



Maplestead Magna Carta

Great Maplestead Parish Council's Award-Winning Newsletter

ECC responds to Council's road safety review request.

Signs of progress

MMC Issue 29 contained details about the Parish Council's request to Essex County Council for a review into what measures could be taken to improve road safety in the Parish.

Of particular concern were the shared-use, National Speed Limit roads outside the village's 30mph limit, where walkers, horse-riders, private motor cars commercial traffic, farm machinery and equipment all need to be accommodated safely.

In response to the request **Jasmine Wiles, ECC's Assistant Highways Liaison Officer**, visited **Great Maplestead** on 14th January to discuss the **Council's** concerns and view the roads in question.

She pointed out that none of the roads outside of the village centre meet **Essex Highway's** current criteria for 40mph speed limits, which had been one of the **Council's** suggestions.

However, she saw these roads being used by dog walkers and horse riders and agreed the need for better protection for these vulnerable users.

Essex Highways are, as a result, going to look at the installation of pedestrian and horse rider warning signs, as well as painting additional 'SLOW' road markings where they are most needed.

Furthermore, should a current Essex-based trial scheme prove successful, one of the village's narrower roads could potentially be designated a **Quiet Lane**, essentially giving priority to non-vehicular traffic.



Further news on this project will be published as and when it is received...

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County Broadband Update

Infrastructure work for Great Maplestead's fibre optic superfast broadband is at last underway!



Recent notices in the local press have listed a series of road-closures around the Parish, scheduled to take place from the end of January onwards, in order to facilitate 'superfast cabling installation' for **County Broadband**.

Although this project is now nearly 12 months behind schedule, seemingly due to a greater than anticipated local take-up, it looks like the Parish might finally be seeing the benefit later this year...

Light pollution is a real nuisance...

...especially during the long winter evenings when artificial lighting comes on at the wrong time or is in the wrong place and illuminating areas outside of its intended scope.

The increasing use of 'security' lighting around some domestic properties means that 'light trespass' is becoming a growing nuisance. A lot of floodlighting uses 250 - 500 watt halogen bulbs controlled by passive movement sensors; depending on how it has been installed, problems can be caused if lights are:

- not fixed in the best position or angled correctly.
- lighting areas they don't need to.
- affecting neighbours' nearby properties.

If lighting for a particular area is **really** needed, a more neighbour-friendly alternative is to use high-efficiency, low-energy bulbs operated by a dusk-to-dawn switch, which usually provide more than adequate, and less intrusive, levels of illumination.

Light pollution is a statutory nuisance under **S102** of the **Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005** but, if anyone's lighting is causing problems, an informal talk may be the best way to sort things out.

If the problem cannot be resolved by discussion, more information about what action to take can be found at: https://www.braintree.gov.uk/info/200257/pollution/260/light_pollution

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- Advance Notice -

Great Maplestead Summer Fête

The Parish Council will be celebrating its 125th anniversary this year with a Village Summer Fête on 25th July.

This will be an **enjoyable** and **fun afternoon** for everyone, with **participation events**, some **competitive entertainments**, sales of **local arts and crafts**, various **displays**, a wide range of **refreshment options** and so on.

The **Fête** will feature contributions from the school, the police/neighbourhood watch, local businesses, clubs and parishioners.

All proceeds from the **Fête** will go towards improvements/additions to some of the various village facilities/services that the **Parish Council** provides.

Please put the date in your diary now!

Budgeting for a Secure Future - 1

Essex County Council is set to increase its 2020/21 Council Tax bill by about 4% - equal to around £50 per average household.

This means the yearly Council Tax bill for a Band D householder will go up from £1,270 to £1,321, raising ECC's funding to £707.9million.

The most significant part of the budget is due to be spent on social care services, in line with the findings from a public consultation held last year, which highlighted the need to balance spending on protecting the most vulnerable whilst still providing good universal services that most residents use.

ECC is also committed to continue investment in the roads and footways, with an additional £4million per year budgeted for their maintenance.

