

Chignal Parish Council

C/O 45 Cherry Garden Road, Great Waltham, Chelmsford, Essex, CM3 1DH

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Clerk: Will Adshead-Grant

Chair: Lynn Ballard

Website: e-voice.org.uk/Chignal-Parish

Vice Chair: Linda Nelson

Minutes of the Bi-Monthly Meeting of the Chignal Parish Council held on Monday 11th September 2023 at 7.30pm.

Governance

2023/612 Chairman's Welcome.

Chair: Ballard.

Cllr: Elwick, Nelson, and Towns.

2023/613 Apologies for Absence

Cllr Lewis and Stainton.

2023/614 Register of Declarations of Interests and any requests for dispensation.

No declarations were made.

2023/615 Confirmation of the minutes of the AGM and meeting of the Parish Council held on 10th July 2023.

Resolution: The minutes were confirmed.

2023/616 Note the Orchard sub-Committee minutes of 6th September 2023.

The orchard has produced a wide selection of fruit, and this is being distributed in the parish. **Saturday 28th October 2.30pm – Orchard Fruit Celebration**

Resolution: The minutes were noted.

2023/617 Public Open Session for any matters that need to be drawn to the Parish Council's attention.

The item does not need to be on the current agenda.

7 members of the public.

An issue raised about the Didigo app going to Essex travel and not making this service easy to use. It was noted that the phone line is not available until 10am.

Thanks to Mike Steel and David Elwick for trying to get the white finger post sign put back in place at the Hollow Lane/Chignal Road junction with all fingers in place. It was noted that several heavy goods vehicles have missed the turn due to the lack of a directional sign to Chignal Smealey.

2023/618 County and City Councillors' Reports

i. Essex County Councillor Report – Cllr Mike Steel

- **Highways:**

There is another "**Member Led scheme**" whereby each County Cllr gets to submit 36 holes on a no-quibble basis, and they get fixed. This is done in 2 batches – July and October 2023. I have already submitted 24 (against my 18 July allowance) and they are being done. 3 of these are in Chignal.

I get the chance to put another 18 in October. I do drive around the division quite a lot, but I don't see them all – so location (what3words preferable) and photo to me please.

- **LCHE223012 - Community Orchard, Mashbury Road, Chignal Smealy**

This has been submitted to the Essex Highways Solutions (EHS) team directly and they have responded that the Road Safety and Engineering Teams are looking to see if the request is viable. I have also lobbied Cabinet Member Cllr Lee Scott to ask for his assistance in progressing this – we need such direct requests to be promptly accepted upon!

Initial view from the Essex Highways Solutions (EHS) team is:

- We are assuming the steps would have to be straight as the distance would not support a turn in the steps.
- As such we would be concerned about the steps leading straight onto the road, this may be able to be overcome by way of reviewing signage on the approach to the site (google maps is not current) and consideration to pedestrian in the road warning signs, maybe SLOWs and/or any other appropriate warning sign.
- A Road Safety Audit would need to be undertaken.
- Stats may impact the proposal.
- A road closure and associated diversion would be required for construction due to the width of carriageway.

Therefore, considering the above concerns, the suggested approach would be to complete a feasibility study, to look at the most appropriate solution to resolve accessibility issues for visitors of the Orchard.

The Third Party Works Team have a meeting scheduled for Monday 11th September to look at this with a Design Engineer, to confirm the suggested approach and associated costs. Once they have an agreed approach, they can then provide myself and the parish with the scope and relevant costings.

- **LHP Scheme LCHE212007** Village gateway Improvements – planned for 23/24 – redesign and implementation. I have an LHP meeting 14th Sept and may have more info on progress after that.
- **Chignal Road and Woodhall Hill** have been resurfaced. I did receive a complaint about the increase in height causing rainwater to flow into a garden. I have raised this with Highways and the Cabinet Member, and they have agreed to rectify problem with raised kerbs. The resident has been informed and arrangements are being made to implement.

