

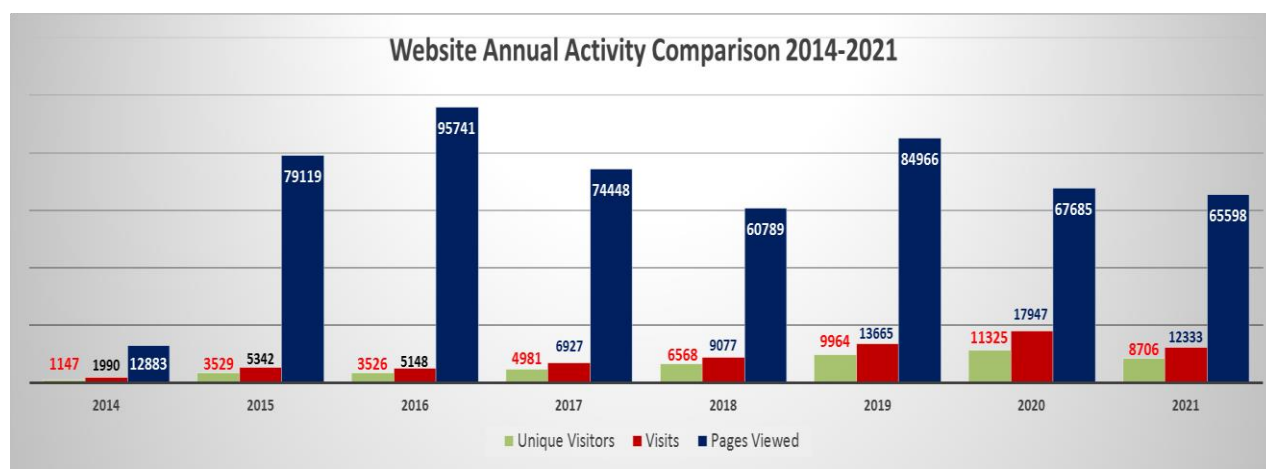
Cllr Harris Report/Action Plan – January 2022

Communications

1. Website/Facebook

❖ Report/Review:

- The Council’s website continues to be a valuable source of local information.
- During the course of last year it was regularly updated with the ongoing changes to the **COVID-19** guidelines; links to the Government and NHS websites were maintained to enable users to keep abreast of relevant official information.
- Averaged across the whole of **2021**, unique visitors to the site were over **725** and it was visited just under **1030** times each month.
- As the chart below shows, after **6 years of successive growth** in visitor numbers and site visits since the Council took control of the website, activity declined slightly, back to 2019 levels, during the past year:



- Some of the reasons for this may be that:
 1. There was less need than in 2020 for people to visit the site to check changing national Covid actions and local community help initiatives.
 2. Apart from the **Fun(d) Day** and **Quiz**, very few village events took place during 2021; this in turn meant that there was less frequent updating of event information on the site, which is one of the main visitor attractors.
 3. The Council placed a greater reliance on Facebook to get its important messages to a wider audience more quickly, resulting in a shift in some visitors’ attention.
- The Council’s Facebook page has continued to prove a valuable asset during the year, in particular its link with the village’s Maplestead Mates page enabling important information to be quickly and widely distributed across the parish.
- **52** separate posts were made on the Council’s page during **2021**, achieving a total reach of **7,903**, each post reaching on average around **152** people.
- The top three posts by reach were:
 1. 665 – Simon Last’s Radio Essex appearance (also with 84 comments!)
 2. 595 – Fly tipping in Gestingthorpe Road
 3. 387 – Overgrown verges obstructing sightlines on Castle Hedingham Rd.
- The three posts with the least reach were:
 50. 36 – Covid Essex website information
 51. 33 – Essex Libraries Consultation
 52. 10 – Covid Plan B update (!)
- Many more however will have seen the Council’s posts on Maplestead Mates – unfortunately, this information cannot be publicly accessed or easily extracted.

❖ **Action Plan:**

- Regular updating of the website and associated links will continue in 2022.
- The Council's Facebook page will also carry links to the website when more in-depth information than can sensibly be carried on Facebook needs to be communicated, in order to bring it to the widest possible attention.

2. E-newsletter (Maplestead Magna Carta)

❖ **Action Plan:**

- **Issue 42** is scheduled for publication on **w/c 31st January 2022** (tbc).
- Editorial content for this issue is suggested to include:
 - Budget Decisions/Effects:
 - County
 - Parish
 - Road Safety actions/update
 - Playing Field Development news
 - County/District news
 - Planning updates
 - Forthcoming Events

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Footpaths

❖ **Report:**

- Footpaths are very muddy currently and appropriate care is needed when negotiating them
- No major problems have otherwise been reported

❖ **Action Plan:**

- Interim assessments and maintenance will continue to be carried out during 2022 on an *ad hoc* basis to monitor path conditions/rectify problems.
- A new contract to extend the Service Level Agreement to maintain our footpaths in the 2022/23 financial year needs to be requested by the end of **February**.
- The request claim needs to be presented on PC headed paper, with details of what we are claiming for. Receipts for last year's expenses will be presented and the claim paid by the **ECC PRow and Localism Officer**.