

NEWS FROM YOUR CHELMSFORD CITY COUNCILLORS



Welcome to our Autumn 2026 village update. We want to keep Margaretting residents informed about local issues, from village maintenance and community projects to planning, the Green Belt and major infrastructure proposals.
Here are the latest developments and what they could mean for the village.

Councillor
Roy Whitehead

Councillor
Gillian Bonnett

LOCAL NEWS & UPDATES

Waste and Recycling Collection Updates

The Council is reviewing collection routes as Chelmsford grows. **Printed recycling calendars will not be issued this autumn.**
Changes are expected in early 2027, with around 10% of households potentially receiving a different collection day. Collection frequency and the materials collected will remain unchanged.
Check your current collection day at:
chelmsford.gov.uk/bins-and-recycling/check-your-kerbside-collection-day

Proposed New Cemetery and Crematorium

Chelmsford City Council is considering a proposal for a new cemetery and crematorium on land off Stock Road, West Hanningfield, near the A12 junction (CM2 8LF).
The existing Writtle Road cemetery is expected to run out of space by 2028/29. The proposed facility would provide around 120 years of burial space, with an energy-efficient design, landscaped grounds and new tree planting.
A formal planning application is yet to be submitted. Residents will then have an opportunity to comment.

Norwich to Tilbury Pylons

The Planning Inspectorate's recommendation on National Grid's proposed Norwich to Tilbury pylon project, which would affect Margaretting and the surrounding area, is due by 10th November 2026.
The Secretary of State will then decide if the project can proceed, with a final decision expected by early 2027.

St Margaret's Churchyard — A Community Effort

Residents came together to tackle the overgrown churchyard at St Margaret's Church.
Following a suggestion from the Parish Council, Cllr Bonnett put the church in touch with Chelmsford's Community Payback Team. The team has since helped with ongoing maintenance, clearing vegetation and keeping paths tidy.
Thank you to all the residents and the Community Payback Team for their valuable efforts in caring for this much-loved village landmark.

Improvements at the Recreation Ground

Cllr Bonnett has been working with Delta Housing and the Parish Council to improve the entrance to the recreation ground. As residents may have noticed, the conifer trees have now been cut back, helping to tidy up the area. Work is also underway to arrange the replacement of the dilapidated fence.
In addition, Cllr Bonnett is working with Chelmsford City Council and the Parish Council to extend the lease, helping to secure this valuable community space for residents to enjoy for many years to come.

Article 4 Direction Confirmed for Land Behind Highfields

In September 2026, Chelmsford City Council confirmed the Article 4 Direction covering land behind Highfields, Writtle Road, Margaretting, following public consultation. Objections were received from the landowner's selling agent.
The Direction removes certain permitted development rights, meaning planning permission will be required for specified activities, including changes to land use, fencing and access.
Confirmation means the Direction will remain in place beyond its initial six-month period. It provides greater planning control over the land, although it does not prevent development where the necessary planning permission is granted.

PLANNING & PROTECTING MARGARETTING VILLAGE

Green Belt Development: Understanding the Changing Planning Rules

Chelmsford's Housing Position and the Local Plan

Chelmsford currently cannot demonstrate the Government's required five-year supply of housing land. As a result, this can give greater weight to national planning policy when planning applications are decided, creating opportunities for developers to propose schemes on sites not allocated in the existing Local Plan.

Chelmsford City Council has submitted its new Local Plan, which sets out a strategic framework for future development. An independent Planning Inspector is due to begin examining it on 10th November 2026, with a decision expected in spring 2027.

What Is "Grey Belt"?

The Government introduced the concept of 'Grey Belt' into national planning policy in December 2024. This provides a route for some land within the existing Green Belt to be considered for development.

Applications must still ensure that the relevant planning requirements are satisfied, including those concerning housing need, sustainable locations, infrastructure, connectivity and the impact on the wider Green Belt.

What Does This Mean for Margaretting?

Developers are increasingly looking at sites that were previously considered during the Local Plan process but not identified as suitable for development as they were in the Green Belt. There are a number in Margaretting and other local villages and your Councillors will ensure that the City Council Planners look beyond the grey belt label and consider the details of each application. Relevant issues can include:

- Traffic, access and highway safety.
- Flooding and drainage.
- Local services, infrastructure and connectivity.
- Landscape, ecology and the wider Green Belt.
- The heritage and character of the village.

An Important Change to Planning Decisions

From 31st October 2026, a new national scheme of delegation for planning applications came into effect. Most applications will now be decided by planning officers rather than the Planning Committee, unless they meet specific criteria for committee consideration. A ward councillor's request or a high number of objections will no longer automatically secure committee consideration.

PLEASE NOTE

The City Council's Planning Portal is operating **very slowly** and is due to be replaced. Please be patient when using it as residents and Parish Councils can still comment and raise relevant concerns. It will be particularly important to submit clear, planning-related comments when applications are open for consultation.

Keeping Margaretting Informed

We will continue to raise residents' concerns and keep you updated on issues affecting the village.

Contact Your Chelmsford City Councillors

Have a local concern or question? We would be pleased to hear from you.

Cllr Roy Whitehead
roy.whitehead@chelmsford.gov.uk

Cllr Gillian Bonnett
gillian.bonnett@chelmsford.gov.uk