

# Action in rural Sussex

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## **Paint your picture of rural life at South of England Show**

### **Action in Rural Sussex celebrates 75 years of achievement**

Young people from across Sussex will have the opportunity to create a unique work of art at the South of England Show, as part of 75<sup>th</sup> birthday celebrations for Action in Rural Sussex.

Children are being invited to help contribute to a giant mural at the AirS stand by painting a picture to represent their community in Sussex.

Each young artist will get expert help from award-winning painting and watercolour specialist Charles Foster-Hall as the mural takes shape during the three day show at Ardingly on June 8,9 and 10.

Children from Lindfield Primary School, pictured here with Charles, took time out from lessons to start work on the mural with a painting of the village pond, park and church.

Chief Executive Jeremy Leggett said: “We want to welcome children of all ages to come and paint an image of their community and so create a giant patchwork picture of rural life in Sussex. It will be fascinating to watch the work as it grows during the show. The finished mural will be quite unique”

AirS began life in 1931 as Sussex Rural Community Council, a registered charity, and has served rural communities ever since. It changed its name in 2002

The role of Action in Rural Sussex has been, and still is, to identify problems and to respond to the needs of rural communities - providing practical help and supporting villages in Sussex to remain vibrant living and working places.

In the early days the group managed a diverse range of issues, from help with village halls, publication of a health facilities handbook, establishing a drama league, launching an aftercare service for tuberculosis sufferers and running an anti-litter campaign.

Today, work on village halls continues to be a key focus - but AirS' extensive agenda also includes supporting communities to develop local action plans, distributing valuable grants for rural projects, developing innovative schemes for young people and campaigning on a range of key issues from affordable housing to rural transport.

Said Jeremy: "Our aim is to be a vigorous champion of both rural communities and the wider voluntary and community sector in Sussex - we want Sussex to be a place where an active community life is valued equally alongside economic success and environmental protection.

"Since the council was first established in 1931 much has changed in rural Sussex with modern technology helping to make life easier. However there are many things that have stayed the same - for example access to employment, local services and local businesses can still be difficult, particularly where local transport is poor.

"AirS will continue to have plenty to do as it embarks on the next 75 years."

Ends

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