

**GOLDHANGER PARISH COUNCIL
CHAIRS REPORT**

April 2023

1. Council Composition

There has been no change to the Council composition.

Julia Bourn – Chair
Hugh Reynolds – Vice Chair
Michael Sargeant
Clive Cheeseman – Allotments officer
Stephen Ellis
Sarah Jane Holmes
Michael Bishop
Clerk - Julie Webster

Council meetings continue to be held on the second Wednesday of the month.

2. Introduction

Despite being designated a very small Parish, with volunteer Councillors, and a very small precept (income), we have over the last year added to our facilities; including the seat and picnic bench in Marigold wood, together with a community orchard and maintained our assets with a project that has much improved the footpath path in the playing field.

I do however note that while compiling this report all the areas of concern in the village that are managed by the larger authorities and organisations; Essex County Council, Highways Essex and Maldon District Council have typically not been actioned, and in many cases even responded to despite many chase ups!

I would also like to remind all residents that local elections take place this year in May and that photo ID or a voter ID document is now needed when voting.

3. Planning

There have been various applications for the council to consider and report their view to Maldon District Council, who make the decisions.
(applications up to March meeting included)

New housing applications –.

- Land adjacent to 6 Church street, erection of a new dwelling – Objected, Refused

- 38 Maldon Road, demolish bungalow and erection of a new dwelling – Support with comments, Approved
- Fish Street, old allotments, (revised application May 2022) proposal for 3 new 4 bed houses – Objected and Refused now subject to appeal, decision pending
- 1 Head Street, Demolition and erection of new dwelling – Supported with comments, Pending
- Steel Barn, Gardeners Farm, conversion of redundant structures into 5 dwelling houses – Objected, Approved

Extensions and Minor Works comprised:

- Old pump house, 6 Head street, demolish garage. – Support, Approved
- Tilly Hill, First floor rear extension – Supported, Refused
- Tilly Hill, First floor rear extension (2nd application) – Supported, Refused
- 13 Maldon Road, single storey side and rear extension – Support (with Comments), Approved
- Inglenook, triple bay cartlodge to Front – Objected, Refused
- Inglenook, triple bay cartlodge to Front (2nd application) – Objected, Refused
- Norsey House, rear extension and remove rear garage – Supported, Refused
- Norsey House, rear extension and retain garage (2nd application) – Supported, Approved
- Land adjacent to Falcon Hall, change of use of outbuildings from agricultural to dwelling – Supported, with comments, Refused
- Land adjacent to Falcon Hall, change of use of outbuildings from agricultural to dwelling, as annex to Falcon Hall – Supported (with comments), decision Pending
- 30 Fish street, First floor extension and other alterations – Supported (with comments), refused
- 54 Maldon Road, Extension – Support, Pending

Miscellaneous consisted of:

- *(from 2021) Benham Close, Vary condition 11 (Footpath link to Maldon Road) on approved planning permission FUL/MAL/13/00839 – Objected & refused – not yet enforced.*
- 2 tree work applications, - allowed to proceed.
- North Maldon Growers, erection of steel framed farm building – No objection (with comments), Approved
- Old pump house, 6 Head street, variations to conditions – Supported, Pending

- 11 Maldon road, Claim for Lawful development, proposed garage – Supported, Approved
- 1A Head Street, Change of use (dwelling to B&B) – Supported, with comments, refused

4. Highways

While the current SID (speed indicating device) continues to limp along with much effort from Councillors who take the time to charge the batteries to keep SID working, a further funding application has been made for a new device which we should hear about soon.

Parking within the village

Parking around the village is becoming more problematic year on year as the numbers of residents vehicles increases and also the numbers of visitors increases.

Parking patrols were booked for various locations in the village during busy periods and additional advice from the Essex Association for Local Councils (EALC) was to suggest residents write polite notes and leave on cars parked illegally, or inconsiderately.

(from 2022 report) Bus cage markings were applied for during 2021/2 at the bus halt on Head street (near the junction with Maldon Road) to improve sight lines on the corner and to benefit residents, this has not yet been implemented by highways.

Parking on the verge in front of the Moat development on Maldon road causes problems with sight lines pulling in and out of the development, Moat were asked to review what can be done to improve the situation during 2021/2 but have not replied to any Parish Council correspondence.

Parking at the bottom of Fish street is problematic when cars (typically visitors) block the access to the park gate (needed for grass cutting vehicles and emergency access to the seawall) and also park on double yellow lines, which can cause obstructions for larger traffic accessing the farm.

