

THE BEACON SCHEME 2008 APPLICATION FORM

PART 1 - AUTHORITY INFORMATION	
Authority Name	Essex County Council
Equality standard rating	
Beacon Theme	Olympic Games and Paralympics Games Legacy: using the opportunity of hosting the Games to encourage communities to be more active
Contact Name	Loretta Sollars
Position	Head of Olympic and Sports Development
Email	loretta.sollars@essex.gov.uk
Telephone	01245 437250
This application can be made available on the IDeA web site once Beacon awards have been made	Yes
Application Number	6114
Application Status	Submitted

2.1 Please summarise the excellent practice for which you are seeking Beacon Status.

Essex County Council submits this application on the basis of a successful track record of engagement with the 2012 legacy agenda for over four years, at national, regional and local levels. Over half way in its Olympic journey, Essex can also demonstrate extensive partnership working across sport and cultural activities and a dedicated evidence based approach. The Council has a strong partnership ethic with its twelve districts and the two unitary authorities of Thurrock and Southend. Through this approach we have initiated a countywide partnership with the intention of securing a legacy from the London 2012 Games for Essex.

The Essex 2012 Legacy Partnership was created and is now led by the County Council with excellent political and senior officer vision. This leadership and commitment has resulted in the growth of a broad grouping of organisations across the public, commercial and voluntary sectors. The structure of the Partnership facilitates a two way process through which projects are shaped at a local level that also influence the future direction of the Partnership, resulting in ownership at all levels.

The Essex Legacy Action Plan, published in 2006, provides a framework for legacy actions across the county. It has achieved Cabinet or full Council support from every local authority in the county and both unitaries. It has been used by districts to develop their own local Action Plans. The Plan sets out the potential benefits to the county in the realms of sport, culture, tourism, volunteering, business, education and skills. It puts them in the context of a locally defined need and is aligned to existing strategy. Cross cutting themes ensure that equalities and diversity issues and other broad approaches are implemented across all of the action areas.

The subsequent annual Delivery Plans have inspired, catalysed and driven a diverse range of legacy projects from the large (the Jiangsu Cultural Festival) to the small (Carrying the Flame Cross Curriculum Pack). Some of these can already demonstrate clear outcomes in terms of inward investment (the Basildon Sporting Village) and participation (disability sport) being achieved.

Essex County Council is leading this commitment to a legacy benefit and has additionally secured the 2012 Games Mountain Bike Event to take place within the county. A consultation programme with those local to the potential venue is one way in which we have engaged directly with the communities that will benefit in the long term. Our corporate agenda, led by the EssexWorks initiative, also helps drive the legacy as two of the ten community pledges directly relate to the 2012 Legacy.

We are outward looking in our approach. We have incorporated learning from visits to other Olympic host cities. We have been a strong voice in the Nations and Regions Group at national and regional levels since their inception, and helped the LGA recognise the importance of this agenda at an early stage. The ultimate complement, however, has been the adoption of our operations and structures by other authorities in their work towards 2012.

2.2 Leadership, Vision and Strategy.

Vision

Essex County Council had the foresight over five years ago to see that positive benefits could be gained from the 2012 Games being hosted by London.

In 2003 Essex literally doorstepped the British Olympic Association, convincing them that local government had a vital role in supporting their bid to host the 2012 Games. Essex lobbied central government to back a London Bid.

Essex also established early relationships with London 2012, the then bid company, working with them throughout the development of the Nations and Regions Group, again re-inforcing the role that local authorities could and would play in delivering a legacy from 2012. This included the provision of a secondee to the Nations and Regions secretariat in 2006.

Essex has worked closely with the LGA for a number of years, helping them articulate the role of local government in the delivery of the Games themselves as well as the legacy. This advocacy has contributed to the setting up of the LGA's 2012 officer network, the provision of a place for the LGA on the national Nations and Regions Group, and Essex's engagement with the LGA officer focus group. Essex has also been a regular contributor to the LGA 2012 officer and Member workshops. Regionally, Essex is a driving force and founding member of Nations and Regions East, a group which our cabinet member for Economic Development, Regeneration and the 2012 Games, Cllr Stephen Castle, has chaired from its inception.

In relation to its own activity, the Council established the **Essex Working Group for the 2012 Games**.

Established in 2004 and endorsed by the Local Strategic Partnerships for Essex, Southend and Thurrock and part of the emerging Nations and Regions Group, the Partnership worked across greater Essex to build public support for the bid.

Following the success of London's bid, and East of England Development Agency's research that suggested Essex could benefit from the Games to the tune of £139m, the Working Group secured senior political and officer buy-in from all leading partner agencies for its revised aim:

to provide the leadership for a partnership that will ensure that Essex, Southend and Thurrock secure a legacy from the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games.

