

## VDS Guidelines and Survey Responses

The survey was distributed between the 24<sup>th</sup> April 2012 and the 27<sup>th</sup> April 2012 with the Survey Return Date being 12<sup>th</sup> May 2012, which represents the baseline date for all views expressed. The survey was completed within the context of the on-going public consultations for the generation of the Local Development Framework documents by Braintree District Council in response to the NPPF.

This survey provides an insight into the views of the parishioners of Great Maplestead and as such, the desirability, or otherwise, of living in a rural parish with its lifestyle and environment. The guidelines are derived from the responses to questions that the parishioners have placed weight on or are high impact questions, over and above the usual Essex Design Guidelines and BDC planning policy.

Survey type	Distributed	Returned	Return rate
Adult	273	250	91%
Youth	32	24	75%

Below is a summary of the results, which allows the parishioners quantified majority views to be understood and to help establish the representative nature of statements made.

### The Guidelines

Guideline		Evidential cross references
<b>GM1</b>	Developments should only be permitted where it does not detract from the rural nature <sup>2</sup> of the Parish and the farming and countryside landscape	Q1(a), Q1(b) Q1(c), Q4
<b>GM2</b>	Ensure farming is a continuously supported business by appropriate implementation of local planning policy	Page 13 Q1(a)
<b>GM3</b>	Ensure the following facilities are retained for community use and social value: 1. Village hall 2. Village playing field 3. Church 4. School playing field	Page 4,5 Q1(b) Q1(c) Q1(d)
<b>GM4</b>	Maintain and preserve the character, for leisure use of the: 1. Countryside lanes 2. Footpaths 3. Bridleways	Page 11,13 Q1(c) Q2, Q4
<b>GM5</b>	Retain the village shape and structure with regards to: 1. Spaciousness, i.e. avoid disproportionate cramming of new dwellings 2. Architectural features in the specific character areas, as can be assessed from the character area descriptions and the Parishioners views with regards to building features as expressed in GM28, 29, 30 and 31 3. Linear development style 4. Open and green spaces	Page 14 to 31 Q15, Q16 Q17, Q18 Q12(a) Q12(b)

<sup>2</sup> The 'rural nature' relates to the specific countryside / country life attributes of Great Maplestead as described in 'Introduction', 'Landscape Character' and 'Countryside' sections

<b>GM6</b>	Retain public access for their visual characteristics and enjoyment to the following green spaces: 1. Village playing field 2. School playing field 3. Churchyard 4. and accessible fields, woods and copses (via footpaths)	Q2
<b>GM7</b>	The currently protected spaces of the churchyard and village playing field should be retained and the school playing field should be added to the protected list at the earliest opportunity	Q2
<b>GM8</b>	The unique local landscape character of Great Maplestead associated with the conjunction of the three landscape character areas of the Colne River Valley, the Yeldham Farmland Plateau and the Wickham Farmland Plateau should be emphasised and retained, in particular the important views from the village overlooking the countryside beyond must be safeguarded	Page 11 to 13 Q3
<b>GM9</b>	Ensure that the listed buildings are maintained and their surroundings form a suitable setting for their historic nature	Q5
<b>GM10</b>	Identify and implement suitable methods to reduce the speed of traffic in appropriate areas	Q6, Q8 Q20, Q21
<b>GM11</b>	Take action to: 1. Restore and maintain the road side verges and grass triangles 2. Prevent future damage to the verges and grass triangles	Q8
<b>GM12</b>	Refrain from the introduction of further: 1. Street lighting, i.e. retain the 'dark sky' approach 2. Pavements	Q6, Q7, Q8
<b>GM13</b>	Avoid the installation of visually intrusive infrastructure items such as overhead National Grid cables with associated pylons, transformers, mobile phones masts in the Parish	Q7
<b>GM14</b>	The installation of high speed fibre optic broadband is a high priority and should be encouraged	Q8
<b>GM15</b>	The provision of more off-street parking by the residents of Church Street, if so desired by those residents, should be supported	Q8
<b>GM16</b>	The provision of mains gas should be considered	Q8
<b>GM17</b>	Allotments space should be provided if requested by any resident	Q8
<b>GM18</b>	There may be some support for a small amount of residential development which should be restricted to infill sites within the development boundary on which 2-3 bedroom family houses would be preferred	Q10(a), Q10(b), Q12(a)
<b>GM19</b>	If a local need is demonstrated there may be some support for a small amount of affordable housing development	Q10(b)
<b>GM20</b>	All developments should be within the village development boundary unless rural exceptions apply	Q12(a)
<b>GM21</b>	The Parishioners opinion has indicated that more than 6 additional properties, within the development boundary, would be detrimental to village character	Q9
<b>GM22</b>	New retail, office and commercial premises should not be encouraged except in the case of redundant farm buildings where conversion to other uses should be permitted in accordance with national and local planning...	Q11

