



Maplestead Magna Carta

Great Maplestead Parish Council's Award-Winning Newsletter

Ambitious plans for improvements to the Playing Field...

Developing our community asset

As we gradually emerge from the past year's coronavirus restrictions, plans are being put in place by the Council for a major upgrade to the Playing Field's equipment and facilities to encourage better use of this unique amenity.

The 'lockdowns' have shown the real benefits to the village of having a safe communal area for outdoor exercise and recreation. The resulting increase in use of the field has, however, highlighted concerns about the aged play equipment and poor drainage.



Funding has already been sourced for a couple of new picnic benches and materials for a boules court – the challenge now is to find and secure sufficient

donations and/or sponsorship to allow complete renewal of the play equipment and the installation of new field drains to improve surface conditions after heavy rainfall.

A Working Party to research various funding options and then implement the improvement programme has been formed – more news on its progress in due course.

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Verges – to cut or not to cut?

Renewal of the Council verge-cutting contract prompted a discussion at the last meeting about reducing the number of cuts carried out each year from two to just one in the autumn.

A joint BDC/ECC trial was carried out last year to judge the environmental and road safety effects of reducing the current twice-yearly cutting schedule. Roadside verges are an important wildlife habitat



for flowers, grasses and pollinating insects and are environmentally friendly.

However, longer vegetation can hide litter, broken glass and other hazards, which can be dangerous to children, pets and horses, as well as compromising sight-lines for drivers on bends or road junctions.

The Council decided to continue with its spring cut on verges in the parish this year but agreed that, during the summer, it would investigate and decide which verges could be considered as candidates for a limited cutting programme in future.

Doggy doo-doo: Don't!

The upsurge in dog ownership within the village during the past year has also seen a commensurate increase in reports of dog waste fouling in the local area.

Failing to scoop and bag dog faeces deposited in public places is not only anti-social but also poses a potential health risk to anyone un-necessarily exposed to this highly unpleasant nuisance.

Recent social media posts have also highlighted a worrying trend: some owners who are dutifully bagging their dog faeces are then dumping the bags beside footpaths or hanging them in hedges rather than placing them in a bin – just why?



There are **six** dog waste bins located around the village (click the link on this page to find out where they are: <https://greatmaplesteadpc.co.uk/parish-information/footpaths/>). This means there is no justifiable excuse for owners failing to scoop, bag and bin dog faeces responsibly.

Residents can report such anti-social behaviour to BDC online: <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/advice-environment/dogs/2?documentId=371&categoryId=20001>

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Parish Council Announcement

Councillors are continuing to undertake their duties and specific responsibilities whilst complying with current Government and NALC advice about holding meetings and household mixing.

To be certain of compliance, the next Council meeting on Wednesday 5th May 2021, the first half-hour of which will be the Parish Assembly, is scheduled to be held on Zoom.

If you would like to attend/participate in the meeting, please e-mail the Parish Clerk to request an invitation, which will then be sent to you nearer the time.

Local Plan Update

Braintree District's Strategic Section 1 Local Plan was formally adopted at a Full Council meeting on Monday 22nd February 2021.

This **Section 1 Plan** is also shared with two other **North Essex Authorities**, Colchester Borough and Tendring District Councils, and examines policies for local developments in **North Essex**.

The **Plan** is designed to, quote:

- Articulate a spatial portrait of the **North Essex area**, including its main settlements and strategic infrastructure, as a framework for accommodating future planning growth.
- Provide a strategic vision for how **planning growth** in North Essex will be realised.
- Set strategic objectives and policies for **key growth topics**.
- Set out the **numbers of additional homes and jobs** across the area that will be needed during the period to 2033.

For **Braintree** the **Section 1 Plan** includes **Policy SP4**, which requires a minimum of **14,320 new homes** to be built over the period 2013 to 2033, an **average of 716 new homes per year**.

Policy SP5 of the **Plan** also sets out **employment land requirements** for **Braintree** of between **20.9 and 43.3 hectares** for the same period.

In June 2018 the Planning Inspector considered that the **Section 1 Plan**, as originally submitted, **was unsound** and needed more work. Amendments were made and put forward for **public consultation** in September 2019 before being resubmitted.

The Inspector's **Final Report** was received by **BDC** and the other **NEAs** in December 2020. This confirmed that, once the main recommendations were agreed and incorporated into the adopted document, the **Plan** would meet the **legal requirements** of the national planning system and the **tests of soundness** contained within national planning policy, allowing it to be formally adopted.

Adoption of the **Section 1 Plan** by **BDC** will have the effect of replacing, in part, a number of the strategic policies contained within the **Braintree District Core Strategy** (adopted in September 2011).

The **Core Strategy (2011)** and **Local Plan Review (2005)** will then be replaced in full once the **Section 2 Local Plan**, which contains further specific local policies and proposals applicable to **Braintree District**, is formally adopted.

The **Section 2 Plan** is now with the Planning Inspectorate, appointed by the **Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government**, for final consideration.

The **Section 1 Plan** and its appendices, the **Sustainability Appraisal** (and addendum) and the **Planning Inspector's report** are all available to view online at <http://www.braintree.gov.uk/>

Parish Assembly

Coronavirus restrictions mean that the Parish Assembly, which normally takes place in April each year, cannot be held in the usual way.

Instead a short virtual session will be hosted by the **Council** on Zoom for half an hour from **6.00pm** at its **Annual Meeting** on **Wednesday 5th May**.

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Latest Planning News

The Council discussed the following planning matters at its Zoom meeting on 17th March:

Application Decisions:

- ✚ **20/02021/HH** Purls Hill Farm House, Purls Hill. Demolition of existing and proposed two-storey side and rear extension incorporating a balcony. **Granted 21/01/21**
- ✚ **20/02070/LBC** St Giles School Church Street. Proposed removal of wall between existing oil storage tank enclosure and plant room. **Permitted 10/03/21**

Applications Received:

- ✚ **21/00714/AGR** Chelmshoe House Farm, Monks Lodge Road. Application for agricultural or forestry development – proposed crop store. **For notification only**
- ✚ **21/00779/DAC** Highview, Church Street. Application for approved details as reserved by condition(s) 3 (external materials) and 4 (boundary treatments) of approved application **15/00914/FUL** **For notification only**

Neither of these applications required a response.

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Forthcoming Events

To comply with coronavirus restrictions there are no imminent village events planned.

However, there are a few post-lockdown events being organised – more details nearer the time:

- ✚ **Sun 27th June: Village Walk**
- ✚ **Sat 11th September: Autumn Show**
- ✚ **Sat 25th September: Jumble Sale**

Currently, walking in the local area is still allowed; some suggestions of walks that you can do around the village as part of your daily exercise can be found, in both **map** and **narrative** form, at <https://greatmaplesteadpc.co.uk/parish-information/footpaths/> from where they can be down-loaded and printed off.

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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)
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