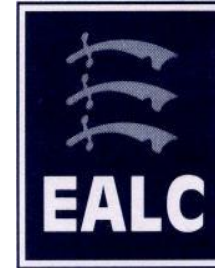




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East of England Rural Forum (EERF)

Opportunities for
Local Councils in the Localism Act

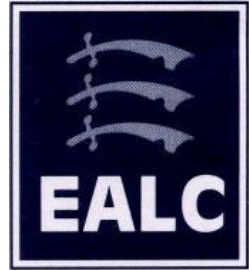
Presented by

Joy Darby & Sue Lake

CEO Essex ALC

Lead Officer Norfolk ALC

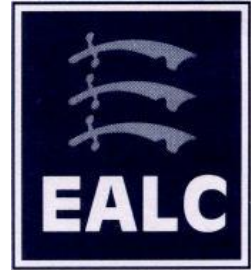
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Localism Act

- Received Royal Assent 15th November 2011
- Provides good opportunities for Local Councils; this is the generic name given to Community, Village, Parish and Town Councils
- Essex has 276 Councils in membership (99%), with Councils varying in size of over 2000 and just under 300 electors
- Norfolk has over 460 councils (second largest in the country) and 424 Councils are in membership of the Norfolk Association - the majority under 1000 electors

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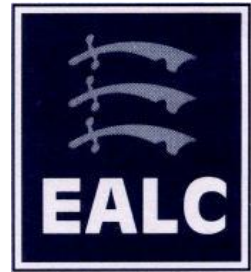
Minister of State for Decentralisation, Greg Clark MP, writes

“The Localism Act sets out a series of measures with the potential to achieve a substantial and lasting shift in power away from central government and towards local people.”

The Opportunities for Local Council have never been so good – The Essex and Norfolk Associations are committed to the continued support of Local Councils for their future development and ever growing role within the Localism agenda/movement



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Developing Local Councils and building capacity is going to stretch the resources we have as

Associations of Local Councils.

In Essex – Essex County Council provides support to the Local Councils by partnership working, The Making the Links Team, Grants, Bursaries and accommodation for the EALC. ECC acknowledge the potential of the sector and support its growth. The Big Society Fund is working hard to deliver local projects and priorities, and free web sites

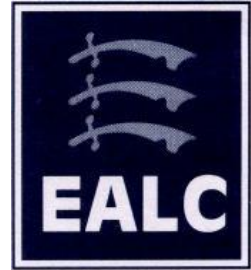
Essex County Council makes it happen!

Other Principal Authorities are partners at a local level working directly with Parishes and with the District and Borough Associations.

Partnerships are good in Essex



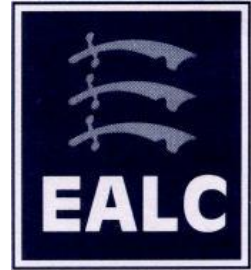
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In Norfolk – Norfolk County Council also provides support to the Local Councils by partnership working, especially the provision of free websites under the Norfolk Parishes scheme. The Association receives a grant and is accommodated at County Hall at standard rent.

The six districts currently will Parish Councils all work closely albeit in different ways with their Local Councils.

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The Opportunities

The Power of General Competence

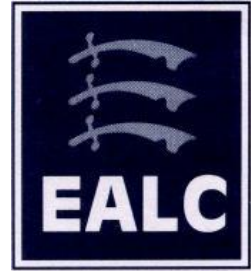
Real Change in how the sector is perceived

Moved from LGA 1972 SEC 137 – major central control through an ACT

to The Power of Well Being – less central control

on to The Power of General Competence – probably only 2 criteria to meet

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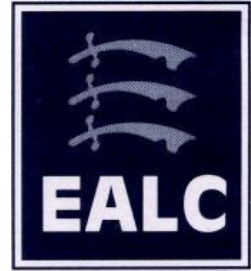
Standards

Change in central control through the Standards Board for England into locally determined schemes.

In Essex – Monitoring Officers are looking at a County Wide scheme

In Norfolk – Monitoring Officers are still in discussions regarding a possible County Wide scheme

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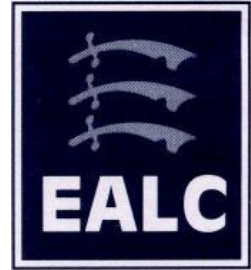


Predetermination

The Act aims to reduce the risk of predetermination against councillors

The Proposals should increase the scope of Local Councillors to represent the views of their residents and will enable them to openly voice opinions held.

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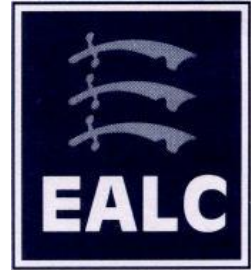
Community Right to Challenge

The Act provides Local Councils with the right to express an interest in taking over the running of a local authority service

The Principal Authority is obliged to consider and respond to this challenge.

