracing our Future: A Strategy for Rural Essex'.

The new strategy sets out 38 priorities across 10 chapters, highlighting what is important for those who live and work in rural Essex, and for the environment. Its launch follows over 18 months of preparation work, undertaken by members of the Essex Rural Partnership and co-ordinated by Rural Community Council of Essex with support from Essex County Council.

The strategy publishes the Essex Rural Partnership's new vision and aims to the year 2020. A six-step plan details how delivery will be achieved, and at the launch event all partners were encouraged to play their part in making the vision a reality, through working together to achieve maximum benefits. Several of the speakers made reference to the short-term future being a time of great change and uncertainty, and highlighted the importance of a united strategic direction whilst working in such an environment.

Cllr David Finch, Leader of Essex County Council, pledged the County Council's support to the strategy and asked others to do likewise. Other speakers included Revd Janet Nicholls who presented a case study on 'Old Age and How to Live It' and Dale Symons who expressed his thanks for the Partnership's role in bringing Leader funding to Essex, which has had a direct benefit to his rural vineyard business and boosted local employment in the area.



At the launch event those present were encouraged to pledge their support for the strategy, and to tie it to a Rowan tree, specially sourced for the occasion. The pledges will be recorded, and the tree will be planted at an Essex Country Park later in the year - a continuing and growing symbol of the strategy and its partners working towards it.

'Respecting our Past, Embracing our Future: A Strategy for Rural Essex' is available to download from the Essex Rural Partnership website, along with various evidence documents. For the direct link please [click here](#)

WHAT RURAL ORGANISATIONS ARE SAYING ABOUT BREXIT



Hear what a range of rural organisations having been saying about the vote to leave EU starting with the NFU president Meurig Raymond:

AGRICULTURE – the NFU president thinks the news will lead to a period of “uncertainty” in vital areas of farming. “The vote to leave the European Union will inevitably lead to a period of uncertainty in a number of areas that are of vital importance to Britain’s farmers.

“The NFU will engage fully and constructively with the British government to construct new arrangements. This needs to happen as soon as possible.

“Our members will rightly want to know the impact on their businesses as a matter of urgency. We understand that the negotiations will take some time to deliver but it is vital that there is early commitment to ensure British farming is not disadvantaged. It is vital that British farming is profitable and remains competitive, it is the bedrock of the food industry – Britain’s largest manufacturing sector.”

To hear what other rural organisations have to say, please [click here](#)

Source: countryfile.com

THE BIG FRIENDLY READ



Every year 40,000 children join in with the summer reading challenge. This year why not celebrate Roald Dahl’s amazing books with your child and enjoy the big friendly read. This Summer Reading Challenge is aimed at children aged four to eleven. You can go to any UK library running the Summer Reading Challenge and you don’t have to keep going to the same library. So if you are on holiday in the UK your child should still be able to keep up with the Challenge. The Summer Reading Challenge takes place every year during the summer holidays. Your child can sign up at your local library, then read six library books of your child’s choice to complete the Challenge. There are exclusive rewards to collect along the way, and it’s FREE to take part!

For further information please click [here](#)

GARDENING AND VOLUNTEERING: THE NEW WONDER DRUGS?



Their impact is immense. Some studies have put the value at over £50bn, making the voluntary sector as big as the energy industry. But it’s a two-way street. There is a growing body of research that suggests volunteering is good for your health, particularly mentally. It can help bring stability, improve self-esteem, reduce social isolation and help people learn new skills. For many, it can be a gateway to paid employment, which in turn has its own benefits.

In fact, there's plenty of evidence a whole range of social and practical activities can improve the wellbeing of people. The physical benefits are pretty obvious - digging or raking a lawn for 30 minutes requires as much energy

as a 2km (1.2-mile) run - and so it should come as no surprise it can help reduce the risk of heart disease, obesity and cancer. But even gentle gardening had an impact in much less obvious ways, the report said. It could improve balance, thus helping reduce falls in the elderly, and tackle anxiety and stress. Simply being in a garden can be beneficial too. In care homes, gardens have been found to be good for reducing the agitation and aggression linked to dementia, while hospices have found the tranquility of nature can play an important part in end-of-life care.