<b>GM22 (cont.)</b>	policies for the rural economy. This should be conditional that the new business use is in keeping with the rural character and infrastructure of Great Maplestead	
<b>GM23</b>	Any development within the development boundary should be restricted to infill sites	Q12(a)
<b>GM24</b>	In submitting / assessing any planning application, the appropriate section of the Great Maplestead VDS report should be consulted with reference to the Parish needs and the local character, history and materials adjacent to the proposed development site together with the VDS report guidelines	Page 3 VDS report
<b>GM25</b>	Developments must be sympathetic with and complement the character of the immediate surrounding area particularly with regard to: 1. Scale 2. Density 3. Design	Q12(b)
<b>GM26</b>	In any development of more than one dwelling, consideration should be given to using different building styles and designs, dependant on site characteristics	Q12(b)
<b>GM27</b>	In any development of a single dwelling, it should have a style that sympathetically integrates with existing properties around but may vary from that style	Q12(b)
<b>GM28</b>	Alterations to existing buildings should be sympathetic with the style of the building being altered and the surrounding buildings	Q12(b)
<b>GM29</b>	For roofs, traditional materials such as slate or clay tiles and thatch are considered desirable and should be encouraged	Q15
<b>GM30</b>	The exterior finishing of the walls of buildings, with weatherboard, red brick, Essex rendered plaster and flint are all well regarded and should be encouraged	Q16
<b>GM31</b>	Encourage the use of traditional window and door materials where appropriate to the building and area under consideration	Q17
<b>GM32</b>	Encourage the use of boundary features such as: 1. older 'recycled' brick walls, flint walls 2. or softer features such as ornamental hedges, wooden picket or hurdle type fencing	Q18
<b>GM33</b>	Agricultural field hedging should be retained	Q18
<b>GM34</b>	Ensure that the visual aspect of any renewable energy infrastructure is fully taken into account to avoid unsightly placement	Q19
<b>GM35</b>	Consider the use of HGV / weight or similar signage to restrict HGV vehicles except for access to local farm, business and residents services	Q20, Q21
<b>GM36</b>	Consider implementing single track road signs on narrow lanes	Q20, Q21
Other views expressed:-		
Retain the 'hail and ride' bus facility		Q20, Q21
Ensure that glass recycling facilities are retained and are user friendly		Q27

## The Survey Responses

The guidelines have been derived from the majority parishioner views as expressed in the survey.

The survey results were presented to the parishioners at an open day meeting in the village hall on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2012 and also made available on the VDS website:

[http://www.essexinfo.net/GreatMaplestead\\_vds/](http://www.essexinfo.net/GreatMaplestead_vds/)

A printed copy was placed in St. Giles Church.

The results are generally presented in the form:

- 'Question number' and 'the question asked', for example, '1(a). Does the following contribute to your enjoyment of living in Great Maplestead'
- The questions are then broken down into separate sub-questions where specific areas are considered, for example 'rural nature'
- The pie chart of those who expressed a view (with the number in each sector). In the case that there are two sectors with low votes and the normal format causes an overlap of numbers, the 'disagree' number is to the upper left of the 'strongly disagree' which is placed nearer the centre of the chart. When no votes are cast for the option, '0' votes are not shown
- A brief commentary of the results

The derived guidelines are from the majority views and are presented in the previous section pages 32 to 34 inclusive ('Guidelines').




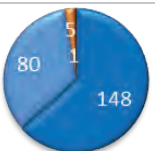
The general format of the survey responses is a pie chart with the number of votes for an option in the 'strongly agree' or 'agree' or 'disagree' or 'strongly disagree' categories.

The legend for the pie chart colours (except for one specific question (Q9) which has its own legend) is as follows:-

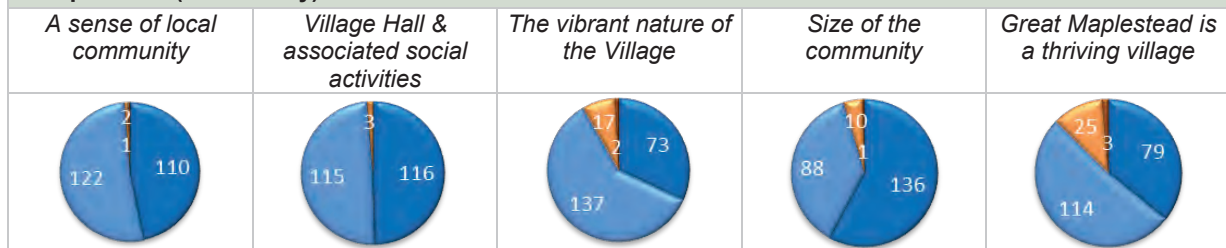
 Strongly Agree
  Agree
  Disagree
  Strongly Disagree

