

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: Chignal-pc@gov.uk

Vice Chair: Linda Nelson

Minutes of the Bi-Monthly Meeting of the Chignal Parish Council held on Monday 14th July 2025 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall.

Governance

2025/880 Chair's Welcome.

Chair: Ballard

Cllr: Stainton, Lewis, Towns, Nelson, and Polley.

2025/881 Apologies for Absence.

Cllr Elwick.

2025/882 Confirmation of the minutes of the meeting of the Parish Council held on 12th May 2025.

Resolution: The minutes were confirmed.

2025/883 Note the minutes of the Orchard Committee held on 8th July 2025.

Resolution: The minutes were noted.

2025/884 Confirmation of the minutes of the extra ordinary meeting held on the 30th of June 2025.

Resolution: The minutes were confirmed.

2025/885 Declarations of Interests and any requests for dispensation.

Cllr Polley – Nonpecuniary interest - resident of Kilnfield barns.

2025/886 Public Open Session for any matters that need to be drawn to the Parish Council's attention.

6 Members of the public.

Discussion on a pétanque court. Suggested cost of £1000 to have it installed by volunteers. Potential to have a taster session before any discussion or specification setting.

2025/887 County and City Councillors' Reports.

1. Essex County Councillor Report – Cllr Mike Steel.

VAS and SIDs on streetlight columns

This is something that I have been pushing for, for some time, and at last it has gone live.

If a Parish Council wants to put up their own Speed Indicator Device (SID), in the past they had to request the LHP put up a pole (or poles)

I can now report that ECC Highways are offering the possibility of street light columns to be used to place a VAS or SID on. PCs can apply via <https://www.essexhighways.org/applications/apply-to-install-a-vas-or-sid-illuminated-sign>

ECC will charge the PCs to assess a number of streetlights - the benefit of this is that the PC can then move the SID around. The perceived wisdom is that SIDs have an impact for a couple of weeks and so should be rotated regularly.

Highways

I have emailed Persimmons asking if they could put up "no through road" signs at the entrance to the development "as delivery vehicles are having to reverse.

I also asked them about the possibility of a notice board on their bit of land.

I copied in Highways – if you want to use highways owned verges – you will need a ‘licence to plant’

<https://www.essexhighways.org/highway-licences>

I have not had a response from either of them!

I have added the damaged 40mph sign at Chignal Smealey, to my MHI. Whoever hit this, has turned it completely around.

LGR and Devolution

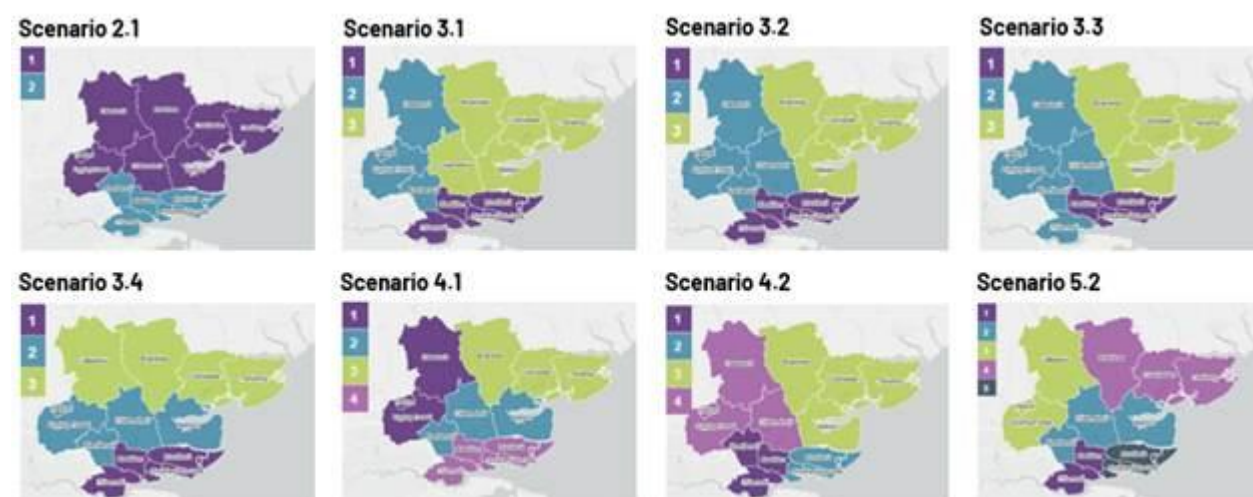
The joint Essex County, 2 Unitaries, and 12 DCs have produced an options paper with eight separate scenarios. The Chief Execs of each council will now review these and select a preferred option (although there is no absolute requirement that there be only one submission). The intention is to submit this by September 2025.