The group, now formally named the **Essex Strategic Board for a Legacy from the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games** established four sub groups (sport; culture and tourism; business and regeneration; skills and education) in January 2006 to audit the opportunities and actions required to secure a legacy for Essex from the Games. An **Action Plan for a Legacy from the London 2012 Games** was launched in November 2006 by ECC on behalf of the Partnership. Providing a framework for a legacy that partners across Essex are now working to achieve, the Plan comprises thirteen action areas selected for their unique importance to Essex:

1. Supporting Volunteers
2. Preparation and Training Camps
3. Increasing physical activity and sports participation levels
4. Cycling Development
5. Improving Sports Performance
6. Culture and Festivals
7. Tourism
8. Ports of Entry, Transport and Logistics
9. Winning 2012 Games related and other Public Sector Supply

Contracts

10. Business Displacement
11. Learning and Development
12. Weald Country Park
13. Thames Gateway South Essex.

A menu of opportunities was produced for each action area, listing 135 actions in total, each to be delivered through the subsequent annual Delivery Plans. However, the majority were already included within existing strategies. The benefit of being included in the Action Plan is that new but aligned projects are being started, existing projects are being delivered within shorter 2012 Games related timescales, are attracting additional resources and are being given innovative and inspirational connections through the magic dust of the Games.

The Action Plan includes **7 Cross Cutting Themes** which are subject to regular assessment to ensure the greatest impact across all the action areas:

1. Young People
2. Equity/Inclusion
3. Sustainability
4. Friendships and Cooperation
5. Inspiration/Aspiration
6. Entrepreneurship and innovation
7. Image of Essex.

The first and second of these themes ensure that equalities and diversity issues are embedded across the whole of the Action Plan and not focused on a few actions.

In March 2008, the first Annual Delivery Plan was published detailing those actions scheduled for delivery this year and those partners that have committed to seeing out their completion. The production of an Annual Delivery Plan (to be accompanied in future years with a Review of Achievements) will enable actions to be reshaped to meet changing circumstances and to take advantage of the ongoing development of national and regional projects and priorities.

Strategic Alignment

When drafted, the Action Plan was aligned with existing strategies including the first Essex LAA, the Essex

Sustainability Framework and the Thames Gateway, Haven Gateway and M11 Corridor Economic Development Strategies. It was also produced simultaneously with the Strategy for Sport within which are embedded the sports elements of the Action Plan.

The Action Plan predated the Nations and Regions East "Rising to the Challenge" strategy and influenced its content. Combined with the emerging 2008 Delivery Plan it was also used to inform our input to the development of the Government's own Legacy Plan published in June 2008.

The strategic relevance of the Action Plan and Delivery Plan's cross cutting nature, combined with the strength and leadership of the Partnership and ECC's commitment to the 2012 legacy have also resulted in the inclusion of 2012 legacy issues in "Liberating Potential: Fulfilling Lives the Essex (Sustainable Communities) Strategy 2008-2118". Within LAA2, the national indicator for adult participation in sport (NI8) has targets for each district, the five with the current lowest participation rates being set at a higher level.

Leadership and Commitment

Originally driven from within the Cabinet office of the County Council, "**Maximising the Legacy from the 2012 Games**" became a priority in Essex County Council's Corporate Plan on 18 July 2006. Resources were allocated to create a Head of Service post and subsequently a staff team (5fte staff positions) with a clear brief to realise this legacy.

A Cabinet resolution to endorse the Action Plan, authorise its implementation and formally take on the leadership and coordination role for the Essex 2012 Strategic Partnership was passed on March 2007. The 2012 Legacy Team's role is a facilitative and enabling one, to work with partners - both internal and external - to ensure that the actions also meet their corporate objectives and that they are able to allocate resources to lead on the Plan's implementation. This advocacy role has resulted in all 12 districts and both unitary authorities endorsing the Action Plan with eight developing full Action Plans for a Legacy.

Internally, the Plan and work of the Legacy Team is mainstreamed within the work of the County Council. It is positioned within the Chief Executive's Directorate and is subject to all corporate processes including the production of Equality and Diversity Impact Assessments, performance and risk management systems and partnership governance reviews. The team also works with colleagues to develop the County Council's own response to the Legacy Action Plan and to ensure that 2012 related projects are delivered.

2.3 Community and Customer Engagement and Empowerment.

The Terms of Reference of the Strategic Board focus the Essex 2012 Legacy Partnership on working initially with partner agencies. The strength of the partnership comes in part through our consistent involvement of the stakeholders in the decision making processes.

The consultation to create the 2012 Legacy Action Plan included:

- two cycles of consultation with the Essex Working Group and its four sub groups;
- meeting with all 15 local authorities (including the County Council)
- four workshops held on themed subjects; and
- 22 additional meetings with stakeholders.

When the Action Plan was launched at a Conference on 29 November 2006, 165 delegates attended including representatives from the public and private sectors, voluntary and community groups, schools, colleges and universities. The workshops conducted at this event resulted in a prioritisation of the tasks within action areas and gave input to the membership review of the Strategic Board and Sub Groups.

The process to agree the Delivery Plan, launched on 17 March 2008 at another major conference was very similar to the initial Action Plan. It included individual meetings with all local authorities and focus groups. These secured the commitment from partners to carry out the actions that make up the Delivery Plan and at the Conference 150 delegates joined workshops to share good practice and to influence the way in which the Delivery Plan will be implemented.

Cross Cutting Themes

The cross cutting themes of the Action Plan set the parameters for the way the Partnership will do things. Two themes have particular relevance to community and customer engagement and empowerment.