*The legend generally used for the pie charts*

## Living in and Enjoyment of Great Maplestead

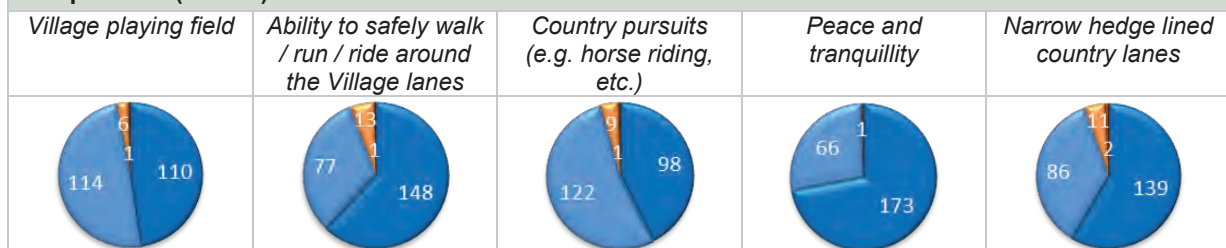
Q1(a). Do you agree or disagree that the following Contribute to your Enjoyment of living in Great Maplestead (countryside)?			
Countryside / open spaces / setting	Rural location and character	Mixture of farming and residential areas	Varied landscape character areas
			
The countryside, rural character and landscape are all major contributors to Great Maplestead as a Parish. The farming element, as an integral feature of the settlement and its contribution to the character, is well regarded			

## Q1(b). Do you agree or disagree that the following Contribute to your Enjoyment of living in Great Maplestead (community)?



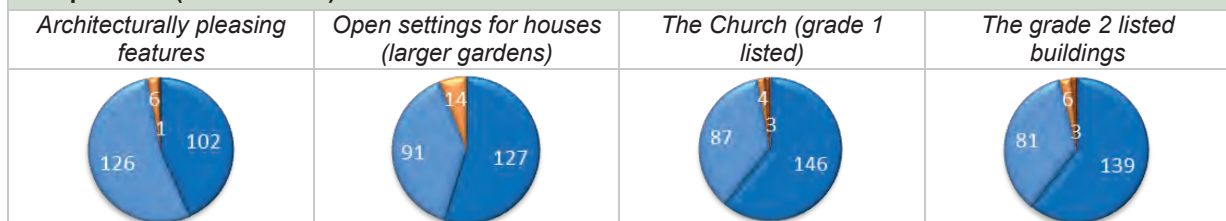
The responses indicate a thriving village with a good sense of a balanced community. The community size and social activities combine to give a thriving and vibrant village

## Q1(c). Do you agree or disagree that the following Contribute to your Enjoyment of living in Great Maplestead (leisure)?



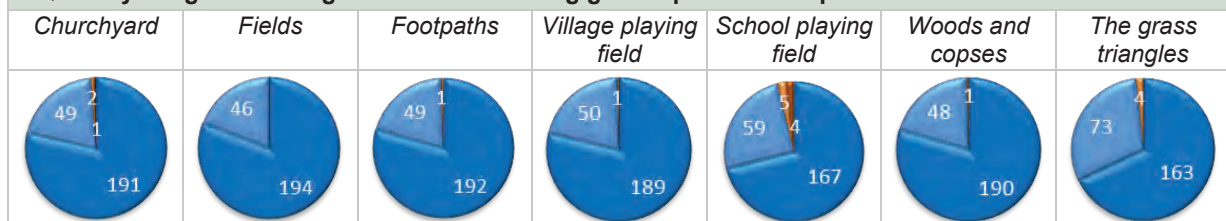
The rural nature is a key element in parishioners leisure activities. The use and nature of the countryside provides opportunities for less frantic pursuits

## Q1(d). Do you agree or disagree that the following Contribute to your Enjoyment of living in Great Maplestead (architectural)?



The physical distribution and style of dwellings with the high concentration of listed structures provides an enjoyable physical environment


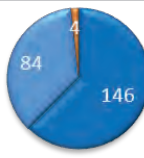


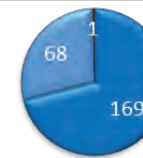
## Q2. Do you agree or disagree that the following green spaces are important?




The green spaces are highly important features in the village character. Without exception a strong view




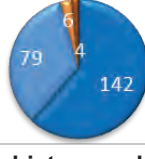
## Q3. Do you agree or disagree that these views are important to the character of Great Maplestead?

The entry routes into the Parish	The entry routes into the Village	From the Church	To the Church	Generally, views all round
				
The countryside setting, the abundance of green spaces and generally rolling hill features result in views, from both within the Parish and the village, that are regarded as integral to the character of the Parish				

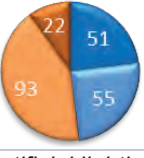
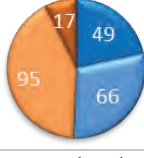
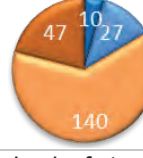
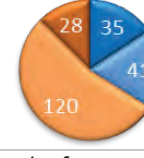
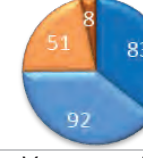
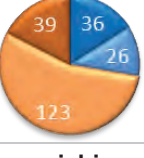
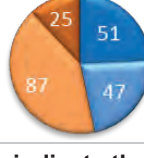
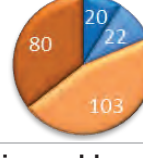
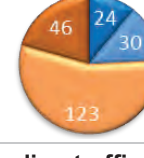
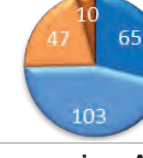
## Q4. Do you agree or disagree that the country lanes, verges and hedgerows are important?