The eight options range from 2 to 5 Unitaries, with more than one option for the 3 and 4 Unitaries options.

Each option has been assessed against six criteria (score three max for each, total max score 18):

- Sensible Geography
- Efficiency and Resilience
- High quality public services
- Local identity
- Supporting devolution
- Community empowerment

The different options are shown below:



Based on the joint analysis, Scenario 3.2 scored highest, however this is still at a draft stage.

I know that Chelmsford City Council favour the 5-scenario option. However, both the 4 and 5 unitary options show an increased operational cost rather than a reduction like all the others. The economic case for 4 or 5 Unitaries does not look viable. Also, there is a concern that the 5 Unitary scenarios, fragments the Adult Social Care Services so much, that it puts it at risk.

It is likely that ECC will favour a 3 Unitary scenario,

I note that the press (Essex Chronicle) is saying that the public have the chance to have their say and steer towards a Southend Council website claiming to act on behalf of all the Essex area. As far as I can see (and I could be wrong) there is no official public or Parish Council consultation, but individual District Councils may be doing this to get support for their preference.

It is likely that the joint September submission includes a 3 Unitary, and a 5 Unitary option, and leaves the Govt to decide which one. Given that the Treasury is making the decision, it is likely that the case with the best saving is chosen. This will be a Central Govt decision!

Pylons

The next phase will be the DCO – which was forecast as summer 2025, but I suspect will be at the back end of the year. On that basis, I have been undertaking the following:

- Our NW Parish Group have employed a landscape consultant to draft a response – when the DCO comes out. They also recently put in a proposal to NG for alternative route around the other side of Chelmsford.
- I have been working with Rosie's group in order to understand their DCO objection – which in the main will be based on the Gunning Principles on consultation. They also have a few alternatives, which still includes the sea route (although unlikely to fly) and alternative route boosting to allow a lower power (and narrower trench) HVDC underground cabling for Norwich to Tilbury.
- I also have an invite to meet the "Offset" MPs – but struggling with dates.
- Working with ECC on opposing on the basis that the consultations were inadequate in terms of impacts on the highway.

Most of this is really at the higher level rather than the detailed route.

Some of my residents are telling me that they are receiving communication on "affected landowner" – I do not have any official communication on this – but I am considering arranging an email common interest group – although this is well outside my ECC and CCC responsibilities.

2. Chelmsford City Councillor Report - Cllr Nicolette Chambers.

Confirmed that nothing to report to the Parish Council from her ward.

2025/888 Planning.

National Grid Electricity Transmission (NG-ET), Norwich to Tilbury: update on the Landscape Study by Alison Farmer for the group of parishes to the west of Chelmsford. www.nationalgrid.com/norwich-to-tilbury

This study concludes that a Close Parallel Route, for a new high voltage overhead transmission line to the east of Chelmsford, would give rise to less harmful effects than the currently National Grid Preferred Route for pylons to the west of Chelmsford. These conclusions will form part of the evidence base that the group of parishes could use in its representations on the N2T planning application, (Development Consent Order) expected late summer.

2025/889 Planning Applications.

1 Planning Application Reference: 25/00804/FUL

Address: Woodside, Chignal Road, Chignal Smealy, Chelmsford

Description of works: Replacement of infill extension and alterations to the existing garage including the addition of a Juliet balcony.

Click to View - <https://publicaccess.chelmsford.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SWPCVPBRN1R00>

This is an application to renew a permission which was granted in 2022 to demolish the existing link to the garage and create a new extension, set back 1 metre from the main house and 500mm from the existing garage to include a large entrance hall with views to the rear garden, a shower and leisure room.