- Young People:* to involve young people in both the decision making and the implementation of the Action Plan
- Equity and Inclusion:* To ensure equity of access and opportunity, adopting an inclusive approach to all sectors of the community so that they can benefit from the implementation and be involved in the decision making associated with the Action Plan.

Young People

A presentation was made and a workshop held at the **Young Essex Assembly** in July 2006 as part of the initial consultation to produce the Action Plan. This gave a positive input to the Plan by increasing the references to young people in several of the action areas including volunteers.

Young people have been involved in the organisation and planning of projects in the Plan including:

- the Disabled People Consultation Workshop - a young disabled person was a member of the Organising Group and Ridgewell Primary School produced a video of the event;
- the EASTmeetsWEST Trailblazer and full Cultural Extravaganza event that will take place in Weald Country Park on 20 September 2008; and
- the piloting of two school curriculum projects.

Disabled People Conference

In order to better understand how the Action Plan could impact on the disabled community in Essex, a half day conference was held on 11 May 2007. It attracted 115 delegates including 40 delegates with a disability, groups and individuals from all districts throughout the county.

Evaluation forms completed showed that the aims for this event were achieved:

- to raise awareness of disabled people of the Legacy Action Plan;
- to consult with disabled people and organisations over the impact of the Action Plan on people with a disability;
- to offer informal networking opportunities; and
- to inspire and encourage disabled people to take part in sports activities.

The event achieved high levels of media coverage, reinforcing a positive image of disabled people.

EASTmeetsWEST Event

The Equality Impact Assessment carried out on the Legacy Action Plan requires that as discrete projects within the Plan are implemented, consideration should be given to community engagement. The EASTmeetsWEST Event which will be held at Weald Country Park on 20 September 2008 as a flagship element of the Jiangsu Cultural Festival and launch of the Cultural Olympiad in Essex has been designed with considerable input from the local community including:

- a consultation exercise to research the possible scope and interest for a major public arts event which included a survey of users of the Country Park and representatives of groups across the community;
- this research indicated that there was interest in staging a large scale community led cultural event and that this event should include and empower young people and introduce the Park to groups who are not regular visitors;
- a trailblazer event held at the Chinese New Year which included a Chinese lantern and dragon procession by local school children through Brentwood High Street raised awareness of the main event; and
- 550 participants will help to create the show, coming from 15 schools and two community groups.

2.4 Actions.

The 2008 Delivery Plan lists 48 key tasks that are underway this year. A selection of these follows:

Sport

Pre Games Training Camp Venues: 21 venues across Essex are included in the Official Pre Games Training Camp Guide for the Olympic Games, 6 of which are also Paralympic Games venues, the highest of all counties in the Eastern region. ECC led cooperation across all the venues and the consortia that they fall into is producing a marketing plan for the county. Many venues outside Essex will like us claim a proximity to the Olympic village, but our claim combined with a commitment to meet the precise requirements of athletes and their coaches from home country departure to final arrival at Stratford will be hard to beat. Leaflets, a dvd and web based publicity materials will be used by delegates attending the Beijing Games in August 2008 and then targeted at the sports and teams we believe we have the greatest chance of attracting. Our marketing plan is aligned with the County Sports Events Strategy (also in production) tourism development initiatives and International activities.

Sports Participation: Using the Games to inspire an increase in sports participation rates, and working with sportsex and local partners, ECC has helped establish 14 community sports networks. Their plans for intervention programmes are based on local demographics and profiling of non participants (incorporating the mosaic market segmentation methodology). An application for funding from Sport England to implement these programmes,

targeting the five local authority areas with the lowest participation rates is being made with the use of matched funding from the Performance Review Grant for LAA1.

Culture and Tourism

Jiangsu Cultural Festival: This unique festival is described in more detail in the Case Study section of the application.

Strategic Tourism Development: A county Tourism Strategy was produced in 2007. This highlighted opportunities for developing tourism associated with the Games and the opportunities to develop business, cultural and sports related tourism in the County. Following the appointment by Essex County Council of a Strategic Tourism Manager in January 2008, and with the catalyst that Games associated tourism presents, dynamism and drive has been injected into tourism development. A new web portal for Essex tourism has been commissioned which includes a state of the art destination management system and will publicise the treasures of Essex to a worldwide audience, contributing to the county's efforts to attract Pre Games Training Camps as well as engaging with the Olympic and Paralympic Games tourism benefits that are well documented from the Sydney Games and other host cities.

Education and Learning

Curriculum Projects: Two olympic inspired curriculum projects have already been developed by the Essex Schools Advisory and Inspection Service and are being rolled out across all three local education authorities:

"Fantastic Me" is a web based game aimed at primary school students. Over a five week period pupils interact virtually with a group of characters including the coach, manager, spy (who watches other teams), fans (who ask questions) and even the Prime Minister. These characters are encouraged to positively experiment and change aspects of their lifestyle as they pretend to train for a major sports event.

"Essex Carrying the Flame" is a 2012 inspired cross curricular support pack for use in infant, junior and primary settings. It provides schools with examples of practical activities and games related to the current Essex Physical Education and school sport programmes as well as cross curricular concepts.

