

# STISTED PARISH COUNCIL

NEWSLETTER issue 11 Winter 2018-19



## The Parish Council

Following the move of Stuart Tyler out of the village and the resignation of Richard Hughes, the Parish Council undertook a co-option process and two new councillors joined in January 2019. Neil Denley and Marc Guy are enthusiastic to take forward initiatives within Stisted. Their fresh ideas and interest in the village will be assets to the Parish Council.

## Council Tax 2019-20

The Parish Council has submitted its Precept request to Braintree District Council. The Precept is the amount included in your annual Council Tax Demand and then paid to the Parish Council by BDC in two parts: April and September.

This year, once again, the Parish Council has been able to cap the level of Precept to the same as in 2018-19. This means that for a Band D rated property, the percentage change on the 2019-20 tax bill for the residents of Stisted will show a **decrease** of 0.27% (or 12p). Not much, we agree, but when everyone else is raising their costs, the Parish Council is doing everything it can to ensure value for money and wise spending of public money.

## Local Council Elections

You will have an opportunity on 2nd May to vote for your District and Parish Councillors.

There will be a change to the process this year. Braintree District is one of 11 Councils taking part in a Cabinet Office pilot scheme to test ways of protecting your vote.

BDC say they do not have any evidence of voter fraud or abuse of the electoral process in the Braintree District, however, this doesn't mean that it isn't possible so we should always be open to exploring ways to minimise any risk.

At the forthcoming District, Town and Parish elections on 2 May 2019, every elector voting at a Polling Station in the Braintree District will need to show either 1 piece of Photo ID or up to 2 pieces of Non Photo ID before they are given their ballot paper. Where electors have neither, locally issued ID will be made available free of charge.

The types of evidence that will be accepted are still being discussed and as soon as these are finalised and published we will let you know.

## Fly-tipping

There has been yet another increase in the amount of fly-

tipping and vehicle dumping in Essex. If you find fly-tipped waste or see any vehicles that may have been abandoned, please:

**Do not interfere** with fly-tipped waste in any way - it could be hazardous and moving evidence could affect the ability to prosecute if the perpetrator is found.

Report it immediately. If it looks like a lorry load or that it may contain hazardous waste you can report it to the Environment Agency on 0800 80 70 60.

If it looks like a van load, report it to Braintree District Council on 01376 552525 who aim to remove it within 24 hours, or in the case of excessive amounts, within five working days.

Abandoned vehicles should be reported in the same way.

You can also report it on-line at BDC's website, [www.braintree.gov.uk](http://www.braintree.gov.uk)

## The Village Green

As we look forward to the Spring, many residents responded to our call for preferred species for the replacement tree. It was decided that a flowering cherry should be planted as this will bring a flush of blossom in the early part of the year. This is a non-fruiting variety, so will offer no temptation to squirrels or birds to peck away and create a mess! The Parish Council is very grateful to the Prince Edward Duke of Kent Court at Stisted Hall for very generously donating the tree.



It was also decided that a small spruce type variety could also be planted. By planting a tree that is restricted in growth (8-10 ft) we will see many benefits; beautiful blue/green foliage right through the year and a tree that is suitable for decorating each year at Christmas time.

## YOUR COUNCILLORS

Alan Moor **Chairman**  
Neil Denley  
Melissa Hewitt  
Hayley Waine

David Burge **Vice Chairman**  
Marc Guy  
Xavier Hodgetts

## YOUR COUNCIL CONTACT

Christine Marshall **Parish Clerk**  
Telephone: 07933 306927  
Email: [stistedparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:stistedparishcouncil@yahoo.co.uk)

Have you noticed the seat has gone too? It had to be removed to fell the tree, so we are taking this opportunity to give it an overhaul and a fresh coat of paint. It will be back once the new tree has been planted.



### Parish Council Surgery

The Parish Council launched its first bi-monthly surgery on 25th January 2019. Bearing in mind there had been minimal publicity about this, we were visited by a few residents (and their dogs). We had the door between the Community Shop and the Montefiore open so that people could easily visit the two.

One of the items raised with us concerned footpaths and how these become overgrown and covered in fallen leaves and moss. This can be dangerous for the elderly or anyone who isn't too steady on their feet. We know that BDC and Essex Highways have cut down on maintenance works to pavements in an effort to save money. This does not absolve them of their responsibilities to keep them usable and the Parish Council will make representations to them in a bid to get this work carried out.

The next surgery will be on Thursday 21st March

Dates throughout the year are:

Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> March 3.00 til 7.00pm  
 Thursday 23<sup>rd</sup> May 3.00 til 7.00pm  
 Thursday 18<sup>th</sup> July 3.00 til 7.00pm  
 Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> September 3.00 til 7.00pm  
 Thursday 21<sup>st</sup> November 3.00 til 7.00pm

Depending on the success of the first few surgeries, the Parish Council will consider organising some of these on a Saturday morning and will invite County and District Councillors to be available to Stisted residents.

