

At the heart of rural Essex



MEMBERSHIP



Who we are

For more than 90 years, Rural Community Council of Essex (RCCE) has been at the heart of rural Essex, working as an independent charity to help local communities build a thriving and sustainable future. Our work focuses on issues such as social isolation, access to services and affordable housing that impact on the life chances of people who live and work in the villages and rural towns of Essex today.

The bedrock of RCCE is its membership which is drawn from local community organisations, principally parish and town councils and village hall trusts, as well as individuals.

Our Services

We provide a range of professional services relevant to the needs of our members and their local communities. These include:

VILLAGE HALLS AND COMMUNITY BUILDINGS

We support community organisations with the management, maintenance and development of halls as focal points of rural community life, including advice on funding and energy efficiency.

AFFORDABLE RURAL HOUSING

We help communities provide small-scale affordable housing schemes for local people based on evidence gathered through housing needs surveys.

NEIGHBOURHOOD AND PARISH PLANS

We support communities in preparing Neighbourhood Plans which enable them to influence development and secure the housing and amenities they need for a sustainable future, and Parish Plans which provide a vision for the community and an action plan to achieve it.



COMMUNITY AGENTS

Our team of agents work in the community to help vulnerable people and their informal carers, enabling them to continue living independently at home.

SOCIAL ISOLATION AND LONELINESS

Our 'United in Kind' team are working across the county to meet the challenge of social isolation and loneliness as experienced by people of all ages.

GROWING COMMUNITIES

Through our annual competition, we encourage children to care for nature and the environment and grow and source local food.

“Thank you for all your help and taking the time to listen – we really appreciate the support your Community Agent has given us.”



“Our parish council really values its membership of RCCE. We have always found your knowledge and support to be invaluable and delivered with professionalism and enthusiasm.”



Our Voice and Connections

As well as providing services, RCCE uses its knowledge and expertise to provide a voice for rural communities in Essex representing their needs to all levels of Government and other public bodies.

RCCE is well connected. We have close links with other voluntary organisations and local authorities, notably Essex County Council, for whom during the pandemic, we delivered the Covid Safe Community Buildings Fund providing almost £1 million in funding to make local

village halls and community buildings more Covid-secure.

We manage the Essex Rural Partnership, encouraging collaboration between all organisations concerned for the future of rural Essex and are a partner in the Essex Wellbeing Service, which provides early intervention healthcare services across the county.

RCCE's reach extends well beyond Essex. We are a member of ACRE (Action with Communities in Rural England), the national network of Rural Community Councils, which speaks for the needs of rural communities throughout England.



“The new affordable homes you have helped to provide have changed my life!”

“RCCE’s Village Halls Service supported us through our successful grant application to the Platinum Jubilee Fund for Village Halls and through ACRE you have lobbied for change on VAT for halls. We greatly value this resource.”

With Your Support – We Can Do More

As a member, you can play a valuable role in securing RCCE's future so we will be there to help keep our rural communities thriving.

Your support will help to ensure our charitable work reaches as many people and places in need as possible as well as keeping us informed about emerging needs and concerns on the ground. In turn, all our members will be able to benefit from:

- Prompt access to the full range of RCCE services with exclusive access to some specific services and sources of information.
- The opportunity to attend all RCCE training events and conferences at discounted rates.



- Keeping up to date with all aspects of RCCE's work and the latest rural news, including new funding opportunities, events and policy developments, through publications exclusive to members, including our monthly e-bulletin 'Essex Warbler', bi-annual 'Oyster' magazine and quarterly 'Update' newsletter (for members who own or manage village halls and community buildings).
- Being able to access the members area of our website.
- Being part of a supportive network sharing information and learning.
- Being part of our governance structure, able to participate in and vote at our AGM.



Categories of Membership

We offer a range of membership categories relevant to the needs of organisations, community groups and individuals that care for our rural communities.



Village Halls and Community Buildings

– that are registered charities.

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Parish and Town Councils

– that do not own or manage a village hall or community building.

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Parish and Town Councils

– that own or manage a village hall or community building.

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Individuals, Community and Voluntary Groups



“Without RCCE’s enthusiasm, commitment and ongoing support our parish plan initiative would not have got off the ground.”

To join us or to find out more about our membership categories, current membership fees and benefits please contact us.



“Thanks to the encouragement and support from RCCE the refurbishment and replacement of dilapidated village halls has led to a remarkable renaissance in village life.”

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