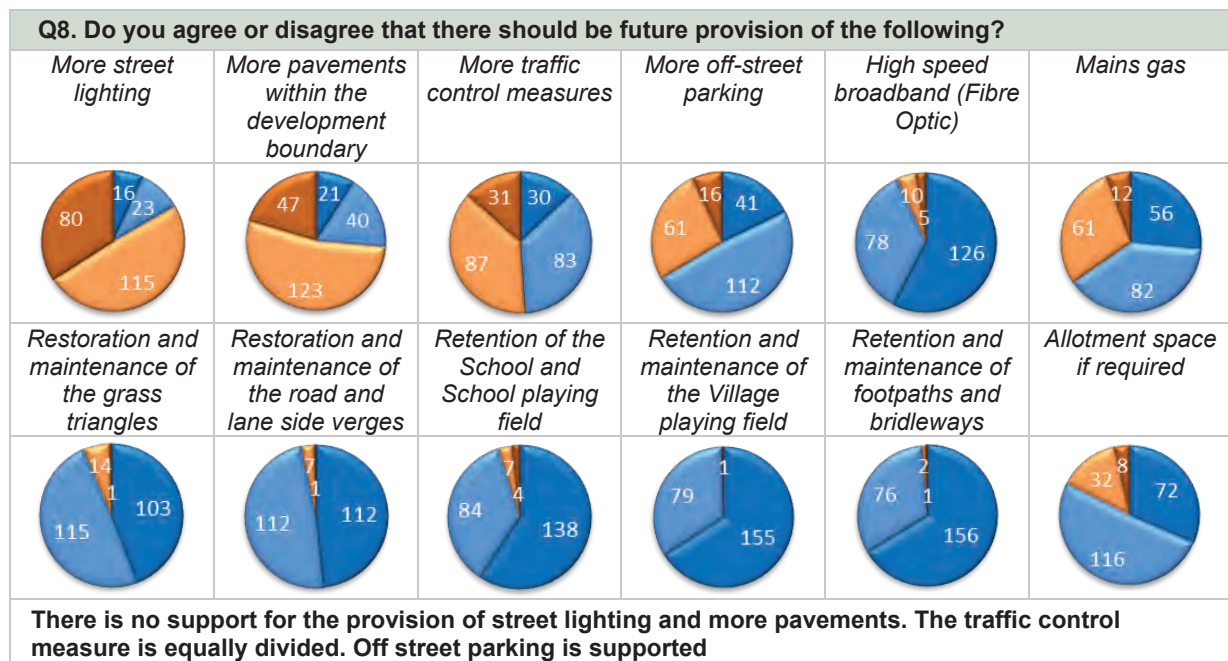
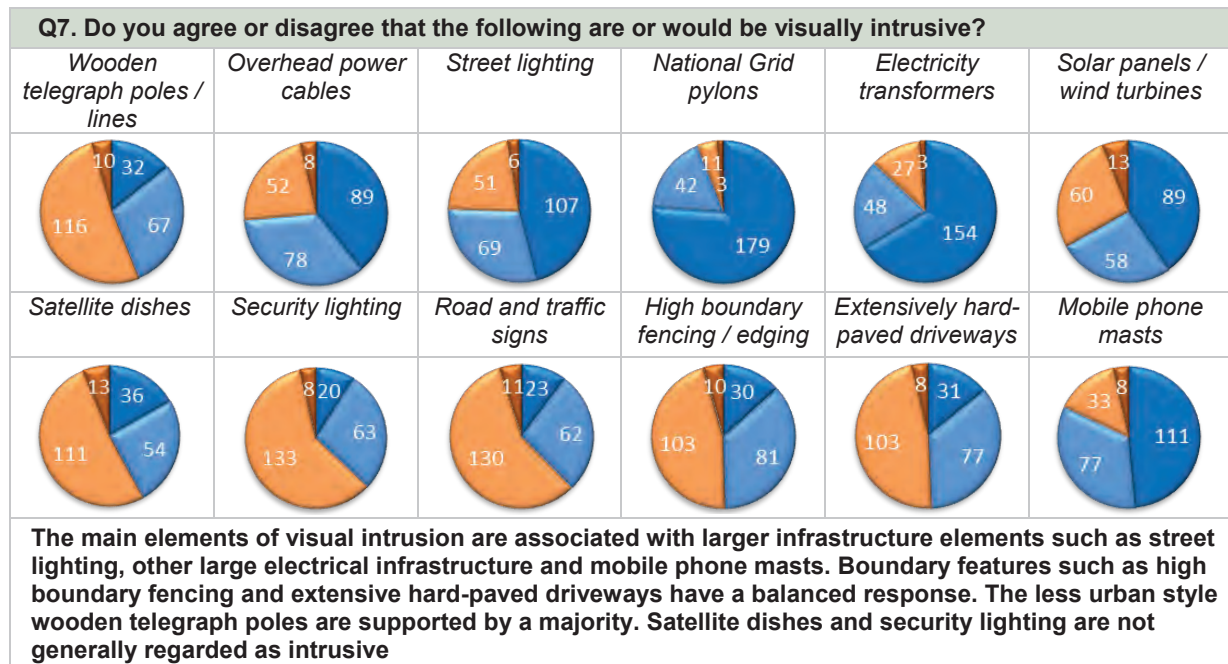
Average for all categories(i) to (v)	They are important for walking, (i) both generally and for (ii) dog exercising, (iii) personal exercising, (iv) horse riding and (v) providing a wildlife friendly environment
	There is a very strong view that the countryside nature of the lanes is valued for a variety of activities and reasons

