

VDS Guidelines and Survey Responses

The survey was distributed between the 24th April 2012 and the 27th April 2012 with the Survey Return Date being 12th May 2012, which represents the baseline date for all views expressed. The survey was completed within the context of the on-going public consultations for the generation of the Local Development Framework documents by Braintree District Council in response to the NPPF.

This survey provides an insight into the views of the parishioners of Great Maplestead and as such, the desirability, or otherwise, of living in a rural parish with its lifestyle and environment. The guidelines are derived from the responses to questions that the parishioners have placed weight on or are high impact questions, over and above the usual Essex Design Guidelines and BDC planning policy.

Survey type	Distributed	Returned	Return rate
Adult	273	250	91%
Youth	32	24	75%

Below is a summary of the results, which allows the parishioners quantified majority views to be understood and to help establish the representative nature of statements made.

The Guidelines

	Guideline	Evidential cross references
GM1	Developments should only be permitted where it does not detract from the rural nature ² of the Parish and the farming and countryside landscape	Q1(a), Q1(b) Q1(c), Q4
GM2	Ensure farming is a continuously supported business by appropriate implementation of local planning policy	Page 13 Q1(a)
GM3	Ensure the following facilities are retained for community use and social value: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Village hall 2. Village playing field 3. Church 4. School playing field 	Page 4,5 Q1(b) Q1(c) Q1(d)
GM4	Maintain and preserve the character, for leisure use of the: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Countryside lanes 2. Footpaths 3. Bridleways 	Page 11,13 Q1(c) Q2, Q4
GM5	Retain the village shape and structure with regards to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Spaciousness, i.e. avoid disproportionate cramming of new dwellings 2. Architectural features in the specific character areas, as can be assessed from the character area descriptions and the Parishioners views with regards to building features as expressed in GM28,29,30 and 31 3. Linear development style 4. Open and green spaces 	Page 14 to 31 Q15, Q16 Q17, Q18 Q12(a) Q12(b)

² The 'rural nature' relates to the specific countryside / country life attributes of Great Maplestead as described in 'Introduction', 'Landscape Character' and 'Countryside' sections

GM6	Retain public access for their visual characteristics and enjoyment to the following green spaces: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Village playing field 2. School playing field 3. Churchyard 4. and accessible fields, woods and copses (via footpaths) 	Q2
GM7	The currently protected spaces of the churchyard and village playing field should be retained and the school playing field should be added to the protected list at the earliest opportunity	Q2
GM8	The unique local landscape character of Great Maplestead associated with the conjunction of the three landscape character areas of the Colne River Valley, the Yeldham Farmland Plateau and the Wickham Farmland Plateau should be emphasised and retained, in particular the important views from the village overlooking the countryside beyond must be safe guarded	Page 11 to 13 Q3
GM9	Ensure that the listed buildings are maintained and their surroundings form a suitable setting for their historic nature	Q5
GM10	Identify and implement suitable methods to reduce the speed of traffic in appropriate areas	Q6, Q8 Q20/Q21
GM11	Take action to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Restore and maintain the road side verges and grass triangles 2. Prevent future damage to the verges and grass triangles 	Q8
GM12	Refrain from the introduction of further: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Street lighting, i.e. retain the ‘dark sky’ approach 2. Pavements 	Q6, Q7, Q8
GM13	Avoid the installation of visually intrusive infrastructure items such as overhead National Grid cables with associated pylons, transformers, mobile phones masts in the Parish	Q7
GM14	The installation of high speed fibre optic broadband is a high priority and should be encouraged	Q8
GM15	The provision of more off-street parking by the residents of Church Street, if so desired by those residents, should be supported	Q8
GM16	The provision of mains gas should be considered	Q8
GM17	Allotments space should be provided if requested by any resident	Q8
GM18	There may be some support for a small amount of residential development which should be restricted to infill sites within the development boundary on which 2-3 bedroom family houses would be preferred	Q10(a), Q10(b), Q12(a)
GM19	If a local need is demonstrated there may be some support for a small amount of affordable housing development	Q10(b)
GM20	All developments should be within the village development boundary unless rural exceptions apply	Q12(a)
GM21	The Parishioners opinion has indicated that more than 6 additional properties, within the development boundary, would be detrimental to village character	Q9
GM22	New retail, office and commercial premises should not be encouraged except in the case of redundant farm buildings where conversion to other uses should be permitted in accordance with national and local planning	Q11