- **Volunteering:**

One of the very impressive things about my rural division is the extent to which people volunteer to support their community. On 3rd July, ECC launched their brand new 'summer of volunteering' campaign across Essex. It runs from July until the end of September and is aimed at encouraging residents across the County to volunteer this summer and help to reverse the decline in volunteering that we have seen, post pandemic. It is also a chance to highlight and celebrate some of the fantastic work that takes place across Essex. Please encourage residents to start volunteering. If anyone is looking for a new volunteering opportunity there are many varied volunteering opportunities now on offer at Essex County Council, which you can sign up to via our volunteering webpage: <https://www.essex.gov.uk/jobs-and-apprenticeships/volunteering>
If you know a local volunteer group, which you feel deserves recognition, you can nominate the group for a Kings Award for Voluntary Service. The award is given to volunteer groups across the country to recognise the incredible work they do. Nominations can be made at: <https://kavs.dcms.gov.uk/make-a-nomination/about-nominating/>

- **Recycling centre vehicle bookings - user survey.**

Essex County Council is trialling a booking process for its network of 21 Recycling Centres. In Autumn 2022 we carried out a user survey which helped to inform the design of the pilot expansion and extension earlier this year. In order to inform our review of the trial, we are currently inviting users to provide us with their feedback on the booking process and their experience on-site. Booking service users will be provided with a link to an optional short survey displayed in the booking confirmation email and on the booking confirmation screen. We will also send a direct email invitation to those residents who have given consent to be contacted. We recognise that this optional survey activity will not capture users who have not yet used the booking service or who use the telephone booking service. However, it is important to note that this survey does not replace public consultation – if it is proposed to retain a booking process in the long term, the council are committed to carrying out a public consultation that will be open to all residents and organisations to respond to.

- **Bus Services**

Essex County Council (ECC) is reviewing its support for 162 local bus services. We want your help to ensure that our future bus network is ready to meet new levels of passenger demand and is providing value for money. ECC is therefore conducting this public consultation regarding these local bus services. This consultation will commence on 13 July 2023 and close on 5 October 2023. The survey pertains to bus services which are paid for by Essex taxpayers. It does not cover services/journeys operated commercially by transport providers. This review covers all 12 districts in Essex with the view of assessing whether to continue providing the service and in what capacity; or whether to look for alternative solutions. To access the consultation please follow this link: <https://consultations.essex.gov.uk/iptu/2023>

I dropped off some paper surveys at the coffee morning 6th Sept.

- **Chelmsford Northeast Bypass**

The full CNEB scheme comprises a new 4.6km single carriageway (Sections 1A and 1B) and dualling of a 1.2km stretch of the A131 (Section 2). The single carriageway section is split into a southern section (Section 1A) and a northern section (Section 1B). These two sections will meet at an intermediate roundabout which will connect the bypass with a proposed new Northern Radial Distributor Road (NRDR). The NRDR will be a new east-west road which will be delivered by the developer consortium as part of the Chelmsford Garden Community and will link Essex Regiment Way in the west with CNEB to the east.

Due to cost increases ECC is renegotiating with Homes England and has received indicative confirmation that its proposals have been accepted. ECC will now be required to deliver Section 1A of CNEB by March 2026 under the proposed amended HIF GDA. Section 1A will see the first part of the bypass completed by March 2026, alongside the opening of BPS in 2025; together these schemes will directly unlock 6,000 homes. The remainder of CNEB is expected to then be completed with the benefit of future developer contributions of which a significant amount has already been secured in principle.

This revised approach to delivering CNEB will potentially impact on the planning of allocated housing sites including the Chelmsford Garden Community. While under this approach ECC will not be required to deliver the later stages of the bypass, completion of the full bypass is recognised by ECC and Chelmsford City Council as the key infrastructure project to support continued sustainable growth north of Chelmsford. ECC will continue to work actively with Chelmsford City Council, Braintree District Council, and developers to determine how and when the full scheme can be delivered as soon as practicable as well as reducing impacts on allocated housing sites.

Note that following concerted engagement by ECC Homes England have provided subject to contract confirmation that the CNEB scheme can be delivered in phases commencing with construction of Section 1A and that the timetable for delivering Section 1A is extended until 2026. Construction of the remainder will take place in the future if and when alternative funding has been secured.

