



Maplestead Magna Carta

Great Maplestead Parish Council's Award-Winning Newsletter

Mobile Phone Mast Planning Appeal Dismissed...

...by the Planning Inspectorate

Telefónica's appeal to the Secretary of State regarding Braintree District Council's refusal to grant prior permission for a planning application to install a Mobile Phone mast near Little Lodge Farm has been dismissed by the Planning Inspectorate.

The reasons for the dismissal were that the siting and appearance of the proposed installation would detract from the rural and undeveloped character of the land surrounding the Grade II-listed Little Lodge Farm and the collection of Grade II-listed buildings at Little Maplestead Hall, causing harm to their significance as designated heritage assets.

The Inspector also felt there was a lack of "*clear and comprehensive evidence*" to justify why any of the twelve alternative potential sites that had been previously identified and rejected by the company were unsuitable, given that at least one of these – Monks Lodge Farm – has similar merit to the proposed location but does not lie within the setting of a designated heritage site.

The Planning Inspector's full report can be found at <https://greatmaplesteadpc.co.uk/latest-news/>

--ooOoo--

Action on Bus Service Withdrawal

Since the decision to replace the F315 regular bus service with a flexible on-demand service at the end of July was announced...

...the **Council** has been gathering information from parishes around the country about the real-world consequences of having an on-demand service.

With buses that have no fixed route or timetable, and cannot be booked more than 24 hours in advance, residents in some parishes are having to make late night phone bookings to be able to secure a seat. While commuters and school children have to compete for seats at the busiest times of day, at other times, if demand is light, the buses are unreliable and often don't turn up at all.

In addition, residents lacking smartphones or access to the bus's booking app or website are noticeably disadvantaged when trying to book.

The **Parish Council** will therefore be asking **Essex County Council** what actions it is intending taking, prior to the introduction of its on-demand service, in order to mitigate or minimise adverse effects like those being experienced elsewhere.

Getting it all together...

This year's Parish Assembly is being held in the Village Hall on 17th April at 7.30pm.

This is an ideal opportunity to socialise, meet fellow parishioners, find out what is going on in the village and hear about plans for the future. Refreshments will be provided, so come along and say hello.

The meeting will include contributions from village institutions and organisers of various local events and social activities. **St Giles' Church**, along with the **School**, will each be reporting on their past year's activities while invitations have been extended to the **Village Hall** trustees, the **WEA** organisers, the **Knitting Circle**, the **Carpet Bowls Club**, the **Maple Leaves** and the **Autumn Show Society**. PCSOs **John Thorne** and **Joanne Cooper** have been invited along to discuss rural crime, while grazier **William Beattie** will be talking about his sheep and their recent local exploits.

The **Parish Council** will be reporting on its recent actions and discussing its current Playing Field **Car Park** and **Mindfulness Garden** plans. It is also intended to have a presentation and Q&A by **Believ**, the **Council's** proposed supplier for an EV chargepoint – located in the car park – in support of **Essex County Council's** Electric Vehicle Chargepoint Strategy.

--ooOoo--

Car Park Update

The Council agreed at its March meeting on its preferred option for resurfacing the car park.

This involves the use of recycled 500mm square plastic grid panels that, slotted together and filled with gravel, will provide a durable, heavy-duty, stable, well-drained and low-maintenance surface.



A grant is being sought to complete the budget already allocated for carrying out this much-needed resurfacing; it is hoped that work can commence later in the year, when ground conditions improve.

Recycling Centre Booking

A booking process trialled across recycling centres managed by Essex County Council has been made permanent following positive feedback from residents.

The decision follows a six-week public consultation that saw over 18,000 responses. An independent analysis showed 58% of respondents were in favour of keeping the booking process for cars, while 72% were in favour of keeping it for vans and large vehicles.

Councillor Peter Schwier, Cabinet Member for Climate, Environment, Waste Reduction and Recycling, said: "The booking process was introduced to smooth service demand throughout the day. Incidents of congestion and queuing have reduced since the trial started. This has made our sites safer and more efficient."



The on-line booking system allows residents to choose a recycling centre and a 15-minute time slot for their visit – a calendar for the selected centre shows the times available each day in green.

A confirmation e-mail will be sent once a booking is made and this must be brought along, together with proof of address, in order to access the centre. The system restricts the use of ECC recycling centres specifically to Essex residents.

Bookings can be made up to six weeks in advance and they close 15 minutes before the scheduled time. If a booked time slot is missed, another booking must be made. Residents are expected to restrict their recycling visits to once a week but this is not enforced by the system...

You can find out more information, or book a time slot at your local recycling centre, by visiting www.loveessex.org/bookings

--ooOoo--

Churchyard Clear-Up

Volunteers are needed for the annual **St Giles'** churchyard tidy-up, which is set to take place on **Saturday 6th April, at 10.00am**. As an incentive, there will be teas, coffees, coffee & walnut cake and chocolate brownies available at half-time...

If you can bring along a selection of rakes, loppers, shovels and wheelbarrows it will help ease the task as much as possible – but no power tools, please!

If you are available to help, please let the Churchwardens, **Denise O'Connell** (07795 170 048) or **Paula Sillett** (07975 571 253) know.

Latest Planning News

The following application was considered by the Council at its meeting on 13th March:

Application Received:

- ⊕ **23/00340/FUL** Chifneys, Lucking Street – Conversion of existing barn to form a 1 x 3-bedroom residential dwelling.

The Council's reasons for objecting to this application are at: <https://publicaccess.braintree.gov.uk/online-applications/search.do?action=simple&searchType=Application>. Type or copy the **planning reference** into the 'Search' box and open the files.

The following was also noted, for information:

- ⊕ **23/02501/FUL** Rangers Hall, Hosdens Lane – Change of use of **Poll Miles Hall** from residential annexe to independent dwelling.
Appeal against BDC's rejection in progress

--ooOoo--

Forthcoming Events

The following are some of the upcoming village events (*these at the Village Hall) you may want to note for your diary:

- ⊕ **Mon 1st Apr***: **Easter Village Walk**. Meet at **11.00am** in car park. Cost: **£2.50**pp. Dogs & children **free**. Half-way drinks + refreshments
- ⊕ **Tue 2nd Apr***: **Village Hall AGM** – at 7.00pm Everybody welcome.
- ⊕ **Thurs 4th Apr***: **The Maple Leaves** present – '**Underground Art**' – at **7.00pm**. Speaker **Dr Paul Marshall** will be giving an illustrated talk on the posters, typography and architectural design aspects of the **London Underground**. Members (**Free**): non-members (**£3**) welcome.
- ⊕ **Wed 17th Apr***: **Parish Assembly** – **7.30pm** (See over for details)

And a date to save for later in the year:

- ⊕ **Thurs 6th June***: **D-Day 80th Anniversary Commemoration and Beacon Lighting**. Village participation in this national event will include **bell-ringing**, a **fish & chip supper** and the **beacon lighting**.

If you have any family links to D-Day, stories or memorabilia to share, please contact the **Clerk**. There will be displays in the Village Hall, including an explanation of what the 'fish & chips' connection is to this national event.

More details will be on **Maplestead Mates**, in **Parish News** and on the 'Events' page of the **Parish Council website** nearer the time.

--ooOoo--

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>