GM22 (cont.)	policies for the rural economy. This should be conditional that the new business use is in keeping with the rural character and infrastructure of Great Maplestead	
GM23	Any development within the development boundary should be restricted to infill sites	Q12(a)
GM24	In submitting / assessing any planning application, the appropriate section of the Great Maplestead VDS report should be consulted with reference to the Parish needs and the local character, history and materials adjacent to the proposed development site together with the VDS report guidelines	Page 3 VDS report
GM25	Developments must be sympathetic with and compliment the character of the immediate surrounding area particularly with regard to: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scale 2. Density 3. Design 	Q12(b)
GM26	In any development of more than one dwelling, consideration should be given to using different building styles and designs, dependant on site characteristics	Q12(b)
GM27	In any development of a single dwelling, it should have a style that sympathetically integrated with existing properties around but may vary from that style	Q12(b)
GM28	Alterations to existing buildings should be sympathetic with the style of the building being altered and the surrounding buildings	Q12(b)
GM29	For roofs, traditional materials such as slate or clay tiles and thatch are considered desirable and should be encouraged	Q15
GM30	The exterior finishing of the walls of buildings, with weatherboard, red brick, Essex rendered plaster and flint are all well regarded and should be encouraged	Q16
GM31	Encourage the use of traditional window and door materials where appropriate to the building and area under consideration	Q17
GM32	Encourage the use of boundary features such as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. older 'recycled' brick walls, flint walls 2. or softer features such as ornamental hedges, wooden picket or hurdle type fencing 	Q18
GM33	Agricultural field hedging should be retained	Q18
GM34	Ensure that the visual aspect of any renewable energy infrastructure is fully taken into account to avoid unsightly placement	Q19
GM35	Consider the use of HGV / weight or similar signage to restrict HGV vehicles except for access to local farm, business and residents services	Q20/21
GM36	Consider implementing single track road signs on narrow lanes	Q20/21
Other views expressed		
Retain the 'hail and ride' bus facility		Q20/21
Ensure that glass recycling facilities are retained and are user friendly		Q27

The Survey Responses

The guidelines have been derived from the majority parishioner views as expressed in the survey.

The survey results were presented to the parishioners at an open day meeting in the village hall on the 15th September 2012 and also made available on the VDS website:

http://www.essexinfo.net/GreatMaplestead_vds/

A printed copy was placed in St. Giles Church.

The results are generally presented in the form:

- ‘Question number’ and ‘the question asked’, for example, ‘1(a). Does the following contribute to your enjoyment of living in Great Maplestead’
- The questions are then broken down into separate sub-questions where specific areas are considered, for example ‘rural nature’
- The pie chart of those who expressed a view (with the number in each sector). In the case that there are two sectors with low votes and the normal format causes an overlap of numbers, the ‘disagree number is to the upper left of the strongly disagree which is placed nearer the centre of the chart. When no votes are cast for the option, ‘0’ votes are not shown
- A brief commentary of the results

The derived guidelines are from the majority views and are presented in the previous section pages 32 to 34 inclusive (‘Guidelines’).

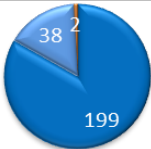
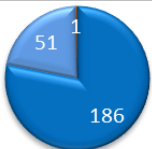
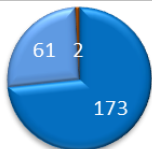
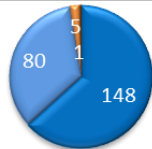
The general format of the survey responses is a pie chart with the number of votes for an option in the ‘strongly agree’ or ‘agree’ or ‘disagree’ or ‘strongly disagree’ categories.

The legend for the pie chart colours (except for one specific question (Q9) which has its own legend) is as follows;

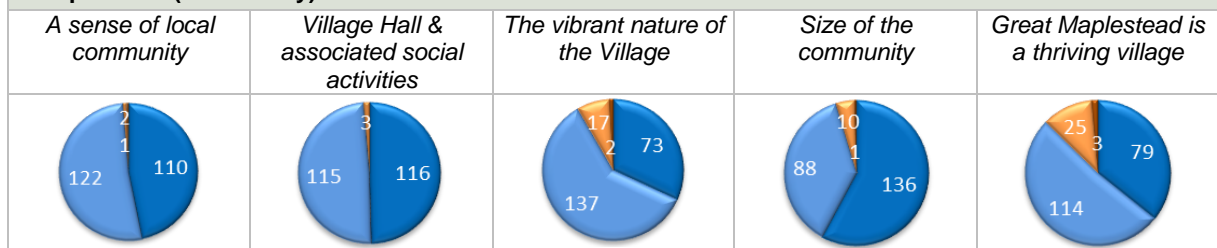
■ I Strongly Agree ■ I Agree ■ I Disagree ■ I Strongly Disagree

The legend generally used for the pie charts

Living in and Enjoyment of Great Maplestead

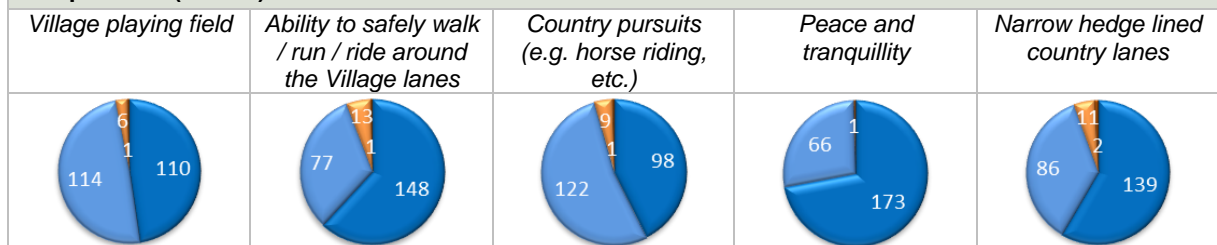
Q1(a). Do you agree or disagree that the following Contribute to your Enjoyment of living in Great Maplestead (countryside)?			
Countryside / open spaces / setting	Rural location and character	Mixture of farming and residential areas	Varied landscape character areas
			
<p>The countryside, rural character and landscape are all major contributors to Great Maplestead as a Parish. The farming element, as an integral feature of the settlement and its contribution to the character, is well regarded</p>			

Q1(b). Do you agree or disagree that the following Contribute to your Enjoyment of living in Great Maplestead (community)?