The Parish Council appeals to all residents and visitors to park legally and considerately.

Accidents

Again this year we have seen a number of accidents in our Parish, on the road between Wash Bridge and our boundary on the D'arcy side and indeed yet another occurrence of Wash bridge being demolished. The Parish Council have followed up correspondence sent some years ago suggesting an alternative to brick or other measures to slow the approaching traffic, as yet no reply.

We remain keen to keep track of accidents, as this data is not held by any other parties. Collecting this data will give us an evidence base which we can call upon, should we request any safety improvement works in the future.

So please email myself or other Councillors details of any accidents you may see, you do not need to have witnessed the initial incident.

Bus stops

The Bus stop in the square was damaged by a bus but the bus company have not been forthcoming with any reimbursement of repair costs.

5. Playing Field, Woodland and Leisure

New gates have been fitted to the playing field following an incident with the grass cutting equipment.

Park and playground

The Path along the side of the playing field was resurfaced last Autumn and has been very successful during the winter, as the surface has good drainage and has not got muddy. The roundabout has also been overhauled.

Marigold Wood.

Marigold Wood has a new new park bench and picnic table and this year will see a small "community orchard" planted in commemoration of King Charles' coronation.

Allotments

Councillor Clive Cheeseman has continued to administer the allotments and if you are interested in having a plot, please contact him.

6. Neighbourhood Watch

Malcolm Holmes with his team has continued to keep us all informed of the latest issues and circulated relevant Police crimes reports for the Maldon District. (although its been thankfully quite in recent months)

Please see the Parish Magazine for further details and contact Malcolm (goldhangernw@outlook.com) if you wish to receive emails.

Goldhanger Matters has been superseded by the success of the facebook "Goldhanger Support Group" and together with the Goldhanger Neighbourhood Watch emails is a way of keeping in touch with anything local.

7. Precept

The Parish Precept is a tax on each property to fund the activities the Parish Council undertakes for the benefit of the community and forms a very minor part of your total Council Tax charges. The Council Members work hard to keep this as low as possible by undertaking many tasks themselves.

Circa £9095 pa is required to meet our recurring expenditure for our legal obligations associated with Parish assets. To allow for other projects considered desirable for the Parish the 23/24 precept was set at £10,500 , In view of our low turnover it is considered prudent to maintain one year's expenditure in reserve for the unexpected.

8. Defibrillators

The village defibrillators continue to be monitored and maintained by volunteer councillors.

9. Maldon Road, Moat Development flooding

I include the same paragraphs as the last 3 years report, correspondence with Highways and Essex County Councillors has been futile.

(2020)Maldon Road drain flooding/overflowing, during sustained rain or flash downpours, has been an issue for a number of years.

some work was carried out on the drains in the verge in front of the moat development during 2021, but the Parish Council believe a blockage exists further downstream in the ditch system, so the situation will continue to be monitored and progressed where necessary.

(2021)In the last few weeks after a year of accelerating our issues upward and finally to our local MP we have had some investigative works started by highways on various problem flood spots throughout the village.

The investigative works were interrupted by more urgent issues and to date have not been completed!

Fish street flooding

Despite further recent correspondence with Highways and Essex County Councillors there has been no progress by those responsible. And I enclose last years paragraph.

(2022)The surface water drains in Fish street have also been problematic for a long time and are included in the unfinished investigative works described above. In addition, the Parish Council have proactively investigated some of the drain routing and causes of the issues during 2021 and are chasing the relevant bodies for a resolution.

10. Website

Thanks goes out to our host Christopher Smith for maintaining our website.

11. Speedwatch

There were Insufficient volunteers to re-apply to create a speedwatch group.

12. Village Hall

The Parish Council have continued to support the village hall.

13. Jubilee & Death of HM the Queen

The Village celebrated the Queens Platinum Jubilee with a programme of events including: Sailing gala and hog roast, flower festival, open gardens, Festival with live music at the village hall, classic cars and a big jubilee lunch. This was Sadly followed later in the year by Her Majesty's death. This was marked in the village by a condolence book and the reading of the proclamation announcing King Charles III.

14. Coronation of King Charles III

The Village looks forward to the festivities in May celebrating the coronation and have planted a small community orchard in Marigold Wood.

I would like to thank Julie, our Clerk, for her service supporting and guiding us, and all Councillors for their dedicated work which enables us to continue to minimise the precept.

J Bourn
Chair - Goldhanger Parish Council