14-19 Curriculum Task and Finish Group: A Task and Finish Group led by the Learning and Skills Council Essex is examining the opportunities for learning and skills initiatives inspired by the Games. The Group is focusing on projects that are aimed at young people not in education, employment or training and will guide the roll out across Essex of the "Personal Best" programme that has been piloted in London and will be financed with Legacy Trust UK funding in the East Region.

Business

Business Breakfasts: Between 2006 and 2007, twelve business breakfasts and meetings were held across the county aimed at stimulating the interest of the business community in bidding for 2012 related contracts. Essex has a business profile with a high percentage of small and medium sized businesses. Over 1,000 businesses have attended these events where they have learned about the wide range of business opportunities that the 2012 Games represents and of ways to prepare for these through having an understanding of public sector procurement processes. This awareness has resulted in 887 Essex businesses making an initial registration on the CompeteFor brokering web portal - more than any other county in the East region.

A second round of Business Breakfasts are being organised by Business Link East using grant aid from Essex County Council. The aim of these events is to signpost businesses to the development agencies that can provide support and assist a business to progress from initial registration through to achieving full sign up as a contractor on the CompeteFor system. The events will also introduce businesses to other sport and 2012 related benefits such as establishing work based health and fitness programmes or supporting employee volunteering activities.

Communications Strategy

The Strategic Board formally considered initial proposals for a Communications Strategy in September 2006. Since then it has been further developed with input from the Sub Groups, and The Essex Communications Officers Group (a regular meeting of Communications Officers from public sector bodies). The full strategy is now being implemented. It contains:

- overall objectives for the Communications Strategy;
- definition of target audiences: (key opinion formers, stakeholders and general public including sub groups within each of these categories);
- statement of key messages for each target audience;
- listing of communications products and media to be developed and used; and
- calendar of events offering communications opportunities to the target audiences.

Progress against the Strategy is regularly reported to meetings of the Strategic Board

The major forms of communication with stakeholders and opinion formers are:

- updates given to sub group members that are then cascaded through professional networks;
- electronic newsletter which is mailed to a growing database of currently over 150 individuals and organisations;
- website (the County Council hosted site for the Partnership is to be replaced by a more flexible externally commissioned site which is under development at present);
- presentations made by staff and County Council members to any group that asks - always tailored to meet the needs of the audience; and
- the hosting of the annual Essex Legacy Conference (first held in 2004)
- contribution to regional and national conferences on the Games (including the Nations and Regions East annual conference and the LGA's annual conference and specific 2012 workshops).

Communications with the public have relied predominantly on:

- media releases over specific events, with a good success rate in terms of both print and broadcast media;
- editorial in regular Council publications including "Essexworks" - the County Council's bimonthly publication, and "Insx" - the staff magazine; and
- event specific publicity materials such as the Jiangsu Festival Programme.

2.5 Partnerships.

Strategic Board

We fully recognise that an effective partnership is crucial to being able to achieve our 2012 Games legacy ambitions. The Essex 2012 Legacy Partnership is focused around a Strategic Board with the following membership:

Chairman:

Gary Sullivan - Chair Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership

Chairs of Sub Groups:

Sport, Preparation & Training Camps - Mark Dobson - Chair sportessex

Leisure, Culture & Tourism - Andrew Lewis - Director Regeneration, Southend on Sea

Education & Skills - Janice Logie - Director, Learning & Skills Council Essex

Business, Regeneration & Inward Investment - Sir Michael Hodgkinson - former chairman, Greater Essex Prosperity Forum

Brentwood/Weald Park Liaison Group:

Bob McLintock - former CEO Brentwood BC

Transport Group:

Chief Supt. Michael Thwaites - Essex Police

Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership

Cllr Pam Challis - Leader, Castle Point BC

Nations & Regions East:

Chair - Cllr Stephen Castle - Cabinet member ECC

Cross Party Political Support:

Labour - Cllr Paul Kirkman - Labour Grp Leader, ECC

Liberal Democrat - Cllr Tom Smith Hughes - Liberal Democrat Grp Leader, ECC

Local Authorities:

Thurrock - Cllr Joy Redsell - Cabinet Member, Thurrock Council

Southend - Cllr Cllr Roger Hadley - Cabinet member, Southend-on-Sea Borough Council

Essex County Council - Joanna Killian - Chief Executive.

The **Objectives** of the Board are to:

- create a strategic framework within which the activities that will comprise a legacy can be identified and monitored;

- oversee the establishment and maintenance of a partnership that is open and inclusive and seeks to involve all organisations and individuals with an interest in the Partnership's aims;
- guide and manage the implementation of a Communications Strategy that will maintain two way communications across the partnership;
- use members' individual and collective influence to impact on the financial and corporate strategies and operations of organisations within the partnership in order to achieve its aim; and
- provide the official representation from the area to the Nations and Regions East Board.