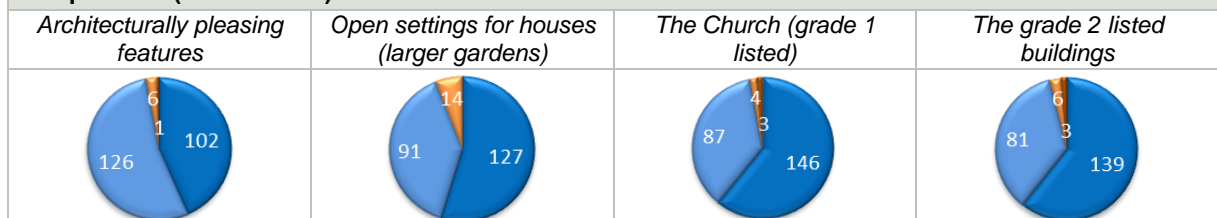
The responses indicate a thriving village with a good sense of a balanced community. The community size and social activities combine to give a thriving and vibrant village

Q1(c). Do you agree or disagree that the following Contribute to your Enjoyment of living in Great Maplestead (leisure)?



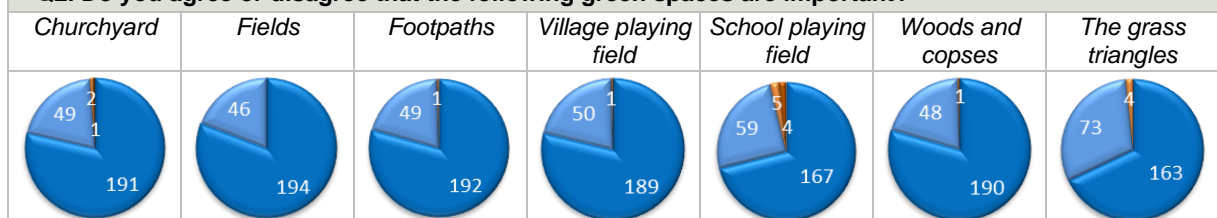
The rural nature is a key element in parishioners leisure activities. The use and nature of the countryside provides opportunities for less frantic pursuits

Q1(d). Do you agree or disagree that the following Contribute to your Enjoyment of living in Great Maplestead (architectural)?

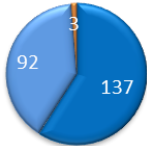
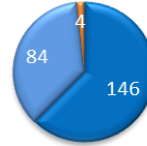
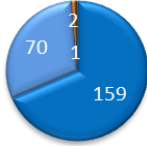

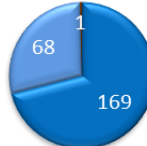


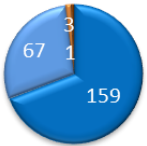
The physical distribution and style of dwellings with the high concentration of listed structures provides an enjoyable physical environment


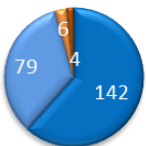
Q2. Do you agree or disagree that the following green spaces are important?

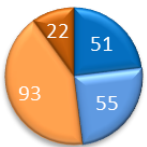
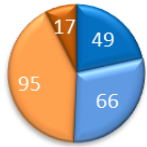
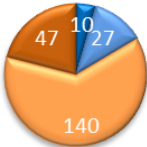
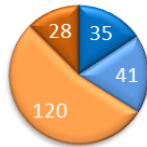
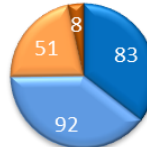
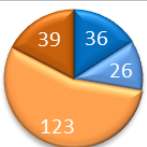
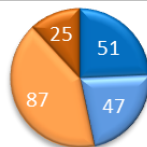
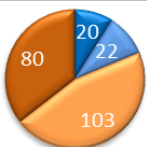
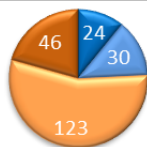
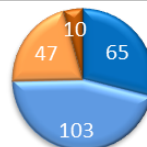


The green spaces are highly important features in the village character. Without exception a strong view.

