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Focus

November 2007

MEMBERS' FOCUS

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AREA: **District-wide**

CORPORATE THEME HEADING:

Create a better place to Live, Work and Play; Improve Performance and Deliver Better Value

SUBJECT: Chelmsford and Braintree Growth Area Funding Bid	CONTACT OFFICER: Kathryn Carpenter
TEL. 01376 551414 ext 2564 E-MAIL kathy.carpenter@braintree.gov.uk	BACKGROUND PAPERS: Chelmsford and Braintree Programme of Development: Housing Growth Funding, October 2007

INFORMATION:

Background:

The Council has been encouraged by the Government Office for the East of England to submit a joint bid with Chelmsford Borough Council and Essex Council for infrastructure project funding for the period 2008-2011 to support future housing growth. The bid has been submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government, and announcements on funding are expected to be made in December.

Summary of the bid: key projects

The key projects included in the bid for Braintree District are set out below:

Town Centre regeneration (land assembly)

£3 million bid for funds to assemble key town centre sites to pump prime development, to bring forward land for residential (including affordable housing) and mixed use development

Employment land

£2 million bid for funds to purchase land for employment use to support existing and future housing growth to achieve a better balance between housing and employment

Water Cycle study

A bid for £100,000 for a study to assess the water and sewerage infrastructure requirements to support new housing development

Cycleway network improvements

A bid for £1 million to accelerate the construction programme to link new housing developments into the existing cycleway network and the Freeport Retail/Leisure area

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Green space enhancements

A bid for £300,000 for a project to improve and extend green spaces on the Braintree River Walk to serve existing and new housing developments

Heart of Essex rail improvement study

A bid for £250,000 for a study to consider the future role of rail provision in the Heart of Essex area, including the Braintree branch line and business case for the north Chelmsford rail station.

MEMBERS' FOCUS

AREA: Braintree District

CORPORATE THEME HEADING:

SUBJECT: Construction of cycle/pedestrian routes in Braintree District	CONTACT OFFICER: Juliet Strathern
TEL/EMAIL No.: 01376 551414 (2559)	BACKGROUND PAPERS:
INFORMATION: During the summer three cycle/pedestrian routes were constructed in the District. The routes were identified on the proposals map of the Braintree District Local Plan Review (adopted in July 2005). The new route from Ebenezer Close to Bramble Road, Witham provides an extension to the north of the existing Witham River Walk providing a safe and improved route for pedestrians and cyclists. This scheme was funded by Essex County Council through the Local Transport Plan. The new section of cycle/footway between Marks Farm to Beckers Green, Braintree provides an improved link to local facilities such as local schools, Tescos supermarket, the Marks Farm community centre and the rugby club. This scheme was funded from a S106 contribution from the Kings Park Village development. The new route from TownEnd Field to Dengie Close, Witham provides an off road link for persons traveling between the Maltings Lane development and the town centre. It is also close to Howbridge Infants School and the Holy Family RC Primary School in Maltings Lane. This scheme was funded from a S106 contribution from the Maltings Lane development. A contribution for the link was also received from 'Safer Journeys to School' to promote cycling and walking. The cycle/footway is the first phase of a longer route. It is planned that the next stage between Dengie Close and Howbridge Road will take place when further funding is available.	



MEMBERS' FOCUS

DRAFT PRESS RELEASE

Council puts the brake on illegal taxi operation.

Prosecutions by local councils for illegal taxi operators are very rare indeed because of the level of evidence required to criminally convict an individual who is at the centre of the operation. But Braintree District Council Licensing Team have sent a clear message that if firms are operating illegally in the Braintree District they will face criminal conviction and be subject to a hefty fine, as an illegal operator in Witham found out to his cost.

An investigation into his operation was conducted following a tip off that an illegal taxi business was advertising on the Internet and in local telephone directories. Braintree District Council's Licensing team put together a covert operation to catch the operator behind the business.

Officers from the Licensing team posed as undercover holiday makers requiring transport to Stansted airport and booked a taxi ride using the number quoted in the advertisements. A car picked them up from a property in Witham and took them to Stansted airport as arranged. On arrival, payment was made and this was the cue for the Licensing Enforcement Officer and Police Officers to swoop in on the driver and vehicle.