To read the full article please click [here](#)

WIRELESS BROADBAND CONNECTS VILLAGES



TWO Essex villages are among the first to benefit from wireless technology bringing superfast broadband to rural communities. The latest Wireless-to-the-Cabinet (WTTTC) equipment is making superfast broadband available in Broxted and Brick End as part of the Superfast Essex broadband programme. A total 170 homes and businesses now have access to the fibre network in the two villages. The technology was installed for the first time in Essex instead of the usual Fibre-to-the-Cabinet (FTTC) link to avoid digging up several miles of local narrow roads. It is one of a variety of innovative technologies used by BT network company

Openreach to expand the reach of superfast fibre broadband. WTTTC is being considered to help the Superfast Essex programme reach further remote rural locations, which do not yet have a superfast broadband service. Essex County Council deputy leader Kevin Bentley said it was great to see new and innovative approaches being used to bring the superfast network to rural communities.

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

WHAT'S THE BUZZ ABOUT BEES?



Summer is here and more and more of us will be in the garden, sprucing up trees, bushes and hedges. However, have you ever thought about how your garden can have a positive impact on British farming and growing?

How do bees and pollinators help put food on your plate?

Did you know, there are at least 1,500 species of insect pollinators in Britain? With around 267 species of bee, they are regarded as the main pollinators across the country. Pollinators, such as bees, butterflies, hoverflies and moths make a crucial contribution to food production and the environment. By encouraging bees and other pollinators to thrive, farmers can improve yields of crops as well as fruits, vegetables and flowers meaning more food on the table.

How can we help?

- Plant more nectar and pollen-rich flowers, shrubs and trees
- Leave parts of your garden to grow wild
- Try to cut your lawn less often
- Avoid disturbing or destroying nesting and hibernating insects
- [Click here](#) to read more information

HEALTHY HEART WALKS



This summer Countryfile and the British Heart Foundation (BHF) are inviting you to share your images and to show them your interpretation of a 'Healthy Heart Walk'. Whether you've been walking in your local park, hiking up hillsides or exploring the coastal path, they want to see your best pictures. The top two winning images will win a Fitbit Charge HR, to help track your steps, distance, calories burned, active minutes, hourly activity and stationary time. The Fitbit Charge HR will also monitor heart rate automatically and continuously to accurately track calorie burn, maintain workout intensity, maximise training and optimise health. Your heart is a muscle and it needs physical activity to stay in good condition. Regular walking can help give your heart the workout it needs. Being active also helps to reduce your risk of stroke, Type 2 diabetes, obesity and osteoporosis.

That's why the BHF has launched 'Just Walk' to encourage everyone to walk and get active this summer. In addition to improving your health, walking is also a simple and easy way to raise money for charity.

Did you know that every three minutes in the UK, another family loses a loved one to heart and circulatory disease? With every stride you take and every pound you raise, you can help bring the BHF closer to helping those in need.

To enter please click [here](#)

MPS LAUNCH RURAL TOURISM INQUIRY



AN influential committee of MPs has launched an inquiry into the role of tourism in supporting rural growth in England. Rural tourism provides around £17 billion a year to the English economy. But rural communities face some particular challenges to tourism growth such as transport connections, restrictions to broadband access and seasonal employment. Now the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (EFRA) select committee has launched an inquiry into how rural tourism can be supported.

Committee chairman Neil Parish said: "Tourism in rural areas creates job opportunities and supports the economic viability of communities." MPs would examine how effectively public programmes and government policies support rural areas to stay competitive in a global

industry, he added.

England has seen a rise in tourism spend in the past year from domestic and international visitors – but over half of the money spent by overseas tourists is in London.

Figures by Visit England show that in 2014 just 18% of domestic overnight trips were taken to rural areas – down from 22% in 2012.

For further reading please click [here](#)

This newsletter is produced and sent by Rural Community Council of Essex on behalf of the Essex Rural Partnership. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter in future please email info@essexruralpartnership.org.uk with 'unsubscribe' as the email subject.

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Rural Community Council of Essex Registered Charity No. 1097009. Company registered in England and Wales No. 4609624