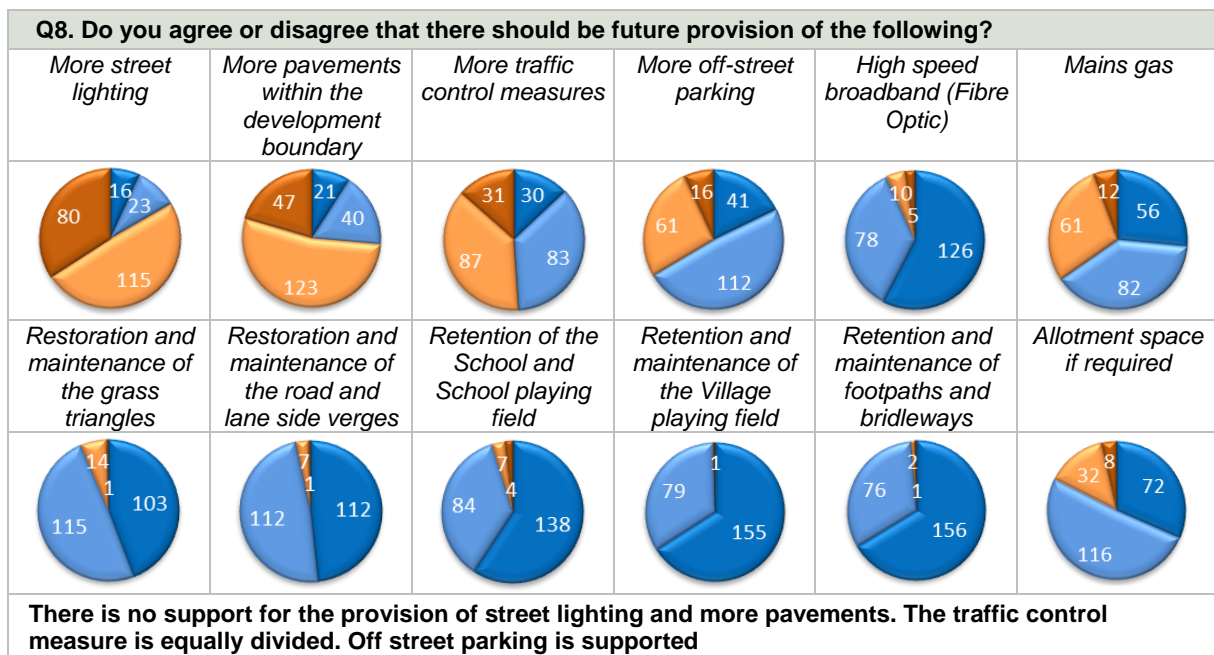
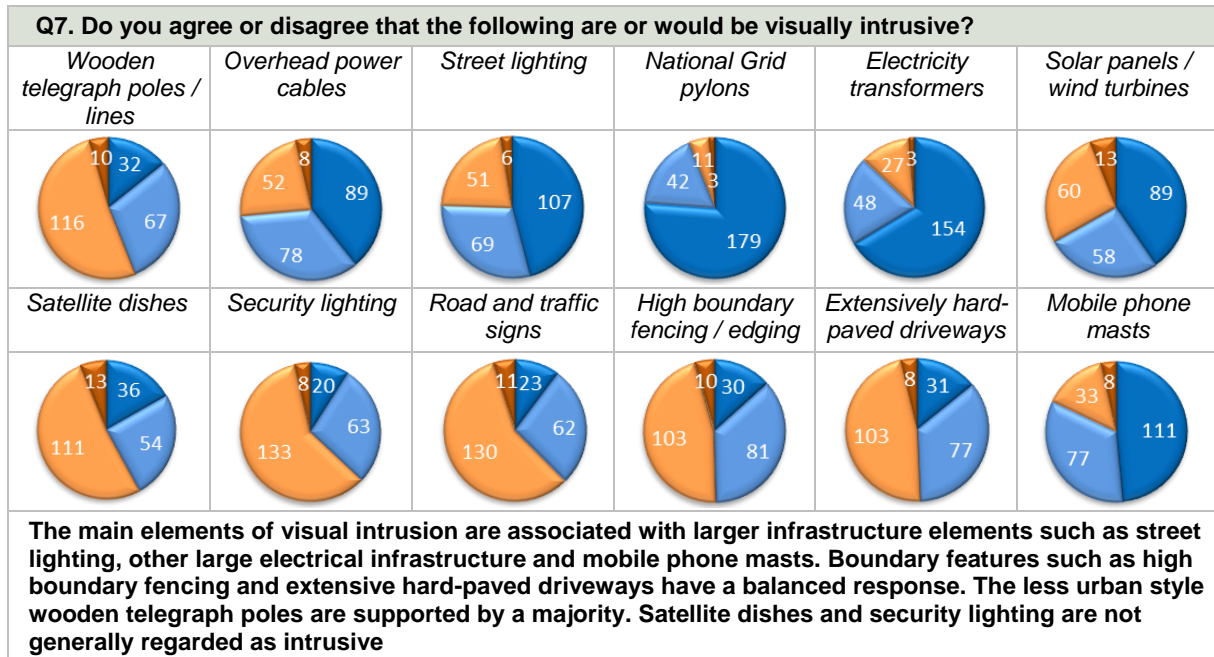
Q3. Do you agree or disagree that these views are important to the character of Great Maplestead?				
The entry routes into the Parish	The entry routes into the Village	From the Church	To the Church	Generally, views all round
				
<p>The countryside setting, the abundance of green spaces and generally rolling hill features result in views, from both within the Parish and the village, that are regarded as integral to the character of the Parish</p>				

Q4. Do you agree or disagree that the country lanes, verges and hedgerows are important?	
Average for all categories (i) to (v)	They are important for walking, (i). both generally and for (ii). dog exercising, (ii). personal exercising, (iv). horse riding and (v). providing a wildlife friendly environment
	<p>There is a very strong view that the countryside nature of the lanes is valued for a variety of activities and reasons</p>