Legacy Sub Groups

There are six legacy associated sub groups. Their roles are to:

- manage the implementation of specified areas and the cross cutting themes of the Legacy Action Plan;
- ensure that the action areas and activities are aligned with other relevant strategies;
- identify the resources required and allocated to implement the action areas;
- manage the Communications networks associated with implementation of the Plan within their action areas;
- make recommendations to the Strategic Board on the monitoring and evaluation of the action areas under their jurisdiction, in line with the Monitoring and Evaluation Framework (to be developed);
- make regular reports, including feeding into the Annual Report on progress to achieve the Action Plan; and
- act as a first point of consultation for issues related to the 2012 Games.

The Sub Groups take responsibility for the action areas of the Legacy Action Plan:

Action Areas Sub Group

2, 3,4,5	Sport, Preparation and Training Camps
6,7	Culture and Tourism
8,9,10	Business, Regeneration and Inward Investment
1,11	Education and Skills
13	Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership Quality of Life
Board	
12	Brentwood Weald Park Liaison Group

A key principle of working for the Partnership is that it should utilise current operational structures and systems to deliver the Action Plan. The Sport, Preparation and Training Camps Sub Group, for example, is also therefore the Management Board for sportessex, the county sports partnership. The sports action areas of the Legacy Action Plan are in the County Strategy for Sport so performance management is streamlined into one meeting. The Thames Gateway South Essex Quality of Life Board is also responsible to the Thames Gateway South Essex Partnership, so joint reporting is achieved.

The membership of the Sub Groups has been developed based on a set of core criteria as follows:

Chairman: holds a senior strategic role and/or professional involvement with the subject area and so can directly influence resource allocation across Essex;

Local Authority representation: minimum of four to represent unitary, district and council perspectives, all to hold minimum of Heads of Service posts within the subject area;

Operational Staff: staff who will be directly responsible for managing implementation of Action Plan and who can act as initial consultees and communicators to key networks for each Sub Group;

Associated networks/ partnerships: reps from networks/partnerships (includes voluntary and business sectors) as specific to each sub group. Must bring strategic understanding, be able to represent the view point of a stakeholder group and commit to briefing their network/partnership.

The development and implementation of the Action Plan is therefore guided by the leading representatives from the relevant subject areas drawn from across the county.

An excellent example of this is the progress with respect to the action area for Volunteering. The Director of Chelmsford Volunteer Centre is chairing a task and finish group and one of the early conclusions of their discussions is that any gains in the number of volunteers that the Games may generate will only be sustained if there is an increase in the capacity of the volunteer infrastructure in the county. A funding proposal to achieve this will be resourced from the 2012 Legacy budget and will be directly linked to other volunteer infrastructure work taking place in conjunction with the volunteering compact and LAA2.

Group members and the Legacy Team staff provide regular updates on 2012 initiatives using the various

professional networks that exist across the county. Making presentations and carrying out discussions at the regular meetings of the considerable range of county groups are an important element of these communications. It includes groups as diverse as emergency planners, archivists and tourism officers. The annual conferences that have generated good attendances have also ensured that there is direct two way communication to wider audiences.

A thematic approach is balanced by a direct liaison held between the members of the Legacy Team with the local authority lead officers for 2012 legacy matters. One to one meetings with each local authority enable the team to offer specific support and to share experiences from across the county. Presentations about the Essex Legacy have been given at various locally held events including sports club development evenings and at two open consultation meetings held by Harlow Council to develop local legacy programmes.

Measures of Success

This approach to the partnership has been recognised by others as effective:

- Chelmsford Borough Council carried out a review of all their partnerships in 2007 and the Essex 2012 Legacy Partnership was named as one of their priority engagements;
- an IDEa peer review of Essex County Council conducted in 2007 led by Sir Simon Milton recognised the good Partnership working around the Olympics that was taking place;
- in December 2007, the Essex Strategic Board for a Legacy from the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games was endorsed as one of six major theme partnerships within the newly structured LSP for Essex, "The Essex Partnership"; and
- as LAA2 has been finalised, the 2012 Legacy Partnership has been given accountability for two of the National Indicators - NI8 adult participation in sport and NI11 engagement in culture and the arts.

2.7 Outcomes.

Essex has a long tradition in delivering community sports participation projects and securing external funding and this has been carried into our 2012 Legacy work with some initial evidence and examples of success already secured.

Physical Activity and Sports Development

Young People and Schools: The joint approach to implementing the Essex Physical Education and Sports Development Strategy from 2000 onwards has seen an extensive delivery of the government's PE and School Sport Club Links (PESSCL) programme. This has resulted in 83% of Essex schools delivering 2 hours of quality physical education and school sport by 2006, exceeding both the national average and the PSI set by government.

During their first year in post, Competition Managers delivered an increase of over 100% in school sports competitions, involving over 10,000 pupils. These numbers are targeted to be exceeded this year by an additional 100%.

Disabled Sports Performance Pathways: Throughout the work of the Sports Development Officer for Disabled People from 2004-07, significant successes were achieved including:

- the establishment of disabled sports clubs in every local authority;
- an increase in the number of sports coaches and teachers for people with a disability; and
- the growth of a network of professionals and volunteers to support disabled sport across the county.

