

# MESSING CUM INWORTH PARISH PLAN 2007



# Messing cum Inworth Parish Plan

Prepared in consultation with the residents of  
Messing cum Inworth  
by the  
Parish Plan Steering Group  
on behalf of  
Messing cum Inworth Parish Council

## **Acknowledgements**

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## Introduction



Keeping the parish just as it is today may not be an option; communities inevitably evolve. Many factors are at play which will affect the parish not least that of devolution and new planning laws. There are a few live issues currently attracting attention, and in a year's time these might be resolved and a new batch arrived. The Plan has tried to acknowledge that things change, and to make recommendations accordingly. We have a unique character, a great ambience, and wonderful central assets, and we are proudly separate from other surrounding communities. The parish must retain its own identity and not become a dormitory community. Residents of the parish need to manage as much as possible their own destiny, but where matters depend on other parties then our involvement has to be active rather than passive. In this respect new developments and planning issues came out as high concerns in the survey and it will be important that a village design statement be produced after this document in order that the parish council can have more influence over planning issues. Short term projects, we hope will be carried out in the near future. Because of a delay in the activity of the group while a new Chairman was found many of these have already been addressed by the parish council so that it is clear that the whole process has resulted in concrete actions and that people's concerns have been heard. Projects that need to fit in with wider objectives or that require more sustained funding form part of the longer term plans. In either case the Parish Council will now need a set of laid down plans to work to in a pro-active fashion and which will form the core of their agenda as time goes on. This we hope will mean that reactive decisions will become less as the parish develops.

## About the Plan



This is not a Parish Council plan. Councillors may be involved in the preparation of the plan and may support it, but it is intended to be independent of the Council. Views have been canvassed from the parish as a whole and it is those views which are reflected in this document. A Parish Appraisal is a study by local people, unfettered by a council, which takes stock of all the important aspects of their community and highlights its assets, deficiencies, problems and needs. It is also a means of getting to know the opinions of everyone who lives in the Parish, not just those individuals with strong views who speak out at meetings. Parish or Village Appraisals are not a new idea. Many hundreds have been carried out to date in other parts of the country. The objectives are:-

- To identify areas requiring action by the Parish, Borough or County Councils in a parish plan.
- It aims to identify local characteristics, problems, needs, threats, strengths and opportunities. It is a means of taking stock of the community and of creating a foundation of awareness and understanding on which to base future community action.
- To enable residents to make a contribution to their Community, to make improvements where it is necessary or desirable and to learn more about the community.

The project came about after attending meetings on Grant Funding and talks with members of the Essex Association of Local Councils and the Rural Community Council of Essex. At a parish council meeting in February 2004 parish councillors confirmed that they wished to continue with the proposal to undertake a Village Plan after a meeting with the field worker from The Rural Community Council for Essex. In July 2004 a Public Day was held to establish what interest there was in the



community for the process. A steering Committee of six interested volunteers from the Parish was formed in September 2004. Questionnaires were distributed in April 2005 and 72% of households responded in Messing and 73% responded in Inworth. In addition 23 young people responded to a separate young people's survey in Messing and 6 in Inworth. In January 2006 a summary of the main issues raised from the questionnaires and what progress had been made on some of the issues was sent to every one in the parish in the form of a news letter.

In general the consensus of opinion throughout the Parish was favourable towards the Appraisal and we hope that the results will prove that the Group's belief in this Appraisal was well founded. It is, of course, impossible to include all the comments made in this report, but all comments have been included in copies of the full Appraisal results which will be kept as a complete record.