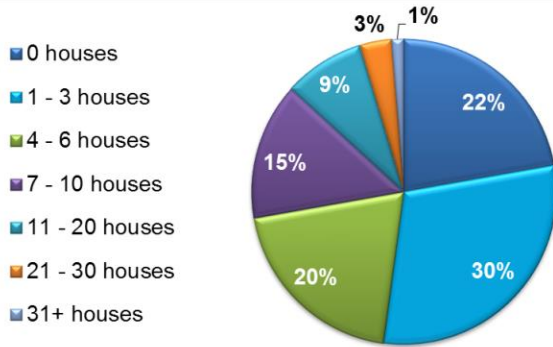
Q5. Do you agree or disagree that these buildings contribute a sense of history and character?	
The Church (c 12 th century)	Average of selected grade two listed structure
	
<p>The high proportion of listed structures in the Parish contribute to both history and character</p>	

Q6. Do you agree or disagree that the following are a problem to Great Maplestead?				
Roads and lane capacity	Access to transport links	Noise levels	Traffic density	Traffic speed
				
				

The parishioner's views indicate that the major problems are speeding traffic and verge erosion. A substantial majority identify these issues. Noise levels, lack of street lighting and lack of pavements are not regarded as a problem by a substantial majority. There is a balanced comment on road capacity, sewage treatment and access to transport links with no strong view. Artificial lighting is generally regarded as not a problem



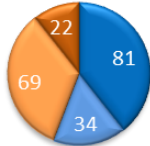
Q9. How many additional houses in total do you think Great Maplestead could accommodate without detriment to its character?



The parishioners majority view is that visually the village could accommodate up to 6 additional houses

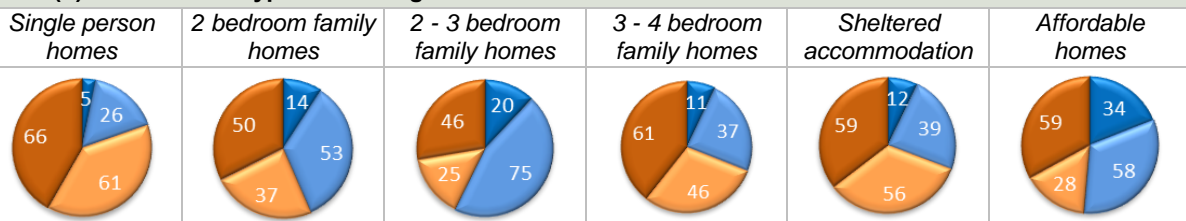
Q10(a). Do you agree or disagree that additional housing is needed?

No new housing is required



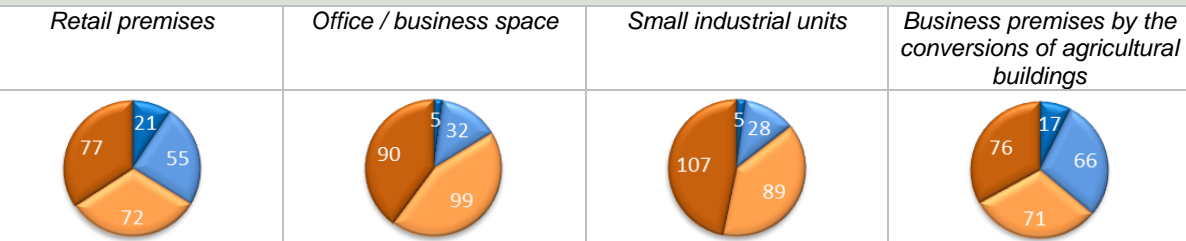
The majority consider there is no need for new housing according to their perception of local need. However, there is a significant minority who consider there is a local need

Q10(b). ... if so what type of housing?