With the establishment of sportessex taking over the role for strategic sports development, the responsibility for disabled sport was successfully integrated within their operations. As the 2012 Paralympic Games approaches, Sportessex have obtained additional external funding for a disabled sports officer to maintain this participation activity and to extend it by supporting the development of performance pathways for disabled athletes with talent. A Disability Sports Academy has been set up and already includes 16 clubs covering 12 of the 19 paralympic sports.

Sports Facilities and Regeneration

Basildon Sporting Village: Essex County Council has led an innovative sports approach to regeneration and with Basildon Borough Council and Basildon Renaissance Partnership has embarked on an ambitious project to regenerate the town centre of Basildon, using the redevelopment of the town's key sports facilities as a pivotal element of this masterplan.

Inspired by the successful London 2012 Bid, the Basildon Sporting Village will be built with a schedule for completion in 2010. The facility will include a 50m swimming pool, gymnastics training facility and indoor sports hall. The catalyst of having the facility completed in time for the venue to be available as a Pre Games Training Camp has helped to maintain the project's momentum.

A sound business case has succeeded in securing partnership funding from CLG (£5M through the Thames Gateway Partnership), Essex County Council (£5M) to contribute to the £35M project overall. The project will also be used as the basis for developing physical activity and sports participation programmes for a community that currently has levels of cardiovascular disease above the national average. An Olympic themed festival to coincide with the opening of the new facility is also being planned and feeds into the Olympic Legacy Action Plan for the Borough.

Cultural Activities and Regeneration

Relocation of the Royal Opera House production facility: An early gain from the clearance of the Olympic site in Stratford was the relocation of the Royal Opera House backstage production facility to Purfleet in Thurrock. The maximum benefit is being made of this move. Through partnership work with the Learning and Skills Council for Essex, the National Academy for Creative and Cultural Skills will be colocated on the site and in addition to providing a new range of learning opportunities to the communities of South Essex, the whole venture will hopefully provide significant capacity for the Opening and Closing Ceremonies at the 2012 Games.

Jiangsu Cultural Festival: Operating to an overall budget in excess of £350,000, the Festival has been successful in attracting £102,000 of additional inward investment to support its range of activities. This includes £60,000 in commercial sponsorship for the programme. Amongst the many ground breaking elements of the Festival, the Guardians of the King exhibition, consisting of 43 terracotta warriors, will be hosted at Colchester Museum and is expected to make a substantial increase in the number of visitors to this location. It is also timed to coincide with the imminent opening of firstsite, a major new arts facility located in the town.

Gearing up Local Businesses

2012 Legacy Themed Business Breakfasts: Over 1,000 businesses attended 12 Breakfasts held between 2006-2007. This has helped raise awareness levels of the contracting opportunities that the Games represents:

- By 9 July 2008, 887 Essex businesses had made initial registrations on Competefor - more than any other county in the East
- 412 of these businesses have progressed through the system to get their full details published on Competefor. This conversion rate (46.6%) is the best in the region.

2012 Legacy Advocacy

Additional Local Authority Resource Allocations: As a result of the advocacy carried out by Essex County Council, eight authorities now have full Legacy Action Plans of their own and have budgets allocated for their implementation. Of these, Southend and Basildon have recently made appointments for Legacy Officers to drive their programmes. Braintree District Council has written Legacy activities into the job description for their Sports Development Officer post which is currently being reappointed. The Action Plans of these authorities are aligned to the Essex Legacy Action Plan but also reflect their own local drivers and circumstances.

Colchester's Plan is an integral part of their LSP. A strong consortium with the Borough Council, Essex University and Colchester Garrison is giving a focus to the marketing of their Pre Games Training Camp venues in the context of their broader tourism marketing strategies. Their commitment to cycling development has recently been recognised through their designation as a Cycling Demonstration Town.

Braintree's Legacy ambitions have focused on sports participation and the development of links with local sports clubs. A Council staff awareness lunchtime event offered a range of sports and physical activities to staff, and a grant aid programme for Braintree athletes with talent has been developed with sponsorship from their local shopping centre.

Chelmsford Borough Council boast an unrivalled strength in the organisation of community events on a major scale. Their hosting of the World Scout Jamboree in 2007 included cooperation across the county with 40,000 scouts from all over the world camping at a range of locations and a massive daily transport operation to bring them to Hylands Park. This expertise is being used to good effect in the planning for the transport surrounding the Mountain Bike event.

The Chelmsford Event Unit are also managing the EASTmeetsWEST event which takes place in a County Council owned Country Park in Brentwood Borough Council's area. Colchester Borough Council has already agreed a five year programme of events with annual themes focused around the Games that will run through to 2012.

Southend on Sea Borough Council is linking the 2012 Legacy opportunities to the cultural focus that is a central part of their resort's regeneration. A small element of this is represented by a Handover Ceremony for the 2012 Olympic Games from Beijing to London which will be staged at sea as part of a bank holiday weekend of activities along the seafront.