- **National Grid – Pylons**

The 2nd National Grid non-statutory consultation has completed. Essex County Council has responded, and I understand that Chelmsford City Council will respond following its Policy Board (having secured an extension).

I am also part of the Northwest and Southwest Parishes Group who are coordinating the responses of member Parish Councils. I am also in discussion with our MP, Kemi Badenoch. We are aware that the Electricity Systems Operator (ESO) announced that it would launch a 'Study' to assess objectively the options for Norwich to Tilbury and other proposed network reinforcements across East Anglia. I understand the Study will consider the costs and deliverability of the different options. This will include the offshore option. However, the recent NG non-statutory consultation does not take this into account. National Grid have stated that if the recommendations from the ESO Study should indicate alternative infrastructure options, they will review and engage with the impacted communities appropriately.

After this consultation and following the completion of the ESO Study there will be a further stage of consultation next year, where National Grid aim to show finalised proposals.

On the 31st of August I took our MP, Kemi Badenoch on a tour of my division, including some of the areas most affected by the pylon route.

- **Schools impacted by Reinforced Autoclaved Aerated Concrete (RAAC)**

Essex have around 550 schools. 54 schools are currently identified as having known RAAC within Essex, requiring immediate action as a result of the change in Department of Education policy made on 31 August 2023. Up until that date, for schools for whom ECC is the responsible body, we had been working with the DfE to manage RAAC in these schools.

Of the 54 schools on the RAAC list, 15 are local authority-maintained schools (ECC). 14 of these schools are able to open next week due to mitigation measures having been put in place.

Unfortunately, one ECC maintained school will need to close temporarily due to the severity of the RAAC across the school building. (Hatfield Peverel St Andrew's Junior School). Parents have been communicated to around arrangements for the start of the school term.

I have 2 schools in my Broomfield and Writtle division, with RAAC. Great Leighs Primary School (which has been deemed safe to open) and Broomfield Primary School (who have relocated 2 classes and 2 offices). Broomfield had carried out remedial strengthening work 2 years ago, with additional steels installed and strengthening work. Nevertheless, the current instruction is to relocate from any areas affected by RAAC pending further inspections. Central Govt funding is being provided for demountable classrooms.

The remaining 39 schools are Academies, for which the Academy Trust is the responsible body. We have been working closely with Academy Trusts and the DfE to understand the impact and provide support where necessary.

ii. Chelmsford City Councillor Report - Cllr Nicolette Chambers.

- **Hylands Park** – Public space protection Orders. 200 responses majority in favour. Specific areas where dogs are allowed off their leads to be considered to restrict any issues. Residents need a duty of care rather than the dogs.
- **Food plan.** Under discussion but its not normally a City Council issues.
- **Environmental and fixed crime notices being discussed.** Enforcement is an issue.
- A variety of shops, libraries, post office have closed. This means low footfall in the Highstreet and reduced income in the car parks. Concerns on the sustainability of the Council with a reduced income.
- **2024 Election** – Boundary changes expected. Uttlesford most likely to make changes and Chelmsford likely. 70,000 residents per ward councillor.
- **Devolution discussion.** Chelmsford could have an elected Mayor or continue with an elected leader.
- **Overgrown verges.** Lots of complaints. Current administration to support the continued overgrown verges. Danbury has specific issues, and this has been highlighted.

Planning

2023/619 Planning Decisions:

<u>Reference</u>	<u>Address</u>	<u>Status</u>
18/00001/MAS	Land North of Warren House Roxwell Road Writtle Chelmsford Essex	Pending Decision
21/01545/OUT	Land North of Warren House Roxwell Road Writtle Chelmsford Essex	Pending Consideration
23/01092/FUL	The Three Elms Mashbury Road Chignal St James Chelmsford Essex CM1 4TZ	Pending Consideration
23/00981/FUL	Hillcroft Chignal Road Chignal Smealy Chelmsford Essex CM1 4SU	Application Permitted
23/00567/FUL	The Willows Mashbury Road Chignal St James Chelmsford Essex CM1 4TX	Application Permitted
23/00972/FUL	Woodhall Farm Chignal Road Chignal Smealy Chelmsford Essex CM1 4SU	Pending Consideration
23/00930/FUL	2 Ivy Cottages Mashbury Road Chignal St James Chelmsford Essex CM1 4TP	Application Permitted