These surgeries provide the residents of Stisted with:

- an opportunity to speak to Councillors or Clerk in an informal and relaxed environment
- an opportunity to speak confidentially to Councillors or Clerk about matters of concern to them in the village, and
- an opportunity to discuss issues they feel affect them as a resident or the parish/village as a whole

The Parish Council would love to see some of the younger residents of Stisted come along to these sessions to share their thoughts on Stisted now and Stisted in the future. It's vital that the younger generations in the village have an opportunity to speak to Councillors and put forward their ideas for schemes that will continue to make Stisted such a great place to live.

### Stisted Neighbourhood Watch

You will be aware that in recent weeks there have been

reports of burglaries in Stisted and the surrounding area.

Stisted Neighbourhood Watch (SNW) are on Facebook <https://m.facebook.com/stistedvillageNW/> which is full of information, such as weekly Braintree NW updates, including crime type and location, Crime Prevention advice and local updates from Essex Police. This has over 150 followers now and we urge others to join.

SNW also has a WhatsApp group for residents of Stisted, surrounding areas and those connected with the village, eg your children attend Stisted Academy school or you work nearby. This is designed to be more dynamic and proactive: for example alert people when there are suspicious people or activity in the village. This has been very popular, especially in recent weeks.

Those wishing to join the *WhatsApp* group should contact Nick Eliot on 07598 785142 or via messenger on Facebook.

Parish Councillor David Burge and Nick are trained to provide safety advice, ranging from fire alarm installations to advice on how to keep your home and possessions safe! Some surveys have been completed already in the village and feedback has been good! A survey and advice is free to residents, so take advantage of this service. Contact Nick on the number above.

Ways to report a crime are:

On-line: <https://www.essex.police.uk/do-it-online/>  
 By phone: Non-emergency 101 : Emergency 999  
 Crimestoppers 0800 555 111

### Crime Data

Here are some figures that you may find surprising, they are from Police statistics for Essex for September last:

Five people were killed in traffic collisions  
 76 serious casualties following road accidents  
 212 mobile phone offences  
 128 drink drive arrests  
 73 drug drive arrests  
 930 seatbelt offences  
 254 vehicles seized for no insurance  
 97 careless driving offences prosecuted

There is no doubt that the instances of drug driving are on the increase and we see evidence of this even in Stisted where syringes and nitrous oxide canisters have been found. If you see anything suspicious, e.g. small groups of cars parked next to each other and passing things through the window, don't hesitate, call Essex Police.

There is no excuse for any of these statistics - we all know it is unlawful to use a mobile phone while driving, drinking and driving, or driving without a seatbelt. It just isn't worth the risk - at best you'll face a fine, at worst you could cause a fatal accident, lose your licence and be labelled as criminal. Do you really want that? Just think about it.

### Brown Hares

There is a decrease in the population of brown hares in England. Hare coursing is prohibited under the Hunting Act of 2004 (it was first controlled under the Game Act of 1831). The hunting of brown hares by dogs is cruel and unnecessary, as well as illegal.

Hare coursing in Essex takes place in fields near us - if you see anything suspicious, call 999. Very often these are gaming events organised by groups or gangs of people who have been known to be violent when confronted - do not approach them, call Essex Police.

## Darker nights - turn on some lights

At this time of year the tell-tale signs of the empty house become more apparent.

**FACT: Most burglars will prefer to target the empty house unseen and avoid any confrontation.**

As the days are shorter, if you work away from home, or even pop out to get the children from school, by the time you return home it may already be dark. A house in darkness says no one is in, especially if your neighbouring properties either side have lights on and show other signs of being occupied. If you back onto open farmland or have parking areas or footpaths to side or rear this may be even more apparent!

Create the "Illusion of Occupancy", when it's dark make your home look like you are in. Leave lights on or put them on timers or daylight sensors to come on when it gets dark. Remember though, no one lives in the hall or on the landing, so if you leave these lights on supplement them with lights on in rooms that you would normally occupy at that time of day, i.e. lounge and kitchen. A carefully placed imitation TV or "Fake TV" carefully can further add to that illusion of occupancy by making it look like the television is on. Some burglars may also listen at windows or letterboxes for sign of activity, so consider leaving a radio on within your home.

Don't forget the outside of your property too, if burglars see that it is lit they are less likely to approach for fear of being seen.

Leave lights on, with energy efficient bulbs it costs very little nowadays yet could save you lots!

A final thought - don't advertise to burglars that you are away by posting photos of you and your family on holiday, or enjoying an evening out.

## The Village Sign

Thanks to Howard Hollands, the Village Sign has been refurbished as it was looking a little tired - so was Howard after a day up the ladder painting! The four symbols on the sign show a bunch of nettles (one interpretation of Stisted means 'bed of nettles' in old English), a sheaf of wheat, a water wheel and a Friesian cow.



## Community Bus

We have another qualified volunteer to drive the Community Bus, but are always prepared to accept new recruits.

If you would like to know more about how to become a volunteer driver, please contact Xavier Hodgetts, the Parish Transport Representative on 07809 342074.