3 **Outline, with reference to a specific case (a geographical area, a particular section of the community, an individual or particular issue) how you have taken action to address an issue and the impact that this action has had.**

The Essex-Jiangsu Cultural Festival

Background

The "Creative Consequences" Arts Economic Impact Reports demonstrate our interest in seeking performance evidence. It records our success over the years in contributing to economic growth as a result of our interventions. Our analysis of this and other reports identified three issues:

- a desire to further increase engagement in cultural events at an organisational and individual level;
- the relatively low profile of tourism compared to our peers and specifically for cultural tourism; and
- low public awareness of our 20 year bond with Jiangsu Province, China.

Tackling these and taking advantage of the timing of the handover of the Beijing to the London Olympiad, the concept of an Essex-Jiangsu Cultural Festival was first conceived in 2006. It was launched on 6 July 2008 and runs until March 2009. During a relatively short space of time, a major Festival has been organised which will have national impact.

The Festival

The objectives for the Cultural Festival are to:

- Excite and inform people in Essex, particularly young people, about Jiangsu's arts, culture and economic development and the future impact on our lives of China's continued growth.
- Significantly increase two-way trade and investment between Jiangsu and Essex.
- Broaden the range of sustainable cultural, educational and sports links between Essex and Jiangsu organisations and individuals.
- Communicate the usefulness of the Essex/Jiangsu link in delivering economic, cultural and educational objectives to Essex and the UK.
- Persuade key Chinese officials at all levels that the Essex/Jiangsu link is the most productive and useful UK/China link.
- Celebrate the launch and retain a legacy from the London 2012 Games Cultural Olympiad.

ECC Leadership and our Partnership Approach

Senior political and officer support for the Festival concept secured the agreement of Jiangsu Provincial Government. Resource commitments were made through the appointment of an International Cultural Festival Manager who worked closely with the Department of Culture, Media and Sport and the Jiangsu Foreign Affairs Office to develop the concept.

Within Essex, communities and groups were supported and empowered to organise their own events. Partners in the organisation of these events include RHS Hyde Hall Gardens, Thameside Theatre Thurrock, Billericay Rotary Club, Anglia Ruskin and Essex Universities, local authorities, schools, museums and libraries across Essex. Harlow is the town with the largest Chinese community and their Community Association have also engaged in the organisation of events.

Fund raising from Trust Funds has assisted the generation of the overall budget for the Festival. Business partners are also sponsors. This includes BT and the Essex Chronicle Media Group who have collaborated in a Photography Exhibition, through one of their photographers visiting the Jiangsu as part of an exchange arrangement.

Research has been commissioned which will monitor the economic impact, the participation levels and assess whether the Festival achieves its objectives.

Alignment with national, regional and local priorities

The Festival meets the overarching aims of the London 2012 Cultural Olympiad:

- Creating a new awareness of cultural activity
- Offering new projects to get involved in and encouraging more people to take part in cultural activity within their local community;
- Developing new partnerships in the cultural sector and around the world.

It also fits within the Government's Five Legacy promises. An application has been made through the Regional Cultural Programmer for the overall Festival and East Meets West Flagship event to be recognised by LOCOG with the "Inspired by the Games" logo.

At the regional level, the East of England 2012 Business Plan 'Rising to the Challenge' encompasses the following aims:

- Contribute to the national Cultural Programme
- Encourage the development of community led cultural projects
- Build on emerging links between China and the East of England to create linked events in 2008 to coincide with the Beijing Games handover.
- Use the Games to increase practical participation in and engagement with culture, especially priority groups
- Develop the capacity of the cultural sector in the region
- Develop international links for the region's creative organisations and businesses.

For the County Council, the Festival will contribute to the following:

- The Corporate Plan objective of "Maximising the benefits to Essex of the London 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games".
- Delivering on the Essex Action Plan for a Legacy from the 2012 Games
- Assisting in reaching targets within LAA2 for National Indicator 11: Engagement in the Arts.

Activities

Over 100 events are planned including:

Exhibitions

Guardians to the King: Making their first ever trip outside China, 43 terracotta figurines from the Han Dynasty will be exhibited at Colchester Museum. Delicate negotiation with the Chinese authorities was required to secure this unique hoard which is expected to create phenomenal levels of interest.

Outdoor Events

EASTmeetsWEST: a large scale cultural event in Weald Country Park with participants from the Brentwood community staging a series of performances featuring hundreds of Chinese lanterns to celebrate the mid Autumn Moon Festival culminating in a dramatic pyrotechnic finale. The Trailblazer event held at the Chinese New Year created great expectation for the full extravaganza.

Events for Families and Schools

Open Day at the Harlow Chinese Community Centre: Martial arts, music, dance, noodle making.

Yangzhou Puppet Company: touring across the county to schools and local arts venues.

Sport

Sportshall Athletics: Following the introduction of Sportshall athletics to the Province through the excellent links between PE teachers already in place, an athletics competition will take place between Essex and Jiangsu schools. The innovative aspect of this event though is that it will be staged simultaneously in sports halls located thousands of miles apart, connected by advanced internet technology to create a fascinating edge to the high levels of excitement.

Business Events

Understanding Chinese Business Culture Workshop: led by the Essex-China Business Network.

The Essex Jiangsu Festival holds the potential to have a massive impact reaching across many aspects of Essex life and its communities. The response to developing the programme of events has been overwhelming and the early signs are that the Festival's objectives will be achieved.