## Q5. Do you agree or disagree that these buildings contribute a sense of history and character?

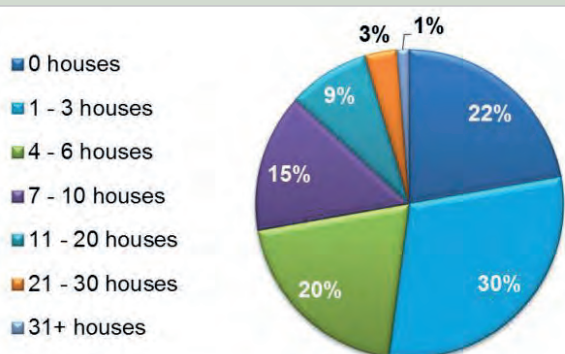
The Church (C 12 <sup>th</sup> century)	Average of selected grade two listed structure
	
The high proportion of listed structures in the Parish contribute to both history and character	

## Q6. Do you agree or disagree that the following are a problem to Great Maplestead?

Roads and lane capacity	Access to transport links	Noise levels	Traffic density	Traffic speed
				
Artificial lighting	Sewage treatment capacity	Lack of street lighting	Lack of pavements	Verge erosion
				
The parishioners' views indicate that the major problems are <u>speeding traffic</u> and <u>verge erosion</u> . A substantial majority identify these issues. Noise levels, lack of street lighting and lack of pavements are not regarded as a problem by a substantial majority. There is a balanced comment on road capacity, sewage treatment and access to transport links with no strong view. Artificial lighting is generally regarded as not a problem				



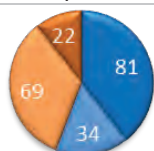
**Q9. How many additional houses in total do you think Great Maplestead could accommodate without detriment to its character?**



The parishioners majority view is that visually the village could accommodate up to 6 additional houses

**Q10(a). Do you agree or disagree that additional housing is needed?**

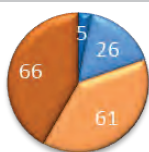
*No new housing is required*



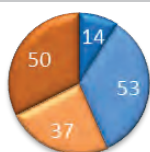
The majority consider there is no need for new housing according to their perception of local need. However, there is a significant minority who consider there is a local need

**Q10(b). ... if so what type of housing?**

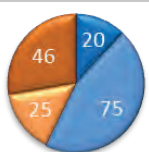
*Single person homes*



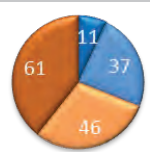
*2 bedroom family homes*



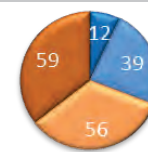
*2 - 3 bedroom family homes*



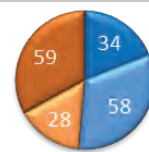
*3 - 4 bedroom family homes*



*Sheltered accommodation*



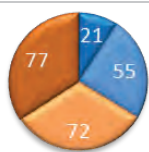
*Affordable homes*



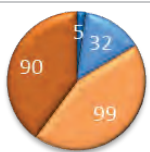
For those who consider housing is needed, this establishes what type of housing is needed. The two types with majorities are 2 to 3 bedroom family homes and affordable homes. There are substantial majorities that consider single person homes, 3 to 4 bedroom homes and sheltered accommodation for the elderly are not needed to meet local needs