The evidence gathered from this operation was used to bring Mr Corby of Witham before Harlow Magistrates court where he was found guilty at trial, of operating an illegal private hire business and was fined £500 and ordered to pay £1300 costs.

Cllr Wendy Schmitt, cabinet member of Public Protection at Braintree District Council, said, "that this level of operation is a clear sign that the Council will take whatever steps necessary to protect the travelling public in our district. It is essential that if someone gets into a licensed vehicle in our district they can be assured that the vehicle and driver are legitimate and all the necessary safety conditions relating to the car and the driver have been met."

MEMBERS' FOCUS

AREA: Environment

CORPORATE THEME HEADING: Caring for the Environment

SUBJECT: Environment	CONTACT OFFICER: Garry Philp
TEL/EMAIL :No.Ext 2228 garph@braintree.gov.uk	BACKGROUND PAPERS: None
INFORMATION:	
<p>First Prosecution by Environmental Protection for Breach of Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990</p> <p>At Chelmsford Magistrates Court on Monday 22nd October 2007 Mr McConnell and Miss Emma Whitten of 30 Foxglove Close, Witham pleaded guilty by post to the failure to comply with a Notice under Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990. The prosecution follows a complaint received by the council on the 7th December 2006 about an excess amount of black bags at the rear of 30 Foxglove Close and which was causing a health hazard.</p> <p>On 8th December 2006, Environmental Protection Officer, Keith Jones visited the rear alleyway and found 32 black bags of household waste. Checks made within the bags found a number of letters and an envelope addressed to Emma Whitten, of 30 Foxglove Close. The grey-wheeled bin was also checked and was found to be two thirds full of what appeared to be dog excrement. The site was then cleared of all the waste at the expense of the Council Tax Payer as there was clearly a risk to health and it was also attracting rats to the area.</p> <p>Following this, on 21 December 2006, two Section 46 Notices under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 were issued and hand delivered to the 30 Foxglove Close, one addressed to the accused Whitten, and one addressed to the accused McConnell.</p> <p>On 5th February 2007 Keith Jones, Environmental Protection Officer attended the rear of 30 Foxglove Close and found a large quantity of full black bags again thrown into a heap at the rear of the property and the grey wheeled bin found to be full of dog excrement. On the same day Keith Jones delivered a letter informing them of there legal obligations under the terms of the Section 46 notice, and that excess waste in bags will not be collected at public expense. Advice was also given on recycling and Special Collection Services available form the Council.</p> <p>On 9th March, Keith Jones revisited the property and a large number of black bags were seen at the rear of the property. Two Fixed Penalty Notices for £100 were then issued to the offenders and they were written to requiring clearance of the waste within 7 days. This waste was not however cleared and in the interests of public health, Braintree District Council removed 53 black bags of</p>	

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waste at the expense of the taxpayer on the 16th March 2007.

Ms Whitten and Mr McConnell failed comply with the notice and to pay the fixed penalty notices and a prosecution for an offence under Section 46 of the Environmental Protection Act was then brought by the Environmental Protection Department.

At the hearing on the 22nd October 2007, Magistrates sentenced Mr McConnell to a fine of £150.00 and costs of £362.80 and Ms Whitten to a fine of £150.00 and Costs of £362.80.

MEMBERS' FOCUS

AREA: Licensing

CORPORATE THEME HEADING:

SUBJECT: Licensing	CONTACT OFFICER: Theresa Debbage-Philp
TEL/EMAIL :No.Ext 2790 theph@braintree.gov.uk	BACKGROUND PAPERS: None
INFORMATION: On the 12 th October 2007, Theresa Debbage-Philp, Licensing Enforcement Officer took part in a multi-agency operation at Stansted Airport along with the Police, VOSA, The Public Carriage Office and officers from four other Local Authorities. The aim of the operation was to identify illegal Hackney Carriages and Private Hire vehicles and take the appropriate enforcement action. Officers also checked all licensed vehicles going to the airport to ensure that the drivers and vehicles complied with the legislation. During the operation in excess of one hundred vehicles from other authorities were checked and approximately fifty offences were reported back to the home authorities. In total seven Braintree District Licensed vehicles were also checked by Theresa Debbage-Philp, however no offences were found. Also as a result of the operation about three vehicles were served with prohibition notices by VOSA and several other offences were discovered by the Police.	