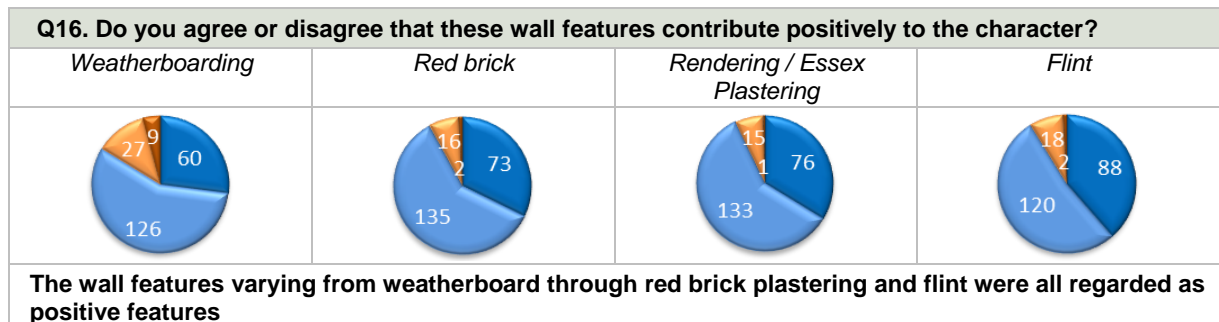
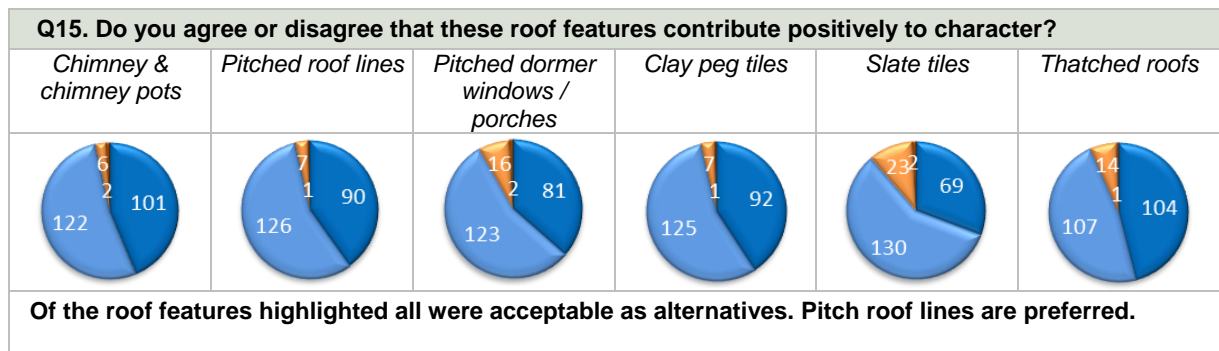
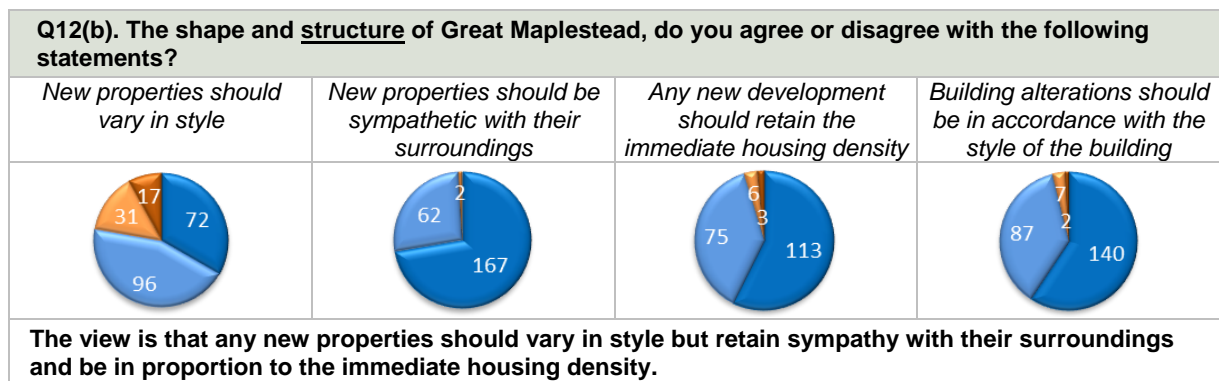
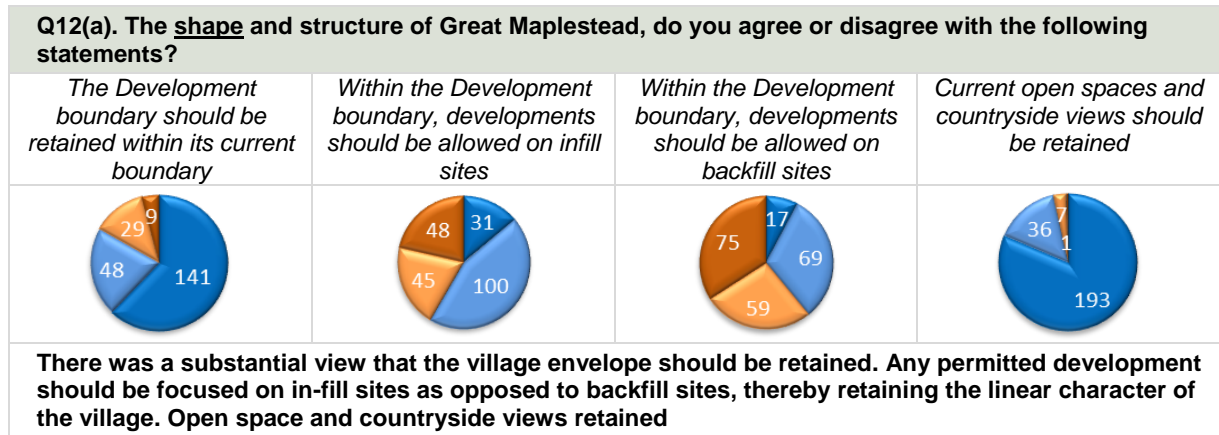
For those who consider housing is needed, this establishes what type of housing is needed. The two types with majorities are 2 to 3 bedroom family homes and affordable homes. There are substantial majorities that consider single person homes, 3 to 4 bedroom homes and sheltered accommodation for the elderly are not needed to meet local needs