**Q11. Do you agree or disagree that the following premises should be provided?**

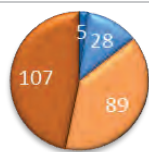
*Retail premises*



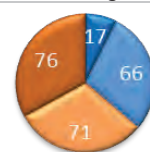
*Office / business space*



*Small industrial units*



*Business premises by the conversions of agricultural buildings*

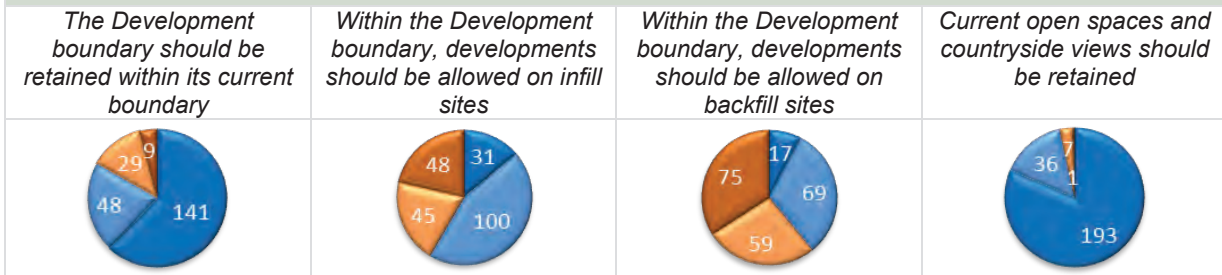


The majority view is that business premises should not be provided. Of special note is the view against the conversion of non-redundant agricultural buildings, this reflects the strong parishioner views that farming is an integral activity to the village and is to be retained



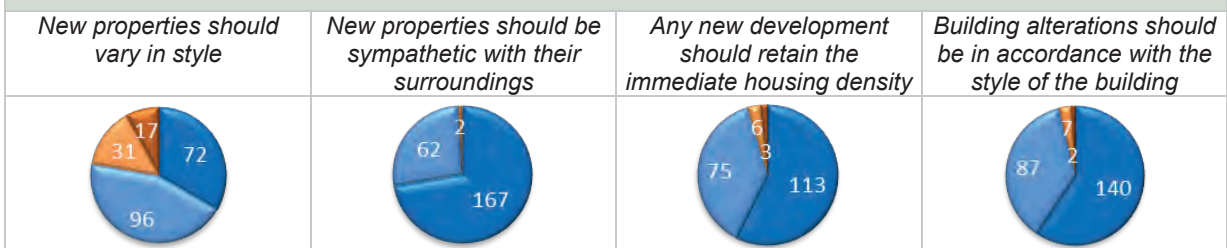
## Planning

**Q12(a). The shape and structure of Great Maplestead, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**



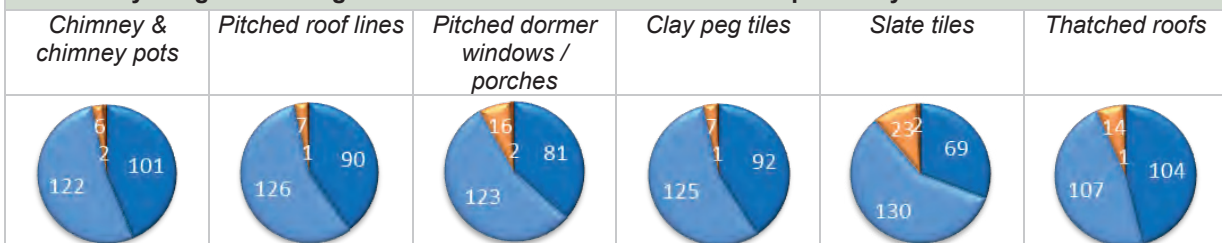
There was a substantial view that the village envelope should be retained. Any permitted development should be focused on infill sites as opposed to backfill sites, thereby retaining the linear character of the village. Open space and countryside views retained

**Q12(b). The shape and structure of Great Maplestead, do you agree or disagree with the following statements?**



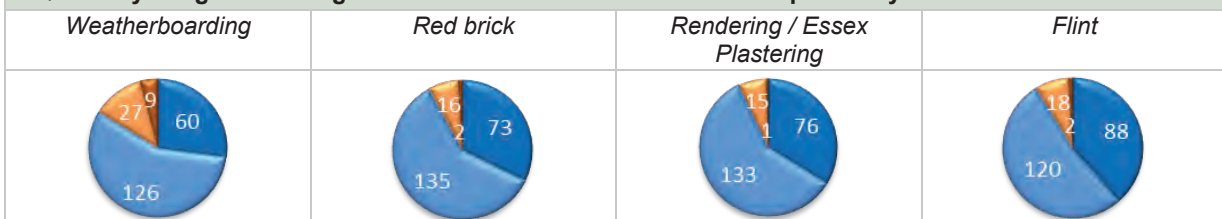
The view is that any new properties should vary in style but retain sympathy with their surroundings and be in proportion to the immediate housing density

**Q15. Do you agree or disagree that these roof features contribute positively to character?**



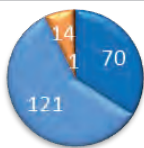
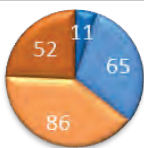
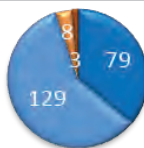
Of the roof features highlighted all were acceptable as alternatives. Pitch roof lines are preferred