MEMBERS' FOCUS

News

Awards for play areas

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The high standards maintained at play areas across the Braintree district have been praised at an awards ceremony.

Braintree District Council scooped six awards - one for each of the six areas entered in the Essex Playing Fields and Children's Play Association awards.

A certificate of merit was awarded to each of them for the high standard of maintenance throughout 2007.

The awards come towards the end of a year in which Braintree District Council has invested nearly a quarter of a million pounds in refurbishing play areas.

Councillor Wendy Schmitt, cabinet member for public protection and healthy living, said: "Play areas are so important to give children somewhere they can have fun and get active at the same time. It is equally important that their parents know it is a safe environment for them and this has been a high priority in the design of the refurbished play areas.

"Nearby residents have also been consulted to ensure that the new equipment is in the right place and caters for the right age group. The schemes are part of a rolling programme and consultation will soon start on the next round of play areas which will be given right up-to-date new equipment."

The six sites which won awards are Silver End Memorial Gardens; De Vere Road, Earls Colne; Ramsey Road, Halstead; Alan Road, Witham, and Riverside and Fisher Field in Braintree.

ENDS

For more information contact Nick Day on 01376 348594.

Issued by Braintree DC PR 30 October 2007

News

Business award recognises Council support

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Cllr Tim Wilkinson will receive a certificate of merit on behalf of **Braintree District Council** from the Federation of Small Businesses next Tuesday evening at Anglia Ruskin University in Chelmsford.

Cllr Tim Wilkinson comments: "I'm delighted to receive this recognition of steady and consistent support to the development of local business over many years. I recognise that business needs change continuously and that we need to keep listening to business people so that the council's objectives and policies enable and encourage enterprise: whether it's through local advice centres or our extensive portfolio of commercial properties."

Tim Wilkinson runs his own small business and adds: "It's a fact that nearly 80% of businesses in the Braintree District survive and grow beyond three years, whereas in other parts of the country, the same proportion is failing in the first year. We also recognise the role that councils can have in combating unnecessary red tape, at a time when many businesses still feel it is a growing burden"

The Council's head of economic development Russell Everard adds: "The strength of our local business council and business forum is that it enables direct communication between entrepreneurs, manufacturers and professionals with local councillors and council staff. Our regular dialogue with the business community enables the council to adapt to changing market conditions and often, to help foster better conditions for business to flourish. I'd encourage more local businesses to see what's in it for them." **ENDS**

For more information, contact head of economic development Russell Everard on 01376 551414 – just say the name. Or call Chris Trim 01376 557752.

Issued by Braintree DC PR on 7 November 2007

News

Cutting substance misuse among vulnerable young

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Tackling substance misuse among vulnerable young people is the subject of a special conference in Braintree.

It is the only event of its kind in the region and is designed for frontline operational staff. The outcome will be the development and implementation of intervention programmes to cut misuse among under-25s who are vulnerable and disadvantaged.

It is being organised by the Braintree District Crime and Disorder Partnership (CDRP) and the Children and Young People's Strategic Partnership (CYPSP). They staged their first joint conference last year, looking at ways of cutting bullying and antisocial behaviour. It proved such a success the conference is to become an annual fixture.

Both groups organising the event are committed to developing initiatives to support children and young people as early as possible to promote positive attitudes.

The conference will feature young people themselves – some on-side and others not – and they will join other delegates in a series of interactive workshops. Topics for the workshops will include binge drinking and sexual health, children affected by parents misusing, hard use and dependency, solvent abuse and cannabis and mental health.

It is estimated around 300 people will attend the conference on Thursday November 22 at Towerlands and in addition to partners from wide-ranging organisations, publicans, school and college staff, health professionals and community-based workers will be invited.

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Councillor Wendy Schmitt, cabinet member for public protection and healthy living at Braintree District Council, said: "The success of last year's conference proved it is an ideal way of bringing partners and other interested parties together to take a critical look at current working practices and to plan future strategies.

