



Maplestead Magna Carta

Great Maplestead Parish Council's Award-Winning Newsletter

Local Government Reorganisation – latest update...

Have your say on Essex's future

Essex is planning to change from fifteen local councils to either three, four or five Unitary Councils, to simplify council structures.

By creating new, bigger councils it is hoped to make them work better, making it easier and more efficient for residents to access services.

The Government will make the final decision, but residents now have the opportunity to share their views before any decision is made.

Braintree District Council supports the three Unitary Council proposal (below), which was backed by the majority of councillors at its Full Council meeting on 26th September. **BDC** believes that this proposal will help make services more financially secure, create opportunities for growth, bring together areas that naturally fit and build on the strong working relationships **BDC** already has with its neighbouring councils.



The Consultation Process

The Government's consultation is now open and runs **until Sunday 11th January 2026**. It gives residents, businesses and partners an opportunity to have their say on the four proposals put forward by all the **Greater Essex** councils.

It can be accessed and completed online by going to: <https://consult.communities.gov.uk/local-government-reorganisation/essex-southend-on-sea-thurrock/>. The four proposals can be found at: <https://www.essexlgrhub.org/proposals>

Following the consultation the Government will make a decision on its preferred option in **spring 2026**. **Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA)** elections will take place in May 2026, while the **Unitary Councils** will go live in April 2028.

Essex Budget Consultation

Essex County Council is inviting residents and businesses to have their say on the priorities for its 2026/27 budget.

It is asking for views on the key issues facing Essex. Responses to the consultation will help shape services and plan for the future. The survey asks residents and businesses their thoughts on:

- the big issues currently faced and the challenges that lie ahead for Essex.
- things that concern them
- where **ECC** should focus resources in working to improve lives across the county

Greater Essex is also in the process of establishing a **Mayoral Combined County Authority (MCCA)** resulting in a directly elected Mayor from May 2026. The new **Mayor** will pick up some of **ECC's** responsibilities, so any related feedback from the this survey will be used in planning for the **MCCA**.

Councillor Chris Whitbread, the Chancellor of Essex, said: "We want residents and businesses to help us shape how we respond to the pressures we are facing, and I would urge them to take part in our consultation."

The consultation **ends Monday 15th December** and can be accessed and completed online at: <https://survey.euro.confirmat.com/wix/9/p526440153019.aspx>.

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Picking a Way to a Cleaner Village

On 1st November a group of twenty-two village volunteers assembled with the aim of ridding the local roads and verges of unsightly litter.

This **Task Force**, organised by Rob Brudenell, collected ten refuse sacks of detritus, which were later collected by **BDC's** Street Scene team.

Thanks also go to Rob and Sarah for the coffee, hot dogs and 'squashed fly' biscuit refreshments they laid on afterwards for everyone who had taken part.

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GREAT MAPLESTEAD PARISH COUNCIL

would like to wish everyone in the village

a very Merry Christmas

and a Happy and Healthy 2026

Christmas Crime Prevention

Winter's dark nights and increased seasonal consumer activity make this time of year particularly lucrative for criminals.

Home and car owners need to take certain common-sense precautions to mitigate attempts at opportunistic seasonal crime – following the twelve steps below will hopefully help lead to a happier, crime-free Christmas:

1. If you store Christmas food and drink, presents or other goodies in garages and/or outbuildings, ensure they are out of sight and any storage places are secured with good quality, well-fitted locks. Treat your shed to a security alarm.
2. Avoid tempting window-shopping burglars; don't leave presents and/or valuables in the house on full view of a window.
3. Ensure windows and doors are closed and locked before leaving the house. Don't attract burglars by leaving your home in darkness; have lights on timers and treat yourself to a TV simulator too.
4. Lock any gates to keep unwanted visitors from getting to the rear of your home.
5. Whether on an evening out or Christmas shopping, keep bags, handbags, wallets and mobiles safe. Busy places make it easier for a sneak thief to go undetected.
6. Park your car safely, check that it is locked and don't leave valuables and gifts on display.
7. Keep car keys hidden in the house, away from doors and windows. Keep keyless car door and ignition remotes in a Faraday pouch to prevent signals from them being hi-jacked to open, start and steal your car.
8. If your car is all iced up in the morning, don't start and leave it unattended with the engine running to de-ice it. It only takes a second to steal a car left like this and, by doing so, any insurance claim for theft is invalidated.
9. If you're attending a Christmas party, make sure you have considered how you are getting home; avoid using unlicensed taxis. Drink responsibly and be aware of your surroundings at all times, whilst keeping your drink and belongings safe.
10. Watch what you put on social media; check your settings to ensure that you are not publically broadcasting to all and sundry about when you are not going to be at home and all the lovely gifts you have received.
11. After Christmas don't advertise your gifts to thieves by putting the empty boxes out for collection in plain view. Disguise them, fold them up inside out or put them inside other, nondescript boxes.
12. Record any new and valuable property free by going to www.immobilise.com and install tracking and security apps on any electrical and computer products.

Great Maplestead's Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator can help with advice on how to protect you or your property against criminals – contact **Ian Johnson** on **01787 461 109**

For further crime prevention advice go to: www.essex.police.uk/cp/crime-prevention/



Latest Planning News

The following were noted and discussed by the **Council** at its meeting on 19th November:

Decisions Noted:

- ✚ **25/01224/TPO** – *St Giles Church, Church Street*. Notice of intent to carry out works to trees protected by TPO 6/2000.
Part Granted/Part Refused 26/9/25
- ✚ **25/01600/TPO** – *Laundry Cottage, Monks Lodge Road*. Notice of intent to carry out works to trees protected by TPO.
Granted 29/9/25
- ✚ **25/01797/TPO** – *Linden Grove, Monks Lodge Road*. Notice of intent to carry out works to trees protected by TPO.
Part Granted/Part Refused 3/10/25
- ✚ **25/02234/DAC** – *Land North of Purls Hill*. Discharge of conditions of **25/01535/AGR**: 1. (Landscaping) and 2. (External Lighting).
Granted 7/10/25

Applications Received:

- ✚ **25/02505/HH & 25/02506/LBC** – *Byham Hall, Gestingthorpe Road*. Proposed single storey extension, re-instatement of a door and minor internal alterations to a floor.

The **Council's** response to this application is 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.

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Forthcoming Events

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

- ✚ **Mon 22nd Dec: Carols by Candlelight** – in **St Giles' Church** at **7.00pm**
- ✚ **Sun 4th Jan 2026*: New Year Village Walk** – meet at **11.00am**. Cost: **£2.50/person** – dogs & children **free**. Half-way drinks + refreshments. Snacks and nibbles at the end.
- ✚ **Thurs 5th Feb 2026*: Maple Leaves** present a talk on **Hearing Dogs for Deaf People** and how they benefit from this charity. Starts at **7.30pm**. Entry **£3/person** for non-members. **Everyone is welcome**. For more details phone Helen (07890 993 965).

Further information can also be found on **Maplestead Mates**, in **Parish News** and 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**:

Denise Ellison, 25 Monks Road, Earls Colne, Essex CO6 2RY

Tel: 07566 265 447 (4.30-6.30pm Mon/Tue/Thu)

E-mail: clerk@greatmaplestead-pc.gov.uk

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