**Q16. Do you agree or disagree that these wall features contribute positively to the character?**


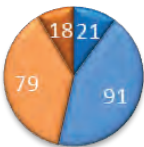

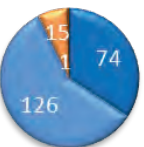
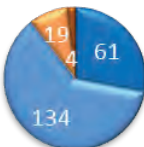

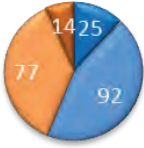

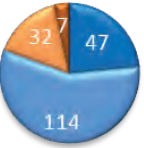


The wall features varying from weatherboard through red brick plastering and flint were all regarded as positive features

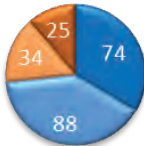
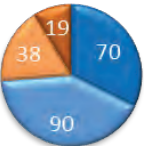
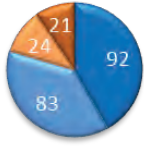
## Q17. Do you agree or disagree that these door & window features contribute positively to the Parish?

<i>Panelled wooden frame</i>	<i>UPVC</i>	<i>Wooden framed</i>
		
The preferred window and door materials were regarded as wooden, the more modern UPVC was not favoured despite its environmental and maintenance advantages		

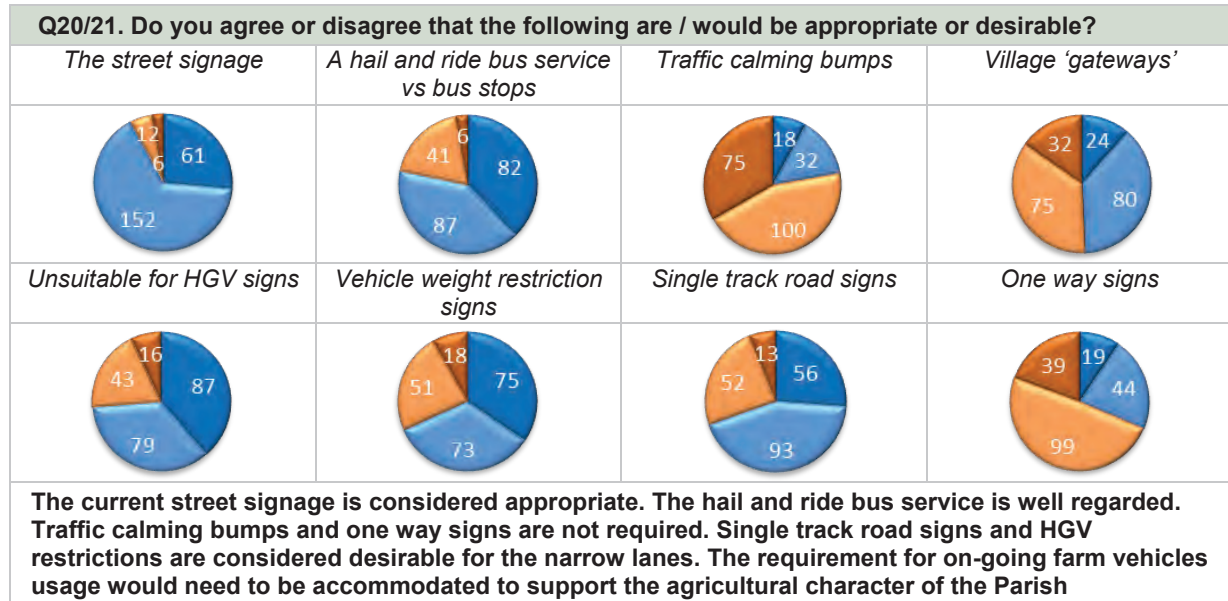
## Q18. Do you agree or disagree that the following boundary features contribute positively to the Parish?

<i>Old brick walls</i>	<i>New brick walls</i>	<i>Flint walls</i>	<i>Ornamental garden hedges</i>	<i>Wooden picket fences</i>
				
<i>Agricultural hedges</i>	<i>Close-board fences</i>	<i>Spacious gardens</i>	<i>Hurdle fences</i>	<i>Not used</i>
				Not used
The preferred boundary features are older brick walls, flint walls, ornamental hedges, wooden picket fences or hurdle combined with spacious gardens are effective boundary features. Agricultural hedging is well regarded				

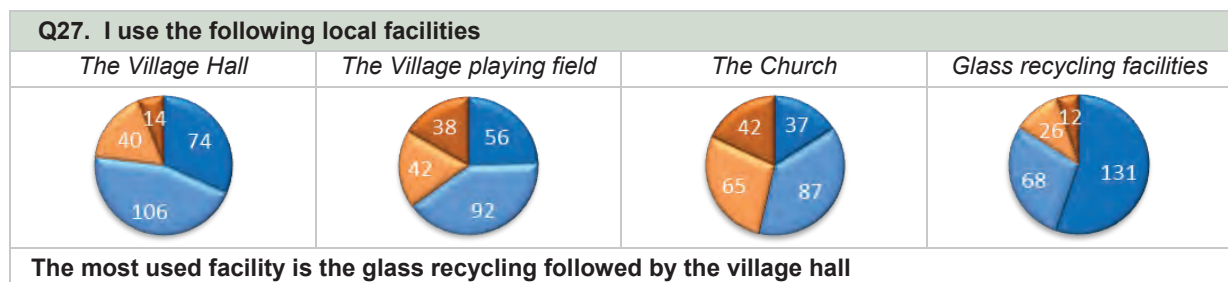
## Q19. Do you agree or disagree that attention should be given to the visual impact on the Parish?