"It is vital we all work together to ensure these vulnerable young people have the best possible chance of escaping the misery of substance misuse. We have to get the strategy right for the sake of the individuals, their families and the wider community."

ENDS

For more information contact Helena Goodwin on 01376 551414.

Issued by Braintree DC PR 20 November 2007

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News

Environment centre gets go-ahead for major improvements

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Planning permission has been granted for a series of major improvements to the Discovery Centre and country park at Gt Notley – which will make it the perfect base from which to explore the adjoining Flich Way. Essex County Council is working in partnership with Braintree District Council to expand the centre's facilities and attractions, creating a regional centre of environmental excellence, doubling as an exciting visitor attraction.

The first changes will include a major outdoor adventure play area (for all ages) with additional car parking and tree planting to be ready for an Easter opening event next year.

This will be followed by a two storey extension of the existing environmental centre as a base for the county's field archaeology service, offering further opportunity for public involvement with a viewing gallery and space for educational workshops. The existing sports pitches and courts will also be developed.

Councillors called for further public transport links to the centre and increased use of solar power with environmentally friendly lighting.

Cllr Roger Walters welcomed the news and said: "The centre is already a showcase for environmentally sustainable building and recreation. This nearly £1.75m investment will transform Gt Notley as a centre for recreation and sports, while putting Braintree on map for environmental heritage and archaeology." He added: "We also want to consider options for the site as a regional attraction for seasonal events."

Essex County Cllr Peter Martin, Cabinet Member for Environment, Planning and Assets, said: "I am delighted planning permission has been granted for this unique and exciting scheme between Essex County and Braintree District Councils.

"As part of the work, a new home will be created for the Essex County Council Field Archaeology Unit, which will give visitors the chance, not only to delve into the county's rich archaeological heritage, but also to see archaeologists at work.

"The development of this flagship site is tremendous news for Braintree and the wider community and will make Great Notley Country Park and Discovery Centre a thriving and stimulating attraction." **ENDS**

For more information contact Chris Trim on 01376 557752 or Toby Allanson (ECC) 01245 430094 Issued by Braintree DC PR 24 October 2007

MEMBERS' FOCUS

News

Many neighbourhoods to gain from housing transfer

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At the 29th October meeting, Braintree District Council's Cabinet endorsed the final transfer of the Council's housing and related assets to the new local Greenfields Community Housing association.

Following a year-long process of consultation, when tenants voted decisively in favour of the transfer, the legal process is nearing a conclusion.

Council leader Cllr Graham Butland emphasises the benefit to the whole community. He says: "The £100million plus investment is over 30 years and we have set up nearly £13million in a special community fund which will bring massive benefits to local communities throughout the District – not just council tenants. Almost every other house in council managed areas is now privately owned and these residents will gain from neighbourhood improvements brought about by the new investment. A huge proportion of the money will find its way into the local economy for years to come: to the advantage of local businesses as well as residents."

With the Cabinet decision, the initial five year investment programme can begin: including installation of 4756 new kitchens, 1,708 new bathrooms, 1,866 new heating systems and re-wiring for over 5,000 homes. These numbers are far more than the Council would otherwise be able to fund.

A new specialist team will be created to deal with anti-social behaviour and a 'handyman' service will be established to help older tenants with decorating and minor repairs.

The £13million community fund is to be provided 50/50 between Council and housing association and is to be used for investment in jointly agreed schemes for the benefit of the whole community.

An additional fund of £5.6million will be set aside for improvements to sheltered housing.

ENDS

Link to cabinet report - <http://www.braintree.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/2B755395-AB35-42E0-A023-6A69E20C6690/0/Item5aHousingTransfercomplete.pdf>

For more information contact Chris Trim on 01376 557752

Issued by Braintree DC PR 1 November 2007

MEMBERS' FOCUS

News

Progress check as pool construction nears completion.

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With the new Braintree Swimming Centre set to open early in the new year, Councillor Wendy Schmitt visited to see for herself the £7million centre nearing completion.

The pool will open to local clubs and schools early in 2008, with an official opening on **Saturday 23rd February**.

Cllr Wendy Schmitt comments: "It is exciting to see the new swimming pool filling and the final stages of construction and finishing. The opening will be a fantastic start to the new year."