In the garage, a new staircase would access the previously converted first floor which has a bedroom with a new Juliet balcony for views of the rear garden. The render on the extension and garage is to match the main house.

The extension is a replacement for the existing link between the main house and garage and there are no neighbouring properties. It would be sympathetic to the property and in harmony with the surroundings.

It is considered that this proposal does not impact adversely on the character and beauty of this rural area and is in keeping with its context and surroundings.

The Parish Council recommended approval of the original planning application and would recommend that this application to renew the permission be **APPROVED**.

2 Planning Application Reference: 25/00812/FUL

Address: Hard Oak, Mashbury Road, Chignal St James, Chelmsford

Description of works: Closure of existing access and creation of new access for dwelling

Click to View - [https://publicaccess.chelmsford.gov.uk/online-](https://publicaccess.chelmsford.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SWWYH7BRN4N00)

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This application seeks to create a new access onto a narrow section of Mashbury Road east of The Green in Chignal St James. It is proposed to remove a section of hedge comprising native shrubs to construct a splayed 5.5m concrete hardstanding directly from the road extending 6m into agricultural grassland. A shingle driveway would then cross the field to meet a former outbuilding which was developed as a “dwelling”. This was built without applying for planning permission but was subsequently granted a Certificate of Lawfulness which was opposed by the Parish Council.

The pre-application advice given to the applicant is that “there is a need to demonstrate that the replacement access is preferable to the existing and there will be no harm to the character and appearance of the countryside/highways safety”.

An adequate and safe access to this new “dwelling” already exists via the drive serving “Hardoak”. This new “dwelling” was created to house members of the same family as the occupiers of the main property, “Hardoak” and should be considered as incidental to the enjoyment of the main dwelling, not as a separate unit. To refer to an existing ‘Access 2’ appears to be misleading. Although gates were in place when the stables were in use, they have not served the original barns for decades and certainly do not serve the new “dwelling” or “Hardoak”. The applicant closed off this entrance several years ago by erecting a high close boarded wooden fence that obstructs the previous gate location. The Chignal Villages Design Statement, (VDS), page 21, states that “existing hedges should be retained wherever possible and new boundary walls and fences should reflect the essentially rural character of the area. High front fences are generally inappropriate in a rural setting and should be discouraged”. The Council is not aware of a planning application to erect this fence across the original entry gate to the stables.

The construction of a 5.5m x 6m concrete hardstanding is also contrary to the Chignal VDS, page 21, which states that “large areas of concrete, tarmac or block paving are not well suited to rural settings where traditional materials such as shingle are more appropriate and assist with rainwater drainage”. Given the current excessive run-off on this stretch of Mashbury Road due water flowing downhill towards The Green from the “Hardoak” estate, adding an impermeable hardstanding concrete area half-way up the hill will increase highway safety problems. The water freezes in winter creating hazards for drivers and cyclists. The Council is aware of two separate incidents where cyclists have been thrown from their bikes by skidding on the ice formed from water at the bottom of the hill near the red telephone box on The Green. When the new “dwelling” can be accessed from the driveway which serves “Hardoak” a new 30m track across a grass paddock and removing a section of native hedge cannot be justified. In addition, the application is misleading in indicating that there is an existing track linking the new “dwelling” with Mashbury Road. The Parish Council also has concerns that the proposed new access point could open the potential for future development in the paddock.

Conclusion

1. The proposed access is unnecessary to serve the new “dwelling”. It should be accessed via the main driveway to “Hardoak”.
2. The previous access gate to the stables has not been used for decades and was blocked up by the applicants several years ago with a high close boarded wooden fence.
3. The removal of a section of native hedge, the construction of a substantial area of concrete hardstanding immediately from the road and the creation of a new 30m driveway will harm the character of this rural area, contrary to the Chignal VDS.
4. The development of a vehicle access half-way up this hill with poor sightlines will be a risk to highway safety especially as this stretch of road has running water in the winter. This freezes and remains frozen for a considerable time as it is in the shade all day.

For these reasons, the Parish Council recommends that this application should be **REFUSED**.

3. **Planning Application Reference: 25/00870/FUL**

Address: 1 Kilnfield Barns, Chignal Road, Chignal Smealy, Chelmsford

Description of works: Proposed two storey double garage, with first floor ancillary Annex. Linked to the existing carport.