2023/620 Planning Updates:

- National Grid's 'Norwich to Tilbury' consultation
Report on responses submitted by Chignal Parish Council and the NW & SW Chelmsford Parishes Group. Consultation is felt to be premature. The Study by the ESO on undersea grid must be allowed to complete. An option proposed by the group was to reinforce the existing infrastructure rather than creating new lines in our parish.

2023/621 Planning Applications:

- Reference: **23/01092/FUL.**
The Three Elms Mashbury Road Chignal St James Chelmsford Essex CM1 4TZ. Demolition of contemporary rear sections of former public house and detached stores. Construction of an extension for office use. Change of use of the first floor to a one-bedroom flat. Alteration of rear section of existing roof from hip to gable.

23/01092/FUL. The Three Elms Mashbury Road Chignal St James Chelmsford Essex CM1 4TZ. Demolition of contemporary rear sections of former public house and detached stores. Construction of an extension for office use. Change of use of the first floor to a one-bedroom flat. Alteration of rear section of existing roof from hip to gable.

The **Chignal Villages Design Statement**, (VDS) advises on change of use, (page 20): "the conversion of redundant buildings to either residential or low key commercial use is preferable to them lapsing into decay" and regarding empty buildings, "if there were any proposals for redevelopment to a more intense form it should only be permitted where it does not have an adverse impact on the character of the area".

The Three Elms is registered as a "building of local value". As such, any physical change to the building along with its setting should ensure that its special character and features are protected, (VDS, page 8).

The elevation / view from the Three Elms car park is a good design with some interesting features included, i.e., high level glazing and an oak porch entrance with a traditional black boarding to the exterior. The removal of the various modern additions is also welcomed.

However, there are a number of concerns about other aspects of this proposed development.

The application contains no information or justification for the proposed large extension for office use and it does not specify how many people will be expected to occupy the new offices.

The new extension is overly dominant compared with the existing footprint of the historic former pub. We note that the larger office at approximately 15m x 6 m which is similar in size to the meeting space of the Chignals & Mashbury Village Hall.

In the absence of information on the proposed users of the office space and the number of occupants, there is some doubt whether as to there would be adequate on-site parking. Only 11 bays + 2 disabled spaces shown on plans.

It should be made clear in any planning conditions that there should be no parking during construction or by office users or visitors on Mashbury Road or on the grass verges outside the Three Elms. Parishioners have experienced obstruction and road safety issues for several years caused by HGVs and staff cars parking on Mashbury Road and verges outside the Gardening Express premises, which are near the Three Elms.

Recommendation: APPROVAL with conditions:

1. The size of the extension should be reduced to make it less dominant in relation to the former pub building.
2. There should be sufficient parking spaces on-site to cater for the expected number of office users and visitors and restrictions placed on parking on Mashbury Road during construction and after completion and occupation.

Finance

2023/622 Review the Accounts for 2023/2024.

Budget Heading	Staff Cost							All Other Payments							Other Payments		
	salary	Expenses	training	Community ink and paper	Emergency Planning	IT & Web	insurance	EALC RCCE	Auditors Internal	Play field Maintenance	Bank charges	Hall hire	Publications	Total Expenses	Orchard	CILs	Reserve
	£5,000	£100	£300	£300	£300	£1,250	£260	£200	£200	£700	£30	£500	£200	£9,340	£1,775.34	£20,340.08	£21,516.48
Spent	£1,333.23	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£467.05	£202.35	£125.00	£384.00	£8.00	£180.00	£0.00	£2,699.63	£200.00	£4,268.49	£236.05
Forecast	£2,666.46	£30.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00	£200.00	£16.00	£360.00	£0.00	£2,666.46	£30.00	£0.00	0
Balance	£1,000.31	£70.00	£300.00	£300.00	£300.00	£1,250.00	-£207.05	-£2.35	£75.00	£116.00	£6.00	-£40.00	£200.00	£3,973.91	£1,575.34	£20,731.59	£21,280.43
Underspend - Budget	£3,973.91																
Underspend / precept	£2,733.91																

2023/623 Finance:

Account Balances:

Cheque Account £ **11,278.96**

Orchard Account £ **1,575.34** (Included in cheque account)

Resolution: The Village Hall has been booked. Residents to be asked for ideas for community projects to discuss at the meeting.