All stages of filling and first heating are carried out deliberately slowly, to allow the new building and its environmental systems to adjust and become acclimatised to the change of temperature.

New fun pool equipment will arrive from the USA early in January from a leading American manufacturer. It will include a colourful beach boat slide designed for toddlers and small children and for older children and teenagers, an array of interactive water spouts and jets, water wheel and bucket, designed to respond to swimmers' activity.

ENDS

For more press information contact: Chris Trim 01376 557752.

Issued by: Braintree DC PR 19 November 2007

MEMBERS' FOCUS

News

Council aims to reduce travel and parking

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Braintree District Council aims to show leadership in carbon reduction and sustainability. Reducing energy use, pollution and costs are at the heart of a new policy proposal considered by the Cabinet on 29th October.

The proposal looks at the council's own transport and staff travel needs and identifies several opportunities to reduce vehicle use and cost, while encouraging more active lifestyles.

Reduction of work related journeys and control of mileage allowances through use of pool cars and cycles can be encouraged by reduction in car parking provision, while at the same time training people for more economical driving. Car sharing will be encouraged, along with better journey planning.

Surveys of journeys to work conducted earlier this year, reveal that a 4 out of ten staff live within two to four miles of Causeway House, yet many drive to work because they know they may need to travel during the day.

Cllr Robert Mitchell is deputy cabinet member for environment, and says: "The Council aims to encourage less reliance on cars and to make a real contribution to carbon reduction by setting an example for itself and other local organisations. This is a challenge which we cannot ignore."

ENDS

Link to report. <http://www.braintree.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/455A5A05-CB3B-4482-80C3-AF94A8503CB0/0/GreenTravelPlanReportv103.pdf>

For more information contact Chris Trim on 01376 557752

Issued by Braintree DC PR 1 November 2007

MEMBERS' FOCUS

News

Volunteers plant great oak

Local volunteers met with Chairman of Braintree District Council Cllr Lady Patricia Newton and Essex County Council Vice Chairman Cllr Connie Hart early this week to plant a 30' oak tree to mark the start of the £50,000 Bocking Blackwater river walk improvement scheme: funded by Essex County Council as part of the Radio 5LIVE local democracy project earlier this year. The semi-mature tree was craned into position, overlooking the river walk flood management area, watched by pupils from Great Bradfords county primary school, which adjoins the river walk area. The pupils have all taken part in a competition to design a plaque for the project, won by classmate 11 year old Yasmin Fyzool.

The six month scheme will include a further 15 semi-mature trees, 200 new sapling trees, naturalistic play and climbing equipment and benches at intervals along a new winding nature trail. A plan shows the improvements worked out by the 20 strong group of local resident volunteers, who will do much of the preparation and installation work. (Friends of Bocking Blackwater – one of the electoral wards on which the project was based.)

ENDS

For more information contact Chris Trim on 01376 557752

Issued by Braintree DC PR 16 November 2007

7158 Bocking tree 01b - Chairman Lady Patricia Newton, competition winner Yasmin Fyzool and ECC Vice Chairman Connie Hart with children from Gt. Bradfords country primary school.

7158 Bocking tree 02b - Chairman Lady Patricia Newton and ECC Vice Chairman Connie Hart with local volunteers the Friends of Bocking Blackwater.

MEMBERS' FOCUS

News

Councils consider sharing services

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Braintree District and Colchester Borough councils are to consider the opportunities for greater efficiency and cost saving offered by sharing the work of several local services. Braintree endorsed an initial decision at Cabinet on 31st October.

Council leader Cllr Graham Butland comments: "We are exploring the possibilities, which may lead to our two councils working more closely together, sharing common resources where it is practical and sensible to do so. I stress it is not a merger, because both organisations will continue to exist, serving two separate and democratically elected councils representing people in their own areas. Depending on the opportunities, some services may integrate very closely: for instance we already have the same information technology provider, and we know that where each council has developed particular services to an excellent standard, that service could grow to serve both areas.

He adds: "Where excellence is obvious, it will be encouraged and changes will occur at a pace which allows staff and the organisations themselves to adapt; taking several years. It will be important to keep the best and to avoid spoiling anything which already works well."