Click to View - [https://publicaccess.chelmsford.gov.uk/online-](https://publicaccess.chelmsford.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SXKU90BRFQS00)

[applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SXKU90BRFQS00](https://publicaccess.chelmsford.gov.uk/online-applications/applicationDetails.do?activeTab=summary&keyVal=SXKU90BRFQS00)

This proposal is for a two bed, two bath property with a large open plan lounge, kitchen, dining area all with dormer windows overlooking the fields, and a large double garage underneath. It appears to be another separate and independent residential property. The original site planning application, 20/000121, removed Permitted Development rights for this development, hence the need for this application.

The proposed new barn / 2 bed home, which is 21mts long and 8mts high is far too large for the plot and its location and will completely destroy the current open aspect view across the fields and it will become the most prominent building when viewed from the road.

The original approval for this site was for 8 old farm buildings to be refurbished to become residential homes that closely matched the existing farm buildings, not an opportunity to continue to build new dwellings so this becomes just another new residential development.

The garage which is proposed to be altered as part of this application was a late planning application and an amendment to the original plans, along with all the other five new garages during the construction phase, it was never part of the original scheme.

The area / location of this new home is shown on approved drawing 327-001 Rev F, as being land allocated as "shared open amenity space" for all barn / homeowners use, with access via a double gate from the courtyard. For information the applicant is not the sole owner of the land to the rear of the existing garage. The 'amenity area' for the original development encircles the pond and comes to the rear of the existing garage. The Certificate of Ownership – Certificate A is therefore incorrectly signed.

The red line marked up as 'The Site' does not match the Land Registry demise plan issued to the existing residents. The land being developed was previously allocated as 'amenity space' under the original application 20/00121/FUL.

The size of this proposed building at 21mts long and 8mts high with a total floor space of 210 square metres. It is far larger than a number of the existing barn conversions on this development and occupies a prominent location seen from the adjoining fields and the main road, this will completely overshadow the existing barn view, changing the whole approved perspective of this development.

The height noted for this building on the drawing, is to match the height of the applicant's existing barn which is already the largest and tallest barn on the development. The existing barns roofing is slate not tile and the garage to be demolished is red clay tiles. Another large dark black slate roof would be very unsightly in this location. The external appearance of the annexe, as mentioned on the application form description, will not match the existing garage/carport/store building or be in keeping with the remaining properties on the site. This is with specific regard to roof design, use of dormers and excessive pitch.

The sewage treatment plant is design to serve a maximum of 50 persons; the proposed annexe will add further bedrooms.

The proposed use as ancillary to No 1 is noted, a condition should be added to avoid the annexe being used as a separate residence.

For all these reasons the Council recommends that this application be REFUSED

2025/890 Essex Love Your Bus.

Update on implementation of project to promote the Lodge bus services 17/18.

Resolution: The project has commenced, and the finances awarded by Essex County Council.

2025/891 Chelmsford Association of Local Councils, (CALC)

Review constitution and approval of annual membership fee of £40.00.

Resolution: The CALC membership was approved.

2025/892 Chignal Parish branding:

Update on using the branding on:

- Parish council media, website, emails, agendas etc.
- Parish notices boards.
- Community orchard information board.
- Chignal Welcome/Information booklet.

Resolution: **The templates will be in place by the next meeting.**

Resolution: **The noticeboards will be updated in the near future.**

Resolution: **The Community Orchard information board will have the logo added and a logo plaque to be made for the Orchard shed.**

Finance

2025/893 Update on Budget 2025-2026

	Budget	Current Spend	Balance	Remaining
Staff Cost	£5,600	£1,702	£3,898	
Admin	£5,405	£1,974	£3,431	
Total	£11,005	£3,676	£7,329	67%
Cil	£16,660	£5,858	£10,802	
Reserves	£19,616	£1,562	£18,054	
Orchard	£2,903	£200	£2,703	

2025/894 Finance:

Accounts 06.07.2025 at 13:00.