2023/628 Representatives' Reports: to discuss and debate any items.

- Litter Hollows / Copperfield Liaison - Cllr Elwick
Concerns with the Copperfield element of the Chignal Parish. A large snagging list is a concern. A lot of the issues are around dead trees and dead hedging. The planting scheme should be maintained for 5 years.

Resolution: Cllr Elwick to draft a report of issues for Chelmsford City Council planning.

- Playing Field - Cllr Elwick and Cllr Towns.
Oak Gazebo was damaged. It's been repaired.
- Village Hall Liaison - Cllr Towns
Nothing to report.
- Community Engagement - Cllr Nelson
 - Community laptop – setup but no software so need to purchase appropriate software.
 - Laptop is configured and ready to be used but it needs a license on Word to be most useful.

Resolution: Cllr Nelson to investigate the software for the laptop.

- Community printer not yet installed – needs setup.
Resolution: Cllr Nelson to investigate a cabinet for the unit.
- Update on parish website launch and publication of the next edition of Chignal News.
Go live planned for November. Clubs can get their own pages up to date. Clubs can use the provided e-mails or can have the e-mails forwarded.
No plans for an edition of the Chignal News.
- Community Safety – Cllr Lewis
 - update on options for siting and managing a Defibrillator in Chignal Smealey.
 - i. Chignal Cricket club purchased a new defibrillator. They have asked the Parish Council to assist with a site and they need a cabinet for the unit to keep the unit at temperature.
 1. Suggestion of a post near the cricket club gate – but needs power.
 2. Phone box – need 4 bars of mobile phone signal. (Currently only 2). The owner of the land could decide to adopt the phone box.
 3. St Nicholas Church porch. Issues around funding of church and parish revenue.
 4. A private house that borders the road is a potential route.
- Highways (include Hedges) - Cllr Towns
 - Update on LHP funding for village entry gates and validation for steps to the community orchard.
 - i. Covered under Mike Steel's report.
 - Update on ECC Member-led pothole repair scheme.
 - i. Covered under Mike Steel's report.
 - Update on Road Safety issues: parking outside Gardening Express; run-off from pond at Hardoak.
 - i. Gardening Express owner has had residents' concerns raised via a letter from the Chair - covering parking, litter, lorries turning, lorries parked and general difficulty of cars moving past the site.

ii. Hardoak Pond run off. The owner has used a contractor to investigate and create an underground network of pipes and pumps to move the water so that it does not run across the road.

- Footpaths/Bridleways – Cllr Nelson and Cllr Towns
Nothing to report.
- Tree Warden - Cllr Ballard
Chelmsford City Council are looking to revive the Tree Warden network in Chelmsford. The Tree Council are asking Tree Wardens to respond to a DEFRA consultation on hedgerows.
- Countryside Conservation.
On the new website there is a section called Nature Notes. This will cover the input from the trail cameras and other sightings.

2023/629 Cll Application

- Mower for croquet courts: repairs under warranty requested.
 - It's under review by Ernest Doe. Mower was collected on Friday and taken away for repair.

2023/630 Items for the next Agenda

- Defibrillator
- Community Meeting
- Precept

Next meetings:

Monday 13 th	November 2023	Monthly Meeting
Monday 8 th	January 2024	Monthly Meeting
Monday 11 th	March 2024	Monthly Meeting
Monday 11 th	March 2024	Annual Parish Meeting
Monday 13 th	May 2024	Monthly Meeting

Meeting closed 21:04
Will Adshead-Grant
Clerk to the Council.