Understanding the existing structures, needs and community partnerships will be done through 2008, leading to a review of service / sharing opportunities in 2009.

A project board will be established to represent both councils.

ENDS

Link to report. <http://www.braintree.gov.uk/NR/ronlyres/45164A69-9020-43B8-BDDA-D1CD38F9D1D6/0/WorkingTogetherColchesterBoroughCouncil.pdf>

For more information contact Chris Trim on 01376 557752

Issued by Braintree DC PR - 1 November 2007

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News

Upgraded telephone system improves customer service

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Braintree District Council is upgrading its telephone system with a new self selection option to improve customer service and connect callers directly with the person who can help with their request.

From 31st October 2007, the new system will give customers their choice of service by short selection lists (no more than six options, in two 'layers') instead of waiting for the switchboard to answer. In effect, callers will use their keypad to begin their enquiry, rather than waiting for the switchboard to answer.

Cllr Jo Beavis comments: "We recognise that however many people we have to answer the phones, there are busy times when callers are kept waiting. This new system will help to route calls closer to the people who have the answers, improving efficiency and saving time for everyone."

The system will identify a caller's dialled destination and offer options for that service to provide a better response, **and will include calls to Greenfields Community Housing** while they are based at Causeway House.

Bringing in this new system will help the Council to track customer demand and allocate resources to match it, by knowing more directly which services get the most calls. Cllr Beavis adds: "It's part of our continuing Customer First programme, which aims for greater performance and cost savings. By already setting up a sophisticated customer service centre, we have improved the way calls are answered and progressed. This next step is a further refinement of the need to match staff and information resources to customer needs."

ENDS

Notes: The Council's telephone system manages over 200 lines, taking more than 50,000 calls each month of which 2,500 are received every Monday morning. The upgrade will increase efficiency and capacity, providing management information and data, which existing or additional staff would not be able to provide.

For more information contact Chris Trim on 01376 557752

Issued by Braintree DC PR 24 October 2007

MEMBERS' FOCUS

News

Council to publish guidelines on roadside banners and signs.

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Braintree District Council's Cabinet agreed the publication of a new guide on advertising and fly-posting such as fund-raising posters, signs and banners. The guide will explain what is and what is not acceptable.

The Council will act against fly posting and indiscriminate advertising which does not have consent or which can be a road safety hazard. The Council's Clean Team has been instructed to remove all offending signs, and store them for a reasonable time to give people the opportunity to reclaim them.

Cllr Roger Walters leads on environment at Cabinet and says: "Graffiti and fly posting is persistent problem across the District. The Council needs to act positively if it is keep it under control which is why we have adopted a policy which means that we shall remove any signs or banners which do not have consent.

There are many legitimate opportunities for people to advertise local fund raising events without spoiling highways and green areas. Charity events can often have 'deemed consent' so organisers should check what is permitted and ask for a copy of the guidance to be published by the Council."

Charities and community events can be advertised without council permission for up to 28 days, as long as the advertiser has the permission of the landowner on which the notice is posted. If it's on highway or public land, permission would still be required and unapproved signs will be removed.

The simplest option is to ask permission on private land and comply with the guidance regarding the size and type of signs used.

Education and guidance will be the council's preferred approach, however there is existing legislation to enable direct action, including fixed penalty notices.

ENDS

Link to cabinet report: <http://www.braintree.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/4E2D86CF-68D3-4831-B0D6-4BB74C1D0DA4/0/GuideonEnforcementofFlyposting.pdf>

For more information contact Chris Trim on 01376 557752

Issued by Braintree DC PR - 1 November 2007

News

Homes for local people

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People with connections to a north Essex village could soon be moving into brand new homes.

Anyone living in Belchamp Walter, or who has links to the village such as relatives, will go to the top of the list for one of six homes included in the development in Gestingthorpe Road.

Originally there were four Braintree District Council bungalows on the site, all empty and in a state of considerable disrepair. Renovation and repair costs were considered too high to make it economic to retain the homes.

Instead, the council's strategic housing team was asked to look into ways of making use of the site to provide new affordable housing.

Hastoe Housing Association, one of many with which the council works to provide affordable housing in the district, was invited to come up with a scheme in consultation with the parish.

