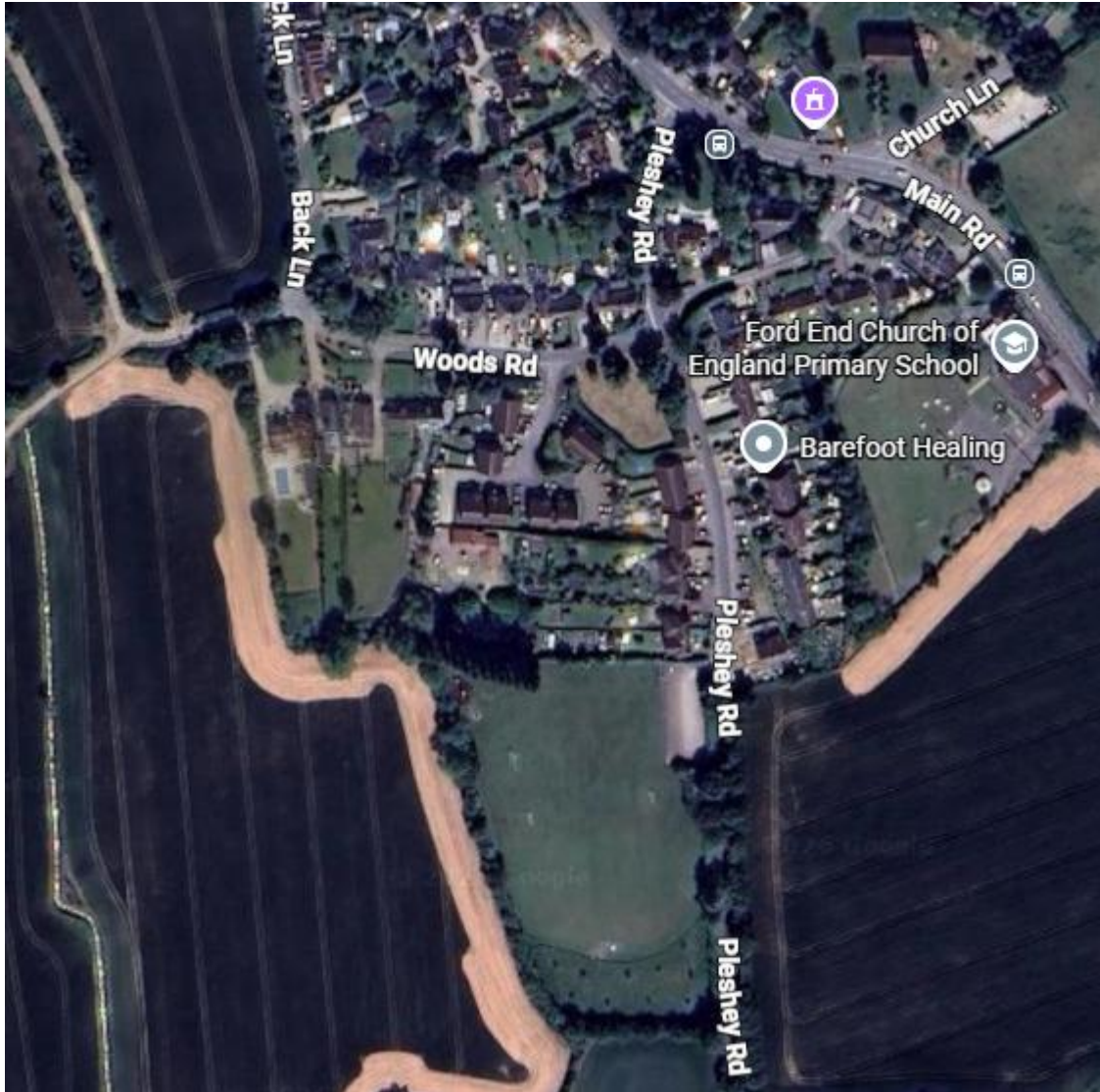


## Chelmsford City Council Parks & Green Spaces

### Ford End Recreation Ground Renaturing Project

Ford End Recreation Ground is located off Pleshey Road and is owned and managed by Great Waltham Parish Council. It has a number of facilities such as picnic tables, an informal path, car parking, a play area and football pitch.



In 2020/21, the Parish Council decided to take part in Chelmsford City Council's greening programme, which arose from the Council's climate declaration ([Creating a Greener Chelmsford - Love Your Chelmsford](#)), and to use part of the space to create a new woodland area. The project is not just about planting trees and increasing canopy cover; it is also about creating new habitats. The area links to an existing field boundary hedge, providing valuable connectivity and acting as a corridor for wildlife ([Greening Chelmsford - Love Your Chelmsford](#)).

## Planting

The area was fenced and planted with around 200 whips, supplied and funded by the City Council, along with several standard trees supplied by Chelmsford City Council but funded by the Parish Council. The whips were all native species and included hawthorn, field maple, Scots pine, guelder rose, dog rose and oak. Planting was carried out through the Parks volunteer programme. The standard trees were planted by a groundsman from Chelmsford City Council and watered for the first two years.

Tree aftercare sessions were carried out with Parks volunteers the following summer to support the establishment of the young two-year-old whips. It was noted at this time that there was a high percentage survival rate and the area was establishing well. Animal tracks were also visible through the area, leading to the field beyond, which was good to see.

As part of the project in 2021, the local primary school helped plant a wildflower edge outside the fenced area as part of Chelmsford City Council's schools outreach programme. Seven species were planted, including vetch, ox-eye daisy, hedge bedstraw and primrose. This added further wildlife value to the tree planting.



The Parish Council have since added to the field and installed a new accessible path and picnic table/seating.

Since that time, Chelmsford City Council Parks officers have inspected the site and noted that the planting is thriving and becoming well established. In autumn 2025, additional wildflower plug planting was carried out by Chelmsford City Council Parks as part of the schools' outreach programme.

Survey images 2026





## Development

This autumn, as part of the schools' outreach programme, Chelmsford City Council would like to install a mini beast hotel within the woodland belt, so that it can be seen from the field, with appropriate signage. Crocus planting is also proposed for October/November near the seat to support early pollinators. We would also like to add a sign to the space, which will include the Parish logo.



The area is establishing well and requires very little maintenance, other than occasional checks. At some point in the future, possibly in around 10 years, the fence may fall into disrepair and will need to be removed by the Parish Council.