



Maplestead Magna Carta

Great Maplestead Parish Council's Award-Winning Newsletter

Waste Management and Recycling – an update...

... and an opportunity to review

From June Braintree District Council will be rolling out its new waste and recycling service, with more kerbside waste and recycling collections.

As a reminder, the changes to collections that are being introduced are shown below:

- Green waste as now – once a fortnight, for those subscribing
- Food waste will stay the same – weekly, using the current caddies.
- Black bins (residual waste) will be collected only every 3 weeks.
- Recycling will no longer be in clear sacks but instead in 2 new wheelie bins with alternating fortnightly collections: paper and card in one bin and all other recycling, including glass, in the other.



During the initial public consultation, residents were concerned that they lacked space for two extra bins and feared having larger bins with less frequent general waste collections.

Last year **BDC** assessed homes across the district and believes that **82%** are suitable for the standard collection service and can accommodate the two new recycling bins. Those properties assessed as being unsuitable for the standard service will receive alternative waste receptacles that offer the same capacity as the normal wheelie bins.

However, **BDC** admits some decisions may need reviewing. Details of how to ask for a review are at <https://www.braintree.gov.uk/wastechanges>, where you can also find the dates and locations of drop-in events being run over the next couple of months by the Council's Waste Minimisation Team in order to answer any questions face to face.

A one-off printed 'Collections Calendar', containing more information about how to use the new service, will be delivered to homes in May.

An Additional New Service

BDC is also now planning a separate, additional collection service – **that residents will need to apply for** – to pick up Absorbent Hygiene Products such as nappies and incontinence pads. Any sensitive waste will go into Council-issued sacks and be picked up six times every eight weeks. Details of this service are still being finalised...

Launch Timetable

The new waste and recycling collection service roll-out is planned to be as follows:

- **February to May 2026:** The additional recycling bins will be delivered.
- **May 2026:** A letter will be distributed, with further information on how to use the new service, along with the printed collection calendar.
- **June 2026:** The new waste and recycling collection service will begin.

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Mitigating Light Pollution

The increasing use of 'security' lighting for domestic properties means 'light trespass' is becoming a growing problem.

Installations with 250-500 watt tungsten halogen floodlights, controlled by passive infra-red (PIR) movement sensors are major causes for concern:

- activation can be intermittent and unreliable.
- they emit a harsh, intrusive and environmentally unfriendly light that can often be a serious nuisance to neighbours.
- they are extremely energy inefficient.

If lighting is really essential for an outdoor area a better alternative to movement-controlled flood-lighting is use of high-efficiency, low-energy dusk-to-dawn lighting controlled by a photo-electric cell.

This kind of low wattage lighting, which can be left on permanently during the hours of darkness, usually provides more than adequate, but less intrusive, levels of illumination.

Light pollution is classified as a statutory nuisance under S102 of the Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005. Action you may take to resolve problems of 'light trespass' can be found by going to the **BDC** website and entering 'Light Pollution' in the Search box.

Reporting Highways Defects

Residents and road users can now report road defects and problems to Essex Highways directly, following a major website update.

However, it is no longer possible to raise issues via third-party sites, such as **Fix My Street**, due to the lack of reporting detail these sites provide.

The '**Tell Us**' webpage has now been tailored to capture all the necessary information. Using the **interactive map** and/or **What3Words** facility on <https://www.essexhighways.org/tell-us> allows the precise location and accurate reporting of various types of defects and enables users to see whether issues have worsened over time.

The '**Track It**' webpage lets users follow the progress of reports from inspection to repair. <https://www.essexhighways.org/track-it> also shows if similar issues have previously been raised.

Since 2024 **ECC** has invested an additional **£49m** over and above its annual highways' maintenance budget to help facilitate the repair of potholes and other defects. The Department for Transport has also allocated over **£168 million** for **ECC** to carry out road repairs from now until 2029/30.

And although users of local rural roads may find it a bit surprising, a recent Government country-wide survey awarded **Essex** the top, 'green', rating for its road maintenance and repair programme...

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Budgeting for a Solvent Future

At its January meeting the **Parish Council**, having reviewed and optimised its costs and reserve options, finalised its **2026/27 Budget and Precept requirements**.

It was agreed that the Precept (the Parish element of the **Council Tax**) should only be increased by an amount needed to cover inflationary costs/the legal obligation to maintain a statutory level of reserves.

This resulted in the **Precept increase** required by the **Council** to meet its anticipated costs and obligations being kept to **28p/Band D household** per year, or just **½p/week**.

Meanwhile, **Essex County Council** is proposing a **3.95%** council tax increase for 2026/27, viz:

- 1.95% general increase
- 2% Adult Social Care precept

This equates to an increase in **ECC's Council Tax** element of **£62.37/Band D household** per year, or **£1.20/week**.

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Litter Pick

The **Task Force** is looking for volunteers for the community **Parish Litter Pick**, taking place on **Saturday 7th March**.

Please text Rob Brudenell (07917 071 447) if you can help. All equipment/tabards will be supplied. Meet in the Playing Field car park at **10.00am**. Refreshments afterwards in **St Giles' Church**.

Latest Planning News

The following were noted and discussed by the **Council** at its meeting on 14th January:

Decisions Noted:

✚ **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.

Granted 29/12/25

✚ **25/02454/FUL** – *Monks Lodge Farm Barns Gestingthorpe Road*. Proposed barn conversions of 3 dwellings, 8 parking spaces and associated landscaping

Pending Consideration

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Forthcoming Events

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

✚ **Fri 30th Jan***: **Paint & Plonk Night** – starts **7.00pm**. Cost: **£30/person**, to include all materials, a glass of plonk and nibbles. Enjoy a drink or two with friends at this fun painting night. Tickets from Myra Jeggo (474 285)

✚ **Thurs 5th Feb***: **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).

✚ **Friday 27th/Saturday 28th Mar***: **Robin Hood - The Pantomime**. Friday 27th: **Evening performance @ 7.30pm** (doors open 7.00pm). Saturday 28th: **Matinee @ 2.30pm** (doors open 2.00pm); **Evening performance @ 7.30pm** (doors open 7.00pm). **Tickets**: Adults **£10** /Children (under 12) **£5** from Ann Crisp (460 216) or Jo Watson (07810 481 016). A cash bar will be available during the performances serving beer/wine & soft drinks.

✚ **Monday 6th Apr***: **Easter Village Walk**. Meet **11.00am** in **Village Hall** car park. Cost: **£2.50/person**. Dogs/children **free**. Half-way drinks/light refreshments at the end.

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>