



Spring 2009

The e-newsletter of Linking Communities and RTAN

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A call to all RTAN members.

The RCCE Rural Transport and Access Network (RTAN) brings together statutory, community and voluntary sector groups who have a common interest in the issues faced by the rural communities of Essex when it comes to accessing vital services.

Established in 2006 the network aims to alleviate social exclusion throughout rural Essex by providing a forum to discuss and support rural transport and access to services initiatives. The broad membership which includes Regional representatives, County Councillors, Local Authority Officers, Service providers, Voluntary Sector Organisations, Community Representatives. Members of the public receive regular a regular e-newsletter 'the link' and invitations to attend 'networking lunches'.

In order to keep the network focused we are reviewing its operation, membership and direction. As a result we are keen to hear from our valued members.

Please complete the attached questionnaire and return it to kris.radley@essexrcc.org.uk

Cash for cranks.

English local authorities are being invited to bid to Sustrans for a share of £17m to improve cycle and walking routes to schools.

The Links to School programme is part of Cycling England's £140m cycling programme announced by the then transport secretary Ruth Kelly last year. Sustrans is administering the schools grants on behalf of the Government.

Authorities interested in bidding should contact their Sustrans area manager in the first instance.

Source LTT511.

Meeting LSP targets through transport.

Please find attached the 'Meeting Targets through transport' report from the DfT which outlines how transport can be key to helping Local Strategic Partnerships (LSP's) meet their objectives. The guide explains how transport can help meet the objectives of access to services, safer communities, health and economic well being of young people, the economy and the environment.

As rural transport and access adviser at the RCCE I am keen to ensure that transport and access to services remains at the forefront of all LSP development, therefore I hope that you find this latest document from the Department for Transport (attached) of interest.

A prayer, a hymn and a pint of milk!

Thanks to advice and support from RCCE the community of Langford can now boast one of the county's only community shops located in a parish church.

The scheme to open a village shop in the parish church was selected by Essex County Council to be awarded £10,000 as part of a competition in 2007.

Irene Allen, Church Warden at Langford Church, was one of four award winners selected by judges in the county council's Quality of Life Unit which includes Council Leader, Lord Hanningfield. Irene told the council: "If I had £10,000 to spend on improving the quality of life for my community I would extend our church so that we could use it as a mini village shop as we have no other amenities."

Having received the award Irene liaised with a number of advisory bodies including the RCCE to establish the best course of action and, having consulted the community for views on what people wanted, the project was developed and is now near completion with shelving in place and a new car park ready for customers.

Diocesan authorities in Essex have said that they want to be more flexible in making churches available to help communities and RCCE are also keen to support such initiatives.

Rural youth in Tendring to travel in style

In recognition of the ever growing demand for transport for children and younger people, Tendring Community Transport's trustees approved a fundraising drive, whose outcome is, a dedicated transport service for Tendring District's children and younger people.

Tendring Community Transport approached Essex County Council's (ECC's) Community Initiative Fund team, requesting a grant toward the purchase of a Youth Bus. The Community Initiative Fund is the brainchild of Councillor John Jowers, Cabinet member for localism. Cllr. Jowers is strongly supported by Lord Hanningfield, who approved the continuance of the fund, enabling many community groups to improve services throughout Essex. Behind this team is the Community Initiative Fund team whose members have the difficult task of deciding which applications to approve.

The Community Initiative team were enthusiastic in their support for the Youth Bus project and donated £15000 toward the cost of a new vehicle. This was the beginning of an exciting project.

Supported by ECC's Highways & Transportation team, TCT donated the balance needed to purchase the new Youth Bus.

Youth Bus users are able to access football, rugby, swimming, biking and numerous other healthy activities. The bus is also used to access vocational training, nursery schools, other schools and colleges, scouts, brownies, guides facilities and much more.

TCT wishes to extend special thanks and praise for Tendring district's children and younger people. Their representatives produced the livery design pictured above. Extended Schools Co-ordinators and EasyTigernet, also worked hard to achieve the eye catching design.

To find out how to book the Youth Bus, please ring 01255 436962.

London to Paris cycle route proposals revealed

Ambitious plans have been revealed to create a cycle path from London to Paris, amounting to 218 miles of safe routes for bike users.