Among other proposals for ECC spend is an extra £5million for highways, another £5million to tackle climate change and more funding for school transport and adults and children's social care.

ECC's Leader **David Finch** says: *"Our budget proposals strike the right balance between an affordable increase and investing in the services residents told us, during last year's budget consultation, are most important to them.*



"These proposals reflect the people's priorities - which is why caring for vulnerable people and investing in roads and infrastructure, for example, are high on our list."

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Budgeting for a Secure Future - 2

At its January meeting the Council reviewed its 2020/21 Budget & Precept options.

It was agreed that the Precept (the portion of Council Tax received by the Parish) needed to be increased to cover fixed operating expenses and maintain a constant level of contingency reserves.

In order to keep the books balanced, an annual Precept increase of **£12.87** - less than **25p/week** - per Band D household was proposed and agreed. This has subsequently been accepted by BDC.

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Latest Planning News

The Council discussed the following planning matters at its meeting on 22nd January:

Application Decisions:

- ✚ **19/01829/FUL** Land north of Purls Hill Farm, Purls Hill. Erection of agricultural building.
Refused 2/12/19
- ✚ **19/01683/HH & 19/01684/LBC** Walnut Tree Cottage, Church Street. Retrospective application for the retention of 2 x garden sheds & erection of a replacement garden workshop following demolition of third shed.
Granted 6/12/19

Latest Planning News (contd)

Application Received:

- ✚ **19/02252/HH-19/02253/LBC** Chelmslowe House Farm, Monks Lodge Rd. Reconstruction of brick wall including two gates.

The agreed response was "No objections raised, no comment". For other comments/responses go to: http://www.braintree.gov.uk/info/200225/search_and_track_planning_applications, then go to 'View Current Applications', type in the **planning reference** and open the files.

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Forthcoming Events

The following are some forthcoming village events (*those at the Village Hall) that you may wish to note in your diary:

- ✚ **Tuesday Evenings* Legs, Bums & Tums** - from **7.00-8.00pm**. **£5 per class**/pay as you go. Contact Lorraine Sutton (07488 281 671)
- ✚ **Wednesday Mornings* Dance & Keep Fit** - from **9.30-10.30am**. Contact Judy Cowell (01376 561 757) for more details.
- ✚ **Thursday Mornings* Pilates** - from **9.30-10.30am & 10.45-11.45am**. **£40 for 5 classes** (or **£5** for the first one). Call Catherine Pawsey (07814 459 683) for details.
- ✚ **Fri 14th Feb* Pub Night** - from **7.30-9.30pm**. Bring your beloved along to enjoy a romantic Valentine's evening of 'Kurling'. BYO drinks/glasses and nibbles + a **£3** donation.
- ✚ **Sat 29th Feb* Cards & Curry Evening** - doors open **7.00pm**; Curry from **7.30pm**. Card games afterwards. BYO drinks/glasses. Tickets **£10 per person** from Philippa Mills (01787 460 578).
- ✚ **Sat 14th Mar* Jumble Sale** + raffle and refreshments. Opens **3.00pm**, admission **30p**. Contributions to Diane Smith (01787 473 300) or Doreen Faulks (01787 460 727) or to the **Hall** all day Friday or on Saturday morning.
- ✚ **Fri 20th Mar* The Art of Wellbeing** - from **7.00-9.30pm**. Unwind with a relaxing evening of arts, crafts and pampering. **Free Entry**: Prosecco, hot drinks/light bites available.
- ✚ **Mon 13th Apr* Easter Village Walk** - meet at **11.00am**. Cost: **£2.50**/person - dogs & children **free**. Half-way drinks + refreshments.

Further information about these and many other village activities 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:

**Ann Crisp, New House, St Giles Close
Great Maplestead, CO9 2RW**

Tel: 01787 460 216 (4-6pm Mon-Thurs)

E-mail: anncrisp@greatmaplesteadpc.co.uk

Website: <https://greatmaplesteadpc.co.uk>