Account Balances:

Cheque Account **£ 7646.29** **@ 0% Interest**

Included in figures above:

VAT reclaim £928.63

Orchard Donations £68.00

Saving Account **£ 38,312.07** **@ 1.375% Interest**

Earmarked reserves:

- Orchard Account £2,771
- General Reserve. £11,561
- Infrastructure & Sustainability £ 3,178
- Legal Challenges V Pylons. £10,000
- Cil. £10,802

Total **£45 958.36**

2025/895 Payments for approval.

To approve the following payments:

Payment to	Description	Budget Column	Cost
Print 2 Media	Orchard advertising board	Cil	£224.40
Fran Layzell Design	Booklet, Banner, and design work	Reserves	£840.00
Essex Pension Fund	June Pension	Pension	£178.96
Essex Pension Fund	July Pension	Pension	£178.96
Clerk Salary	June - Salary	Salary	£202.29
Clerk Salary	July-Salary	Salary	£202.29
HMRC	Paye - June	PAYE	£49.00
HMRC	Paye- July	PAYE	£49.00
Community Heartbeat Trust	Defib x 2	CIL	£5,634.00
RCCE	Annual subscription	Ealc /RCCE	£61.80
CALC	Chelmsford Association of Local Councils	Ealc /RCCE	£40.00
Letchwood Auditor	Internal Audit of 2024 to 2025	Audit	£125
Chignal & Mashbury Village Hall	Hall Hire	Hall Hire	£87.50

Total for approval **£6,909.30**

2025/896 Review of the Bi-monthly bank reconciliation.

Resolution: ***The Bank reconciliation was approved with zero difference.***

REPORTS AND UPDATES

2025/897 Representatives' Reports: to discuss and debate any items.

- A) Little Hollows / Copperfield Place Liaison - Cllr Elwick
 - Update on Copperfield Place landscaping work and road signage.
 - Several trees are dead. Landscaping condition is not being followed through.
 - No through road being pursued.
- B) Playing Field - Cllr Elwick and Cllr Towns
 - Information board installed in the playing field car park.
 - New board installed.
- C) Village Hall Liaison - Cllr Towns
 - Nothing to report.
- D) Community Engagement - Cllr Nelson and Cllr Stainton
 - Update on support for clubs and groups to update their information on the parish council website: www.chignal-pc.gov.uk.
 - Training is available. Cllr Nelson is happy to support.
 - Add a QR code and new website address to the noticeboards: request the information from the graphic designer.
 - Request to Recoded Solutions to have community e-mails set up.
 - Unpublish e-voice apart from Council

E) Community Safety – Cllr Lewis

- Update on installation of two Defibrillators:
- Completed in the refurbished telephone box by The Green and to be installed this week on the Parish Council notice board by St Nicholas Church.

F) Highways (include Hedges) - Cllr Towns, Cllr Elwick, Cllr Ballard

- Hollow Lane: consider a sign stating no access to Broomfield Road (or Patching Hall Lane) to deter large farm / delivery lorries from entering Copperfield Place by mistake and not being able to turn-around safely.

G) Footpaths/Bridleways – Cllr Nelson, Cllr Towns, Cllr Polley

- The better weather has created the opportunity to review the footpath network and highlight any issues.

H) Countryside conservation. – Cllr Lewis, Cllr Ballard.

- Nature Recovery: RCCE NATURE RECOVERY, BIODIVERSITY AND YOUR PARISH EVENT on Saturday 13th September 9.00am for 9.15 start to 3.00pm at Hatfield Peverel Village Hall. Maldon Road Hatfield Peverel CM3 2HP. Target Audience: Parish Councils, Village Hall Management Committees, Community groups / activists. Delegate fees (including buffet lunch): RCCE Members £35, Non-members £75 Contact: enquiries@essexrcc.org.uk

Resolution: Approved to send delegates.

2025/898 Items for the next Agenda:

- Community Meeting – October.
- Defibrillator Training from CHT.
- Pylons.
- Minerals Local Plan.
- Confirm Budget meeting date.

Next meetings:

Monday 08th September 2025
Monday 10th November 2025
Monday 12th January 2026
Monday 9th March 2026
Monday 11th May 2026

Bi-Monthly Meeting.
Bi-Monthly Meeting.
Bi-Monthly Meeting.
Bi-Monthly Meeting and Annual Parish Meeting.
Annual General Meeting and Bi-Monthly Meeting.