Councils from both sides of the channel are planning to scheme and hope for it to be up and running in time for the 2012 Olympics.

The proposals would see the route run mainly along traffic-free tracks, from London to Wandsworth and Croydon and then through Surrey and East Sussex, arriving at the Newhaven to Dieppe ferry crossing.

Robin Reed, principal transport planner at East Sussex county council, says the plan began when French officials mimicked a cycle trail in the UK.

"The idea was you could link the two up using the Newhaven to Dieppe ferry. Then it was decided that the whole thing could be expanded," he adds.

He adds that it could cost up to £30 million to complete the British side alone, including signage in both languages and says there is potential for European Union funding.

Sustrans, a sustainable transport charity, has recently called on schools to apply for £17 million of funding to create cycle paths to give children safe routes to school.

Source News from ETA 21.11.08

Extreme eco-driving can be dangerous

In the face of rising petrol prices, a craze for extreme 'eco-driving' known as 'hyper-miling' has become so popular in America that the New Oxford American Dictionary has named the term its word of the year.

'Eco-driving' or 'green driving' refers to the techniques used by drivers in order to maximise fuel efficiency and thereby minimise the CO₂ emissions produced by their vehicles.

Most eco-driving techniques are little more than common sense – journey planning, ensuring that tyres are properly inflated and not carrying unnecessary weight are among the most obvious.

'Hyper-miling' can be dangerous

As with eco-driving, 'hypermiling' involves drivers doing all they can to maximise their vehicle's fuel efficiency, but some of the more extreme techniques are illegal and dangerous.

A minority of drivers who practice 'hypermiling' in America have over-inflated tyres, refuse to come to a halt at stop signs and slipstream large vehicles in order to reduce fuel consumption.

A spokesperson for the Environmental Transport Association (ETA) said: "Eco-driving is about relaxed and smooth driving – it saves money without the need for motorists to resort to dangerous driving."

Source News from ETA

LAA

The Local Area Agreement is an agreement between public, private, voluntary and community sector partners across Essex to achieve ten priorities that are regarded as key to Essex having the best quality of life in Britain. Transport and Access has an impact on a number of the ten priorities and as a result has been identified as an LAA2 local indicator. LI 5.1 – Access to Services.

To assist RTAN members to find out more about those ten priorities and the LAA please find attached 'The Essex Local Area Agreement 2008 – 2011. A brief guide.'

Did you know.....?

Across the country, local authority surveys identify public transport and traffic congestion as two of the most important ten factors people consider in deciding somewhere is a good place to live.

Walking or catching the bus are the main ways of travelling for nearly half the journeys made by the fifth of households with the lowest incomes. In comparison, for the fifth of households with the highest incomes only one fifth of journeys are made by bus or on foot.

There are 6.9 million people of working age in Britain who are registered disabled.

23% of car journeys are less than 2 miles long, 56% less than 5 miles. Smarter travel choices, in the form of walking or cycling, are real options for many people for many of these journeys.

Three quarters of the transport sector's contribution to global CO2 emissions is from road transport.

DfT's Meeting Targets through transport. 2008

Want more news from Linking Communities? Join the Rural Transport and Access Network for regular Networking Lunches, updates & discussion – for details email kris.radley@essexrcc.org.uk

For more information on Linking Communities work contact **0844 4773938** or kris.radley@essexrcc.org.uk

The Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) is an **independent charity** helping people and communities throughout rural Essex build a sustainable future. As one of England's 38 county Rural Community Councils (RCC's) we are a member of Action with Communities in Rural England (ACRE) and Rural Action East the network of RCC's serving the East of England.

RCCE, which hosts the Linking Communities Project, is an influential voice for rural communities at local, regional and national level. We are an active partner in the Essex Partnership and in a number of local strategic partnerships established at district level. We also participate in a wide-range of multi-agency partnerships such as the Essex Rural Partnership and Essex, Southend and Thurrock Infrastructure Consortium (ESTIC).

RCCE also played a prominent part in shaping the Essex Rural Strategy, and with our partners in Rural Action East we enjoy a strong working relationship with the East of England Development Agency (EEDA) and the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)

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