And don't forget Local Councils may also have their services challenged!

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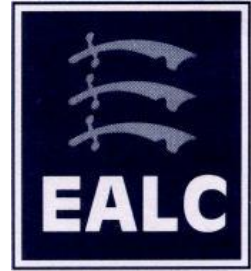
Community right to bid

The Act requires that Principal Authorities maintain a list of assets of community value.

In most cases in Essex and Norfolk this will be the role of the District or Borough Councils.

When listed assets come up for sale or change of ownership, the Act gives community groups and Local Councils the time to develop a bid and raise the money to bid to buy the asset when it comes on the open market.

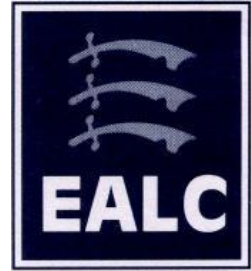
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Planning - Neighbourhood Planning Significant reforms to the planning system

- The EALC will be promoting the new enabling role for Local Councils in the development of Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders
- There will be new guides and information provided to all Local Councils to assist with the Council's development – these will be free resources
- The EALC will be offering free training available in Essex in partnership with CPRE, the RCCE and Planning Aid,

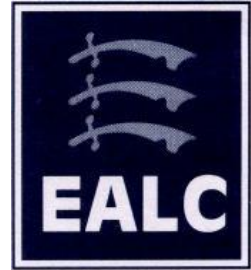
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In Norfolk

- Norfolk ALC will also be assisting wherever possible with the development of Neighbourhood Plans and Neighbourhood Development Orders especially with those councils with special circumstances i.e. large numbers of second homes
- Part of this will see us looking to assist the groups formed in the urban areas currently not parished.
- There will be new guides and information provided to all Local Councils to assist with the Council's development – these will be free resources
- Norfolk ALC in conjunction with Norfolk CPRE will be holding three events on planning – again free of charge

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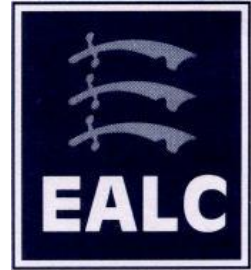


Community right to build

The Act gives groups of local people the power to deliver the development that their local community wants.

Community organisations, including Local Councils, will be able to bring forward development proposals which, providing they meet minimum criteria and can demonstrate support, can go ahead without a separate planning application.

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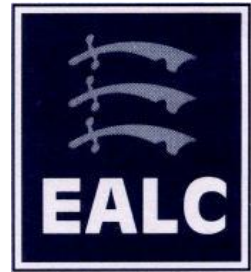
Community Infrastructure Levy

This provision allows funds from a community infrastructure levy to be transferred to an agency – specifically local councils where they exist – other than the local planning authority.

The National Association of Local Councils is pressing for regulations which properly support this measure and also allow for a meaningful proportion of funds going to Local Councils.

Related infrastructure could then be supported regarding developments in these corresponding areas.

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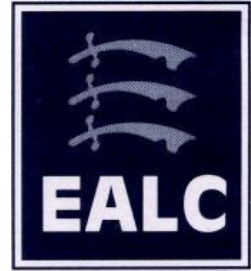
Community Infrastructure Levy

The Greater Norwich Development Partnership (GNDP) have recently consulted on CIL payments within the areas of Norwich, Broadland and South Norfolk. The two tier levy (inner and outer Norwich) has not been universally well received!

Parish Councils in the area were invited to a meeting to discuss the consultation and this was very well attended. Many councils have also expressed their views on the consultation.

The CIL will particularly benefit small communities who have very little new housing or very small areas of new housing that have never attracted S 106 monies

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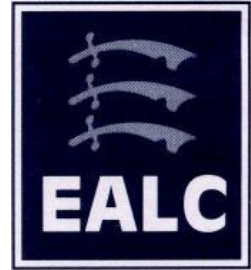
Housing

Reform of council housing finance

Under the Act, rent raised from social housing can now be kept by principal authorities to be used locally to maintain social housing.



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The opportunities for the Local Council Sector have never been so good, at last the work undertaken by these Councils is recognised. The value added noted.

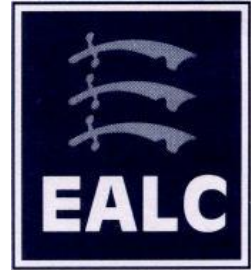
However, not all areas have Local Councils, some are 2 tier and some are 1 tier.

Areas without a Parish, Community, Village or Town Council are 'missing out' This tier does not come with a health warning, it can only improve the communities and local people they serve some by a little but many by a lot.

To demonstrate what communities might be missing we will now show you a 10 minute DVD made by the East of England Association of Parish and Town Councils which represent the 6 County Associations

THANK YOU

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**YOUR COMMUNITY
YOU DECIDE**