



Maplestead Magna Carta

Award-Winning Newsletter of Great Maplestead Parish Council

Crime Prevention – It’s Becoming a Growing Business...

Planting for Protection...

Rural crime is a continuing concern and, with a notable absence of visible policing, burglary opportunities are all too frequent.

Protecting a property with tall fences, razor wire topping, high walls and large gates is not always an option, either from a practical or aesthetic point of view. And, in today’s litigious society, having such deterrents, unless accompanied by prominent warning signs, invites the risk of a legal complaint from the wrong-doer...

Spring, however, offers the chance to consider and evaluate alternative, effective natural protection for vulnerable boundaries, exposed windows and other items that might attract unwanted attention, such as heating oil tanks.



Most local garden centres stock an extensive range of attractive-looking but deceptively spiky plants and shrubs, which can be strategically planted to help thwart thieves and burglars.



Roses rambling over a carefully-positioned trellis can both look and smell nice while the thorns act as an effective discouragement to break-ins.

Plants like Berberis, Mahonia and Holly, planted close to fences can also make attempts to scale a boundary extremely painful!



Most garden centre staff can advise on suitable plants and shrubs for particular environments – some comprehensive information can also be found at: <https://thecrimepreventionwebsite.com/garden-boundaries-fences-and-defensive-plants/618/defensive-plants-shrubs-and-trees-shrub-fences/> along with useful advice on assessing, then addressing, the various security risks particular to your house and garden.

Hare Coursing



A countywide crackdown to combat hare coursing was recently launched by Essex Police.

Operation Galileo is intended to tackle offenders and raise awareness of the problems associated with hare coursing, including criminal damage to property and agricultural land, theft and anti-social and threatening behaviour.



Hare coursing is illegal in the UK under the 2004 Hunting Act – unfortunately, it is happening increasingly frequently locally.

Anyone witnessing such an incident should report it to Essex Police by dialing 999 and giving the location – otherwise contact Crimestoppers anonymously on 0800 555 111.

Participants should *never* be approached or confronted directly – violent clashes, with damage to vehicles and personal injury, have often resulted from such action.

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Watch Your Wallet...

Neighbourhood Watch has noted a recent upsurge in the local area of thefts from wallets and handbags.

These are mainly opportunistic crimes, with the thieves taking advantage of unsecured or unguarded handbags, or distractions in crowded places, to remove purses, money, car keys and mobile phones.

Keeping a close eye on your valuables will help arrest this rising trend and help stop unscrupulous people helping themselves.

Going Round the Bend...

A number of instances of damage to roadside furniture and grass verges have been brought to the Council's attention over the past few months.

A broken drain cover in Lucking Street, churned up verges around the triangle at the top of Church Street and damage to the roadside railings on the bend below Chelmshoe Farm (pictured) have all recently been identified.



Requests made to **Essex Highways** to try and get these problems rectified have unfortunately been met with what appears to be their standard response: "...this does not meet our criteria for immediate repair".

The Council will, however, continue to pursue Essex Highways to try and achieve a satisfactory resolution.

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A Local Case for Change

The Policing and Crime Act 2017 allows Police and Crime Commissioners to develop a local case for change in the way the police and fire and rescue services are governed.



Roger Hirst, the Essex PCC, has developed a case and is seeking the views of the public on three proposed options for change, by way of a **Public Consultation**.

This takes the form of an on-line **questionnaire**, which needs to be completed and submitted before the closing date of **5.00pm** on **10th May**.

More information about the proposed options, together with the questionnaire, can be found at: <http://www.essex.pcc.police.uk/localcaseforchange/>

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Latest Planning News

The Parish Council considered the following applications at its last Meeting:

Application Decisions:

- ✚ **17/00189/FUL** Erection of part ground & first floor/part first floor extensions to front of existing building, including roof alterations to raise ridge height of existing roof. **St Mary's, Toldishall Road.**

Permitted: 24/03/17

Latest Planning News (contd.)

Applications Received:

- ✚ **16/00655/FUL** Proposed detached dwelling with garage. Land adjacent to **2 Toldish Hall Cottages, Toldish Hall Road.**

The Council originally objected to this application in June 2016, based on its policy "...that all proposed changes to the Village Development Boundary will be rejected".

Since the re-submitted application still showed the planned garage outside the Village Envelope, the Council's objection was re-iterated at the BDC Planning Meeting on 11th April 2017.

The Planning Committee's decision, and other responses/comments, can be found by clicking: http://www.braintree.gov.uk/info/200225/search_and_track_planning_applications, clicking on 'View Current Applications', typing in the **planning reference** and opening the file.

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Forthcoming Events

During the coming months there are a number of events at the Village Hall* that you may wish to note for your diary:

- ✚ **Wed 19th Apr* Annual Parish Assembly** – starts **7.30pm**. An informal meeting for village organisations and groups to report their past year's activities and promote future events.
- ✚ **Sat 29th – Sun 30th April* Fifth Annual Great Maplestead Beer Festival** – open **midday to midnight** (Sat); **12.00 noon to 3.00pm** (Sun). A wide range of local beers and ciders to sample. Music & Morris Men both days. Tickets: **£5** (Sat, inc. free glass)/**£4** (Sun) from Julie Ingram (01787 463 637).
- ✚ **Sat 13th May Little Maplestead Church Fayre** – at the **Round Church**. Crafts, produce and flower stalls. Refreshments & raffle. More information from Jane Stone (01787 472 525)
- ✚ **Sat 24th Jun* Pimms & Puddings** – a posh midsummer celebration! More information from Philippa Mills (01787 460 578)

Much more information can be found on the 'Events' page of the **Parish Council website**.

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Contacting the Council

Any comments, requests or correspondence should initially be made to the **Parish Clerk**:

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