## Assets of Community Value

You may have heard this term a lot towards the end of 2018, so we thought we'd try to explain what it is and how to get one placed on land or property.

The Localism Act 2011 introduced the Community Right to Bid scheme. This scheme gives local communities early warning of the sale of land and buildings that have been identified as having community value, allowing the community the opportunity to bid to buy them.

An ACV can be nominated by

- Neighbourhood forums
- Parish or town councils
- Unincorporated bodies
  - Members must include at least 21 individuals.
  - Must not distribute any surplus (income or profit) it makes to members.
- Charities
- Companies limited by guarantee who do not distribute surpluses to its members
- Community interest companies.

A panel at BDC will make the decision as to whether the subject of a nomination can become an "asset of community value".

Buildings or land can be considered to be an asset of community value if:

- they have been used in the recent past to further the social well-being or social interests of the local community; and,
- it is realistic to think, that the use (whether or not the same use) could recommence in the next 5 years to further the social well-being or social interests of the local community.

After an asset is listed, if the owner wishes to sell the asset, the nominator/s of the asset can bid to buy (within 6 weeks), if no such bid is put forward, the owner can proceed to sell. If the nominating group expresses an interest in bidding, then no sale is permitted to any other body during a period of 6 months (to allow the nominators to develop a proposal and raise finance).

If no purchase takes place during that period, the owner is free to sell to anyone.

An ACV lasts for five years, after which a further nomination can be submitted.

## Sub-committees

A sub-committee is established by and takes its authority from Stisted Parish Council and its Chairman is appointed by the Council and will include members from the Parish Council and residents of the parish. The sub-committee is accountable to and reports to the Parish Council as required. The purpose of a sub-committee is to support Parish Council fulfilling its obligations and objectives for the Parish.

If you'd like to be involved in one of these committees, contact anyone listed overleaf, or the Parish Clerk.

<b>STISTED PARISH COUNCIL SUB-COMMITTEES</b>			
<b>Sub-committee/ group</b>	<b>Scope</b>	<b>Chairman</b>	<b>Councillor/s involved</b>
<b>Neighbourhood Plan</b>	Neighbourhood Plan	Melissa Hewitt 07711 690852 melissa3d@aol.com	Melissa Hewitt Alan Moor Christine Marshall (Clerk)
<b>Community Safety &amp; Awareness</b>	Neighbourhood Watch Safety Parking Speedwatch	David Burge 07931 519994 scrim73@googlemail.com	David Burge Alan Moor
<b>Contingency Planning</b>	Defibrillator Life Belts Emergency Plan	Hayley Waine 07939 037045 hayleywaine@hotmail.com	Hayley Waine Alan Moor Christine Marshall (Clerk)
<b>Events</b>	e.g: Litter pick/dust cart	David Burge 07931 519994 scrim73@googlemail.com	David Burge Alan Moor Christine Marshall (Clerk)
<b>Finance</b>	Budget Audit Banking Grant applications	Christine Marshall (RFO) 07933 306927 stistedparishcouncil@ yahoo.co.uk	Alan Moor Christine Marshall (Clerk/RFO)
<b>Planning</b>	To consider planning applications prior to presentation to full council or between meetings		All Councillors
<b>Recreational (playing field) Maintenance</b>	<u>Playing Field</u> Inspections Pavilion Rights of Way Grass cutting/ vegetation/ bins Access Surface quality Repairs Benches	David Burge 07931 519994 scrim73@googlemail.com	David Burge Marc Guy
<b>Social Media</b>	Publicity Village Newsletter Website Broadband	Xavier Hodgetts 07809 342074 xavier.hodgetts@talk21.com	Xavier Hodgetts Melissa Hewitt Christine Marshall (Clerk)
<b>Street Maintenance</b>	Verges / Overgrown vegetation (e.g. river) Litter Road Signs Street Lighting Footpaths Trees	Neil Denley 07450 250019 neil.denley@hotmail.com	Neil Denley David Burge Xavier Hodgetts <i>Footpaths</i> - Bob Powers (resident) <i>Trees</i> - Roy Edwards (resident)
<b>Village Groups</b>	Joint initiatives for the benefit of Stisted to include Good Neighbours	Rotates between: Parish Council Parochial Church Council Stisted Academy Stisted Village Hall	Alan Moor Christine Marshall (Clerk) Councillors as available.
<b>Non-Parish Council services/ events</b>	Youth Club Easter Egg Hunt Duck Hunt	David Burge 07931 519994 scrim73@googlemail.com	

#### **YOUR VILLAGE CONTACTS**

<b>Village Hall</b>	Telephone: 07716 990599	Web site: stistedvillagehall.org.uk
<b>All Saints Church</b>	Rev'd. Christopher Davey	Telephone: 01376 561234 Email: vicarbradwellandstisted@btinternet.com
<b>Stisted Academy</b>	Telephone: 01376 325116	Web site: stisted-academy.co.uk
<b>Allotments</b>	Telephone: 07716 990599	