

Economic

BT broadband investment fails to address 'final third', says CLA

The [CLA](#) has welcomed the latest phase of BT's super-fast broadband investment programme, but warns that rural areas and the 'final third' could be left behind, without a decent infrastructure. The Association said that although investment is welcomed, funding is concentrated on making the already fast areas faster, rather than addressing the needs of those with poor broadband access. The CLA has also teamed up with IT and social media expert, John Popham, who will tour rural communities to mark national '[Get Online Week](#)'.

Britain and Poland call for radical CAP reform

Britain and Poland have called for [radical reforms](#) to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), centred on a more competitive agriculture sector and better protection for the environment. Ahead of the European Commission's publication of proposals for change, the UK has called for farm production subsidies to be reduced, with any remaining CAP funds used to reward farmers who take measures to protect the environment.

New briefing papers on planning policy and Post Office mutualisation

ACRE has produced two new briefing papers; one on the draft [National Planning Policy Framework](#), which gives a detailed overview of the Framework's implications and sets out areas for concern, the other on the consultation regarding the potential mutualisation of the [Post Office](#).

Communities

New campaign to encourage communities to buy oil early

New guidance on how communities can set up buying groups has been published as part of a campaign encouraging people to buy heating oil early to avoid running out of fuel this winter. ACRE in collaboration with DECC, Defra, Consumer Focus, Citizen's Advice and the Federation of Petroleum Suppliers have produced '[Best Practice for Oil Buying Groups](#)' which contains practical information and case studies from oil buying syndicates.

British Pubs Week countdown begins

Community Pubs Minister [Bob Neill](#) joined publicans and punters at the Black Dog, London to launch the countdown to [British Pubs Week](#), which kicks off on 28th October. Bob Neill said that he was keen for the 'local' to be recognised as an important social and economic hub of local communities. British Pubs Week will see hundreds of pubs all over the country celebrating their role in the community.

Call for views on opportunities for young people in rural areas

The [Commission for Rural Communities](#) (CRC) is seeking views on employment, education and training for young people living in rural areas to inform their review on the subject. The CRC is interested in hearing about examples of good practice, where public and private organisations are seeking to address some of the issues.

Big Lottery Fund answers Village SOS

The Big Lottery Fund has joined forces with the [Village SOS](#) initiative to support rural communities via an advice line and a series of regional and county information events. A £5.3m competition to help rural communities set up community enterprises or help existing ones diversify into new activities has also been launched. Rural communities have until 20th October to [register](#) their interest in the competition.

Environment

Government to create new charity to protect Britain's waterways

The Government has announced its commitment to the creation of a [new waterways charity](#), subject to parliamentary approval, following a positive response to the consultation 'A New Era for Waterways'. The charity will take over powers and responsibility from public corporation British Waterways; details of how the transfer will be managed will be discussed at a further short consultation launched this month.

Other News

New ERP website goes live

Our new look Essex Rural Partnership website has just gone live! Visit www.essexruralpartnership.org.uk for all the latest Partnership news, meetings and events, and to download up-to-date agendas, minutes and presentations. Follow us on Twitter [@EssexRP](#)

Dates for your diary

7 th October	ERP Steering Group meeting , RCCE Offices, Feering
20 th October	Full Essex Rural Partnership meeting , Bentley Golf Club, Brentwood
22 nd October	RCCE Village Halls Conference , Great Totham Village Hall
30 th November	Environment Action Group meeting , RCCE Offices, Feering
18 th January	Full Essex Rural Partnership & East of England Rural Forum – joint meeting, Hylands House, Chelmsford

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.

Compiled and edited by Daisy Martlew, Rural Community Council of Essex.

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