



# Maplestead Magna Carta

Great Maplestead Parish Council's Award-Winning Newsletter

## Improving Parish Life – what the Council has done...

### ...to make a difference (Part 1)

The present **Parish Council** is nearing the end of its allotted term of office – an opportune time to review the projects that have been undertaken, since it was elected, to improve life in **Great Maplestead**.

One of its immediate priorities was to enhance communications with parishioners, achieved by launching this e-newsletter. Afterwards, extensive and on-going improvements were made to the currency, quality and range of information on the **Council's** website, which is now a 'one-stop' information source not just for **Council** matters but all village news, events and activities.

Some of the more noticeable projects that have been completed during the last 4 years are:

- **Children's Play Area:** fenced to guard users against dog waste contamination and equipment renewed/replaced to meet safety standards.
- **Car Park:** extended to guard against the dangers of on-street parking at the school. 
- **Village Information Board:** commissioned to provide residents and visitors with details of local points of interest/walks.
- **Footpaths:**
  - **Service Level Agreement:** entered into for local control of footpath maintenance.
  - **Water Meadows & Slype Footbridges:** repaired to address safety concerns.
  - **Slype Stepping Stones:** installed to make boggy ground negotiable. 
  - **Church Field Steps:** handrail installed to address safety concerns
- **20 mph Scheme:** introduced around school to reduce speeds/increase safety.
- **Street Lighting:** upgraded to LEDs
- **Lucking Street:** drainage channel excavated by Task Force to alleviate flash flooding problem.
- **Litter Picks:** regular actions by the Task Force to ensure a litter-free village environment.
- **Defibrillator:** installed at Village Hall and well-attended CPR training courses run.
- **Dog Waste Bins:** new bins provided and existing ones re-sited to meet residents' requests.
- **'Adopt-a-Triangle' Scheme:** introduced to encourage wider involvement in maintaining a pleasant village environment. 

**More in the next issue...**

### Let there be (less) light...

**Artificial light in the wrong place at the wrong time can be intrusive, especially if it is allowed to illuminate areas outside of its intended scope.**

With the increasing use of 'security' lighting around domestic properties, 'light trespass' is becoming a growing problem. Many installations use floodlighting with 250 - 500 watt tungsten halogen lights controlled by passive infra-red (PIR) movement sensors, but:

- their 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.

Depending on how such floodlighting has been installed, it may also:

- not be in the best position or angled correctly.
- be lighting areas it doesn't need to.
- be affecting nearby properties.

If lighting for a particular area is really needed, a better alternative to movement-controlled floodlighting is to use high-efficiency, low-energy lighting controlled by a photo-electric cell – a dusk-to-dawn switch. This kind of low wattage lighting, which can be left on permanently during the hours of darkness, usually provides more than adequate, and much less intrusive, levels of illumination.



### Avoiding problems...

Although light pollution is classified as a statutory nuisance under **S102** of the **Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005**, if a neighbour's lighting is causing you a problem it is best, initially, to try and resolve your complaint by discussing it with them.

You may find that they're unaware that their light is causing a disturbance and, in most cases, all that's required is a re-angling of the light, adjustment of the shielding or the fitting of a lower wattage bulb.

If the problem cannot be resolved informally, more information about what action to take can be found at: [https://www.braintree.gov.uk/info/200257/pollution/260/light\\_pollution](https://www.braintree.gov.uk/info/200257/pollution/260/light_pollution)

## County Broadband Update

At last November's County Broadband presentation of its household fibre-optic broadband plans for the Parish...

...it was stated that the programme would go ahead if **30%** of households expressed an interest, by signing and submitting a **Pre-Order Agreement**, before the end of 2018.

**CB** has announced that this target has now been reached, so the project will be going ahead.

**Initial survey work will take place during the Spring, with construction work due to commence this Summer.**

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## Emergency Telephone Scheme

Following the successful introduction of the Village Emergency Telephone Schemes (VETS) in Pebmarsh and Little Maplestead...

...the **Council** would like to gauge the interest in setting up a **VETS** scheme in **Great Maplestead**

**VETS** is designed to assist in a lone-rescuer situation, where someone aiding a person who has suffered a cardiac arrest has to stay with the patient but needs help in getting the defibrillator.



It works like this: after ringing the Emergency Services on **999**, the rescuer would call a memorable **VETS** number, unique to **Great Maplestead**.

This then rings telephones simultaneously in a number of volunteers' homes, until someone answers and can assist.

The rescuer then tells the responder the location of the incident so that the responder can collect the defibrillator, take it to the patient and assist the rescuer until the Emergency Services arrive.

**If you would like to be a VETS volunteer, or would like to discuss joining such a scheme, please contact the Parish Clerk.**

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## Budgeting for a Secure Future

In its January meeting the **Council** reviewed its **2019/20 Budget & Precept options**.

A complete withdrawal of the **Local Support Grant** for the coming financial year meant that the Precept (the **Council Tax** portion received by the Parish) needed to be increased in order to cover fixed operating expenses.

To keep the books balanced, an annual Precept increase of **£4.50** – or 38p a month – per Band D household was agreed. This has subsequently been accepted by **BDC**.

## Latest Planning News

The **Council** noted the following planning decision at its meeting on **16<sup>th</sup> January**:

### Application Decision:

- ✦ **18/01900/VAR** Buttercup Cottage, Church Street. Variance of Condition 2 of planning permission **13/00328/FUL**, to replace the previously approved drawings with revised drawings that the dwelling is actually being built in accordance with. **Granted 10/01/19**

There were no **Applications Received**.

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## Forthcoming Events

The following are some forthcoming village events (\*those at the Village Hall) that you may wish to note in your diary:

- ✦ **Wednesday Mornings\* Keep Fit** – from **9.30-10.30am**. Contact Judy Cowell (01376 561 757) for more details.
- ✦ **Thursday Mornings\* Pilates** – weekly sessions for men/women of all ages/fitness levels. **9.30-10.30am & 10.45-11.45am**. Cost **£40** for **5 classes** (or **£5** for the first one). Call Catherine Pawsey (07814 459 683) for details.
- ✦ **Friday Evenings, occasionally\* Pub Nights** – from **7.30-9.30pm**. Informal social evenings, playing a game or having a chat. Bring your own drinks/nibbles! **See website for dates**.
- ✦ **Sat 9<sup>th</sup> Mar\* Jumble Sale** + raffle and refreshments. Opens **3.00pm**, admission **30p**. Contributions to Diane Smith (01787 473 300) or Doreen Faulks (01787 460 727) or to the **Village Hall** on **Saturday morning only**.
- ✦ **Thurs 4<sup>th</sup> Apr\* Maplesteads' WI Open Meeting** - starts **7.30pm**. The talk: **History of the Maplesteads** by Jim Davis. **Men/Guests** welcome (†**£4** including refreshments).
- ✦ **Sat 13<sup>th</sup> Apr\* Wine Tasting Event** – more details on the website nearer the time.
- ✦ **Mon 22<sup>nd</sup> Apr \* Easter Village Walk** – meet at **11.00am**. Cost: **£2.50**/person – dogs & children **free**. Half-way drinks + refreshments

Further information about these and many other village activities can be found 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:**

**Ann Crisp, New House, St Giles Close  
Great Maplestead, CO9 2RW**

**Tel:** **01787 460 216** (4-6pm Mon-Thurs)

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