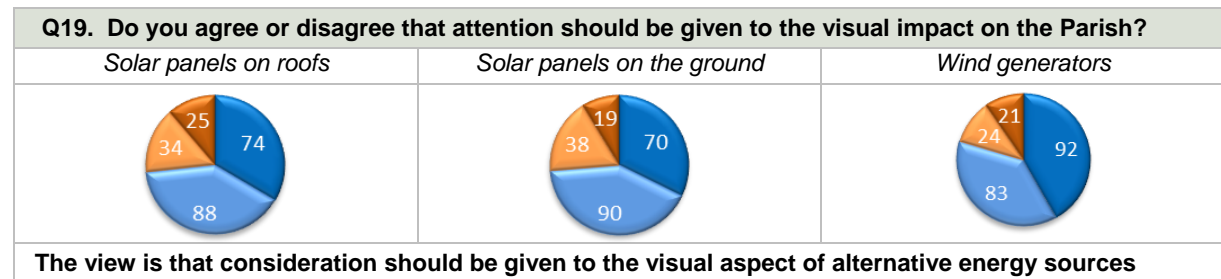
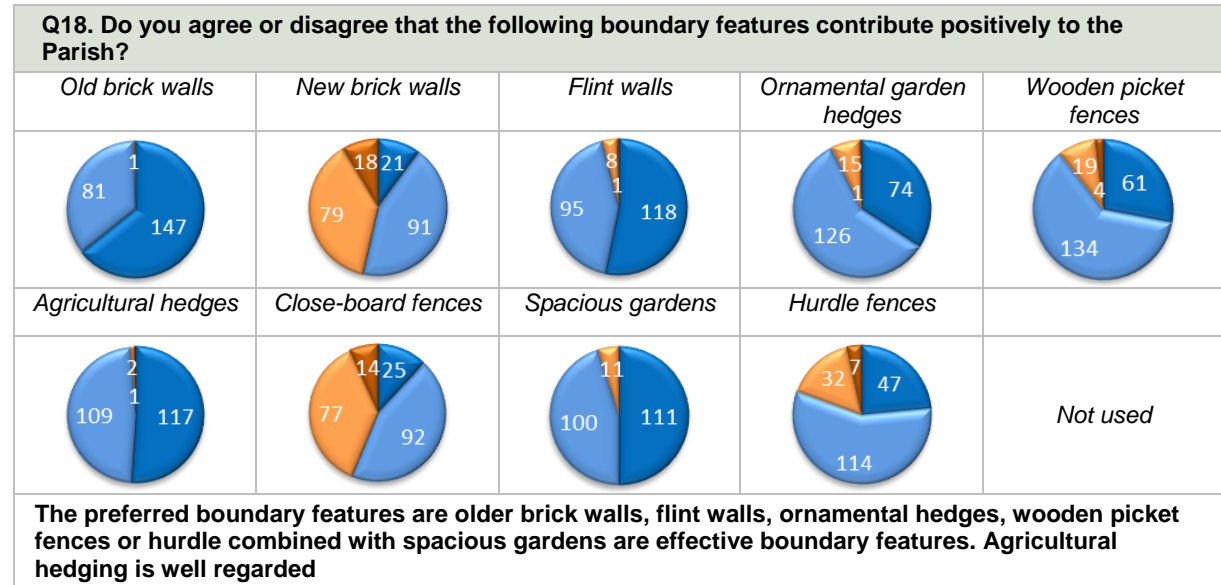
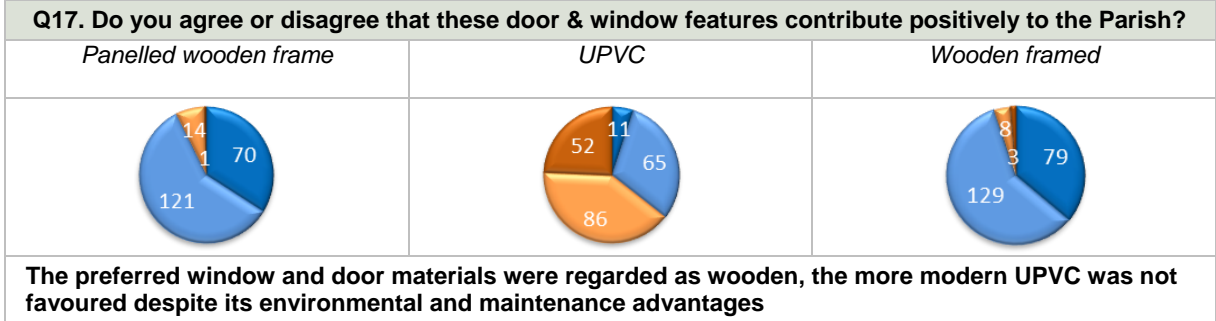
Q11. Do you agree or disagree that the following premises should be provided?