A development of two and three-bedroom houses was identified as being the most suitable. Two of these will be offered for outright sale and four on a shared equity basis, enabling the project to be self-funding.

Councillor Jo Beavis, cabinet member for community support and engagement, said: "It would be really good if we could house people who have local connections – perhaps some of them have given up all hope of being able to afford somewhere in their village.

"It is vital for the future of our rural communities that we do all we can to help people to remain within them by providing homes which they can afford."

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“The council is committed to providing high quality affordable housing and by working in partnership with associations which share this commitment we are able to make a real difference.”

Anyone interested in buying a property outright or on a part rent basis should contact Hastoe Housing Association Development Team on 01799 533490.

ENDS

For more information contact David Steel, housing enabling officer, on 01376 551414

Issued by Braintree DC PR 23 October 2007

MEMBERS' FOCUS

AREA: Environment

CORPORATE THEME HEADING: Caring for the Environment

SUBJECT: Environment	CONTACT OFFICER: Stuart Thompson
TEL/EMAIL :No.Ext 2217 stuth@braintree.gov.uk	BACKGROUND PAPERS: None
INFORMATION:	
<p>At Chelmsford Magistrates Court on Monday 12th November 2007 four members of the same family were convicted for failure to comply with an abatement notice served under Section 80 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 for the accumulation of waste.</p> <p>The first complaint was received by the Dog Warden on the 23rd April 2007 of an excessive accumulation of dog faeces. The Dog Warden visited the premises and observed rear garden of 52 Queens Road, which was found to be heavily fouled and considered that there was a breach of the abatement notice, which was served on the occupiers on the 21st November 2006.</p> <p>On the 25th April a letter was sent to all 4 occupants of the property informing them that they had breached the abatement notice and a subsequent visit confirmed that the garden waste now clear of waste.</p> <p>On the 18th May 2007 a further complaint was received of an excessive accumulation of dog faeces in rear garden of 52 Queens Road. The Dog Warden then visited the premises and witnessed 36 piles of dog faeces.</p> <p>As a result of complaints a further two breaches of the abatement notice were witnessed on the 6th June and on the 19th July and as a result a file was put forward for prosecution.</p> <p>Neither Alan & Suzanne Engel or Simon & Rocky Jobson attended Court, however, Alan & Suzanne Engel had written to the Court entering a guilty plea by post. After hearing the Council's evidence, the Magistrates ordered the following:-</p> <p>Alan Engel - Credit was given for his early guilty plea and was Fined £100.00 (£33.33 for each breach of the abatement Notice - 3 in total) and Ordered to Pay £115.00 towards the Prosecution Costs.</p> <p>Suzanne Engel - Credit was given for her early guilty plea and was Fined £100.00 (£33.33 for each breach of the abatement Notice - 3 in total) and Ordered to Pay £115.00 towards the Prosecution Costs.</p> <p>Simon Jobson - As the matter was proved in absence due to no plea being</p>	

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entered - was Fined £200.00 (£50.00 for each breach of the abatement Notice - 4 in total) and Ordered to Pay £115.00 towards the Prosecution Costs.

Rocky Jobson - As the matter was proved in absence due to no plea being entered - was Fined £200.00 (£50.00 for each breach of the abatement Notice - 4 in total) and Ordered to Pay £115.00 towards the Prosecution Costs.

MEMBERS' FOCUS

AREA: ALL

CORPORATE THEME HEADING: Helping People Feel Safe And Well/A Better Place to Live, Work and Play.

SUBJECT: Food safety and health and safety newsletter – focused on pubs and clubs	CONTACT OFFICER: Lisa Buckland
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INFORMATION: The Health Protection team recently sent a letter to all of the pubs and clubs currently on our database in the District. The 8-page newsletter (a copy of which can be found on the health and safety and food web pages), contained articles on the smoking legislation and the use of gardens, recent changes to the food hygiene legislation, accommodation above pubs / clubs, cellar safety, laughing gas, bouncy castles, accident notification, slips and trips, food poisoning, risk assessment, food hygiene courses, The Noise at Work Regulations, Scores on the doors, beer line cleaning, Healthy Eating awards and Food allergy. The pubs and clubs were invited to ring the service if they have any food hygiene or health and safety queries.	