4.1 Factors that underpin your success.

- Strong and committed political leadership that places a high priority on this work because of its great potential and links to other corporate priorities and the dedication of significant resources.
- An effective partnership that has gained full ownership and the respect of its stakeholders who are implementing the actions in the Legacy Plan
- A broad range of stakeholders encompassing the public, private and voluntary sector.
- A communications strategy that keeps partners engaged and up to date with an ever expanding programme.
- A positive message for the public that is being broadcast with growing interest by the media particularly the BBC.
- Innovative and attention grabbing projects that are inspiring everyone from young people through to experienced professionals.
- Politicians and officers with excellent communication skills who are strong advocates and have secured a unanimously enthusiastic response from partners.
- A national reputation for our commitment and understanding of how to secure a legacy from the 2012 Olympic Games and Paralympic Games.

4.2 Successful initiatives.

- The **Jiansgu Cultural Festival** includes over 100 separate events, the collaboration of over 40 partners from the county and in Jiangsu Province China. The Festival was shortlisted and Highly Commended in the "Leaving a Lasting Legacy" category of the Sustainable Communities Awards in 2008.
- The "**Fantastic Me**" Healthy Lifestyles Game Simulation developed by Essex Education Advisors in conjunction with Great Baddow High School and its feeder primary schools was recognised by Jim Knight MP Minister of State for Schools and Learners in a recent speech.
- **Essex County Council are sending six students from Notley School, Braintree to Beijing** on a trip of a lifetime to attend the Olympic Games in August. The students won a competition staged for Essex schools that already have links with China. The visit will be reciprocated in 2012 when students from Jiangsu Province will visit the London Games.
- Essex County Council has pledged to **increase the grant aid allocated to talented athletes by 500%**. £100,000 is being awarded to sports people at all levels of the performance ladder from Gifted and Talented pupils through to members of Great Britain's teams. A £2M capital fund has also been established to enhance sports facilities for young people.
- The **Olympic Handover Ceremony** on the August Bank Holiday 2008 will be celebrated at venues in all districts and both unitary authorities. The **Paralympic Handover Ceremony** will be celebrated at a Celebration Event attended by schools from across the county.

4.3 Who are the key target audiences that would benefit from hearing your key messages?

Leaders and senior officers from local authorities across the country who have not invested resources in identifying a legacy from the 2012 Games would be our initial target audience.

The key message we would be communicating would be:

the London 2012 Games can be used to help you meet the aspirations of your community. They can act as a catalyst to drive the delivery timescales for programmes. They can bring new life, enhance and add extra value to mainstream activities. They can inspire and motivate virtually everyone... they are a once in a lifetime opportunity that must be seized now!

We strongly believe that the role of local government is to provide leadership in this area and to bring local partners together to cooperate to deliver the legacy opportunities.

We would therefore also wish to deliver this message sharing our experiences and the lessons we have learned with

practitioners from a range of different subjects, with the format of the message being focused upon how legacy projects can be mainstreamed within corporate work programmes.

Passionate, responsive, inspirational, supportive, motivating are the values of Essex County Council and these would be implicit in the way in which we will communicate our message.

4.4 Beyond the national Learning Exchange conference and Open Day, how might you work with other Beacons within your theme to maximise the impact of your learning activities?

We would want to form a group with all the Beacons in our theme. This group's function would be to share approaches and experiences. By mapping out our accumulated "strengths and weaknesses" we could build a pool of case studies and different approaches that could be applied to a more diverse group of authorities. This could be shared through various communication formats (web based, at workshops, 2012 themed clinics etc).

We would use LOCOG's own Nations and Regions network and the LGA 2012 officer and member networks to further test our hypotheses, obtain more examples of good practice and to give support to partners already committed to securing a 2012 Legacy.

We would also want to look at how to spread our message to authorities and partners that are not actively pursuing legacy projects. To do this, we would want to link up with **beacons from other themes** to challenge them to use the 2012 Games as an inspiration and with their support, to stage events and learning activities with their professional networks.

4.5 What experience does your authority have with sharing lessons with others? Give examples of where your authority has supported others to improve.

We have shared our experiences in a high profile way through presentations that have been made on a national stage, for example at LGA Conferences. These presentations are underpinned by our support behind the scenes for the planning of these events as members of the LGA member network and officer focus group for the 2012 Games. Our ongoing input to the debates held at regular meetings of these groups enables us to share and discuss our experiences. We shape policy development, raise and solve operational issues at the Nations and Regions Group and Nations and Regions East in a similar way.

Essex County Council organised a major national two day conference on the Quality of Life in November 2007. The legacy of major sports events was a major theme running through the event. Francis Done, Chief Executive of the Manchester 2002 Commonwealth Games described the outcomes for the city and the discussion focused around how to secure a long term legacy in a way that contributes to the quality of life of all members of the community.

Essex County Council's Director of Children, Schools and Families is a member of the DCSF Advisory Group for the 2012 Games. We are members of LOCOG's group of Learning Experts who have given supported the development of the Education Programme.

A culture of continual learning and an ambition to help shape and support national policy is actively encouraged at the County Council. We have already received beacon status for two other themes.