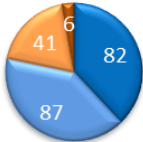
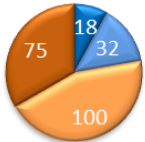
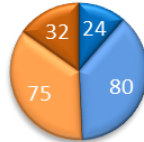
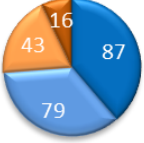
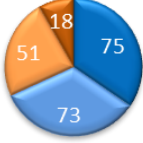
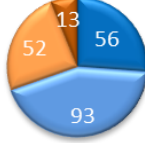
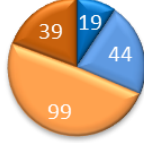
The majority view is that business premises should not be provided. Of special note is the view against the conversion of non-redundant agricultural buildings, this reflects the strong parishioner views that farming is an integral activity to the village and is to be retained

Planning

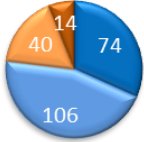
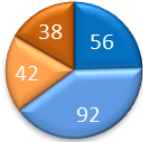
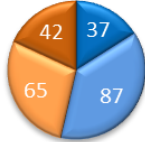
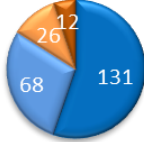




Design Features

Q20/21. Do you agree or disagree that the following are / would be appropriate or desirable?			
<i>The street signage</i>	<i>A hail and ride bus service v's bus stops</i>	<i>Traffic calming bumps</i>	<i>Village 'gateways'</i>
			
<i>Unsuitable for HGV signs</i>	<i>Vehicle weight restriction signs</i>	<i>Single track road signs</i>	<i>One way signs</i>
			
<p>The current street signage is considered appropriate. The hail and ride bus service is well regarded. Traffic calming bumps and one way signs are not required. Single track road signs and HGV restrictions are considered desirable for the narrow lanes. The requirement for on-going farm vehicles usage would need to be accommodated to support the agricultural character of the Parish</p>			

General Information

Q27. I use the following local facilities			
<i>The Village Hall</i>	<i>The Village playing field</i>	<i>The Church</i>	<i>Glass recycling facilities</i>
			
<p>The most used facility is the glass recycling followed by the village hall</p>			

Youth Questionnaire

Out of the 32 questionnaires, 24 were returned by 9 males and 15 females. 23 were in full time education and 18 have lived in the Parish for 11-17 years. Generally the youth and adult responses were similar.

Green spaces (24 yes 0 not) and rural nature being equally important (22 yes 2 not). The youth community was less certain that the village was a vibrant (15 yes 9 not) and thriving community (13 yes 10 not) and more considered that transport links were a difficulty (17 yes 4 not).

There was less concern with the visual impact of solar panels (11 yes 11 not) but more keen on pavements (13 yes 8 not) and traffic calming measures (13 yes 11 not).

Production and Acknowledgements



The residents of
Great Maplestead
and the Parish
Council



Warwick Network Ltd

'Working with Steering Groups and
Councils assisting the production of
Parish and Town Plans'

- This document was produced in two phases, the first in 2008-2009 and the second in 2012-2013
- A key element to the Great Maplestead VDS was a strong desire that the parishioners views be reflected in this document and the views presented are the majority views as evidenced by the survey results
- Public meetings were held by the VDS Committee at which the VDS process, the reason for the survey and the use to which it would be put were explained and comments and questions from parishioners were received
- This was assisted by expert advice provided by a representative of the RCCE and BDC Planning Department
- The anonymous nature of the questionnaire was regarded as an important element and this was preserved all through the process. A professional company specialising in data analysis was used to generate the results
- The results were presented at an open day in the village hall on the 15th September 2012 and comments received
- The document was developed over the next year and reviewed at several village hall meetings

There has been considerable support to this enterprise by many parishioners and other parties who we thank. We especially note and thank the parishioners for their excellent response to the questionnaire and constructive observations who made this a truly representative document.

The Great Maplestead VDS committee wish to thanks all those who have contributed either time, resource or funds to help this happen.

The committee members for the second phase and production of this final document were: Bill Bowers, Jean Bowers, Julie Breed, Mary Elms, Chris Hunnable, Paul Knight, Simon Last, David Money, David Oakes, Kevin Surgett, Peter Faulks and Francis Mortlock as a co-opted member to be called upon if required. Cllr. David Turner, was the Parish Council representative monitoring the process, progress and community engagement.

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Jan Cole RCCE	Professional advice, review, comments, much effort
Braintree District Council Planning Department	Professional advice, review, comments, much effort and maps
Great Maplestead Parish Council	Finance and support to the process
Mrs Shelagh Cracknell	Historical information and pictures
Warwick Data Analysis	Professional data analysis
Mrs Mary D'Albert	Assistance in facilitating the prompt data analysis
Mr and Mrs Simon and Julie Last	Welcoming the parishioners into their home to help fund raising
Mr Fernando Castro	Display facilities
Mr Joe Newton	Pictures and local knowledge
Mr Bob Newman	Proof reading
The printers	Production of the document

At the start of this activity, the Village Flower Show hosted a photographic competition, both adult and junior categories to 'Capture the Character of Great Maplestead'.

Some of those photos are used in the 'Images of Great Maplestead' section with other photographs of the Parish taken on the character assessment day or later updates.

Images of Great Maplestead



Hulls Mill



Toldish Hall Road



Church Street



Lucking Street



Church Street



Grass triangle at (u)



Church Street



Family memorial in St. Giles Church



Bridge over the River Colne



Barrett's Hall outbuilding



The village in the snow



Old chimney in Church Street



Dynes Hall

GREAT MAPLESTEAD