<i>Solar panels on roofs</i>	<i>Solar panels on the ground</i>	<i>Wind generators</i>
		
The view is that consideration should be given to the visual aspect of alternative energy sources		

## Design Features



## General Information



## Youth Questionnaire

Out of the 32 questionnaires distributed, 24 were returned by 9 males and 15 females. 23 were in full time education and 18 have lived in the Parish for 11-17 years. Generally the youth and adult responses were similar.

Green spaces (24 yes 0 no) and rural nature being equally important (22 yes 2 no). The youth community was less certain that the village was a vibrant (15 yes 9 no) and thriving community (13 yes 10 no) and more considered that transport links were a difficulty (17 yes 4 no).

There was less concern with the visual impact of solar panels (11 yes 11 no) but more keen on pavements (13 yes 8 no) and traffic calming measures (13 yes 11 no).

## Production and Acknowledgements



- This document was produced in two phases, the first in 2008-2009 and the second in 2012-2013
- A key element to the Great Maplestead VDS was a strong desire that the parishioners views be reflected in this document and the views presented are the majority views as evidenced by the survey results
- Public meetings were held by the VDS Committee at which the VDS process, the reason for the survey and the use to which it would be put were explained and comments and questions from parishioners were received
- This was assisted by expert advice provided by a representative of the RCCE and BDC Planning Department
- The anonymous nature of the questionnaire was regarded as an important element and this was preserved all through the process. A professional company specialising in data analysis was used to generate the results
- The results were presented at an open day in the village hall on the 15<sup>th</sup> September 2012 and comments received
- The document was developed over the next year and reviewed at several village hall meetings

There has been considerable support to this enterprise by many parishioners and other parties whom we thank. We especially note and thank the parishioners for their excellent response to the questionnaire and constructive observations who made this a truly representative document.

The Great Maplestead VDS committee wish to thank all those who have contributed either time, resources or funds to help this happen.

The committee members for the second phase and production of this final document were: Bill Bowers, Jean Bowers, Julie Breed, Mary Elms, Chris Hunnab, Paul Knight, Simon Last, David Money, David Oakes, Kevin Surgett, Charles Tindall, Peter Faulks and Francis Mortlock as a co-opted member to be called upon if required. Cllr. David Turner was the Parish Council representative monitoring the process, progress and community engagement.

<b>Acknowledgements</b>	<b>For</b>
<b>All the parishioners of Great Maplestead</b>	Patience, help and participation in events and completing the questionnaire and contributing their views and support at Parish meetings
<b>Those parishioners</b>	... who helped with organising and preparing events
<b>The National Lottery</b>	The majority of the funds (and patience)
<b>Greenfields Community Housing</b>	Financial (twice)
<b>The Great Maplestead Flower Show Committee</b>	Financial support and the use of the Flower Show for a photographic exhibition
<b>The Village Hall organising committee</b>	Making the village hall available for meetings
<b>Jan Cole and the RCCE</b>	Professional advice, review, comments and much effort
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<b>Great Maplestead Parish Council</b>	Financial support and support to the process
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<b>Warwick Data Analysis</b>	Professional data analysis
<b>Mrs Mary D'Albert</b>	Assistance in facilitating the prompt data analysis
<b>Mr and Mrs Simon and Julie Last</b>	Welcoming the parishioners into their home to help fund raising
<b>Mr Fernando Castro</b>	Loan of display facilities
<b>Mr Joe Newton</b>	Pictures and local knowledge
<b>Mr Bob Newman</b>	Proof reading
<b>Indigo Ross</b>	Printing of this document

At the start of this activity, the Village Flower Show hosted a photographic competition, including both adult and junior categories to 'Capture the Character of Great Maplestead'.

Some of those photos are used in the 'Images of Great Maplestead' section with other photographs of the Parish taken on the character assessment day or later updates.



## Images of Great Maplestead



*Hulls Mill*



*Toldish Hall Road*



*Church Street*



*Lucking Street*



*Church Street*



*Grass triangle at (u)*



*Church Street*



*Family memorial in St. Giles Church*





*Bridge over the River Colne*



*Barrett's Hall outbuilding*



*The village in the snow*



*Old chimney in Church Street*



*Dynes Hall*



# *GREAT MAPLESTEAD*