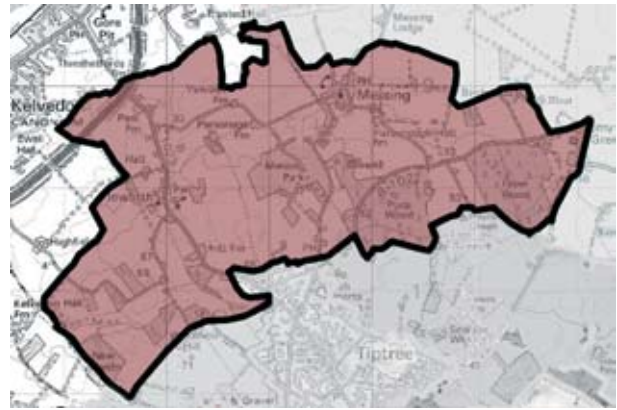


## About the Parish



The parish stands in approx. (1027 hectares / 2538 acres) and is bounded by the parishes of Kelvedon to the west, Feering to the north, Birch to the east and Tiptree to the south. Colchester is 8.5 miles to the east and Chelmsford is just over 15 miles to the west. The highest point in the parish is no more than 69 metres (226 feet) above sea level dropping to 32 metres (105 feet) in the vicinity of Domsey Brook. It is situated in the Birch & Winstree ward of Colchester Borough Council and encompasses the two villages of Inworth and Messing. The main roads in the parish are the B1023 in the west and the B1022 in the south. The A12 lies just on the boundary to the north. There is no public transport in Messing village and the amenities within the village have gradually disappeared. What remains is one church, one public house/restaurant, the village hall and a primary school. At Inworth there is a green grocery, a church, a public house/restaurant and a large garden centre. Inworth is also host to most of the small businesses in the parish. Tiptree and Kelvedon, the nearest urban centres offering employment opportunities, facilities and services lie less than 2 to 3 miles to the south and north. The history of Messing has been published twice. Once in the book *Simply Messing* which was researched and written by Roger Carter, the current parish chairman, and also by a past vicar of Messing, William Goldsborough Whittam in *The Story of Messing*. No Messing written by C.C Thorburn is the autobiography of John C. Chevely and provides an insight into the affluent childhood of someone born in Messing in 1795. Being the ancestral home of the American Presidential Bush family draws visitors to the village and All Saints church which has visible post-medieval architecture and an outstanding stained glass window attributed to Abraham Van Linge. At Inworth, remains of Roman pottery kilns have been found and the church at Inworth, also called All Saints, contains 13th century wall paintings.

# Landscape



In broad terms the land as in the character map (as opposed to the electoral map) shown above in which the parish lays, is a plateau landscape situated on a broad, elevated ridge, dissected by a number of small streams, providing undulations and giving the appearance of a gently folded landscape. Large areas of mixed woodland (Layer Wood and Pods Wood) punctuate areas of predominantly arable farmland, consisting of large rolling arable fields. Smaller regular patches of woodland are a characteristic feature of the south western corner of the area, extending from a band of similar landscape pattern, which extends across the Borough boundary into areas of landscape to the southwest. The network of minor roads is lined with mature hedges. Single mature trees in field boundaries and standing within fields, create distinctive landscape features, which contribute to a unique sense of place. There is a sense of tranquillity within the area, away from the fringes of the Tiptree settlement but for the residents of Inworth this is being disturbed by the steady growth in traffic along the B1023 due to the expansion of Tiptree.

The last census taken in the parish in 2001 revealed the following;

- The parish head count totalled 349
- There were 175 males and 174 females
- 18% of residents were under 16
- 6% of residents were between 16 and 24
- 25% of residents were between 24 and 44
- 33% of residents were between 44 and 64
- 12% of residents were between 64 and 74
- 6% of residents were over 74
- 19 households did not own a vehicle
- 42 households possessed one vehicle
- 51 households possessed two vehicles
- 31 households possessed three vehicles
- 12 pensioner households did not own a vehicle
- The average distance travelled to a fixed place of work was 27.34 miles





## Messing Summary



### Housing and development

There were majorities in favour of:

Preventing major developments.

Using infill sites only (within the village envelope)

Restricting all development to within village envelope.

Protecting village from encroachment from Tiptree

Ensuring that any developments are in keeping with existing buildings.

Ensuring buildings and building materials are more eco-friendly.

### Shop

A majority of respondents used the Inworth farm shop. 60% would find a community shop in Messing useful citing saving of time and transport as the main reasons. The majority favoured a central location in the village with the spare rooms in the village hall being the most favoured location. However there are few who are willing to volunteer time to run it and although there is evidence of successful community shops elsewhere it was not thought to be practical in Messing.

A majority would not benefit from shop deliveries, nor volunteer or join the Messing driver rota.

### Community & Communications

Information about the community was mainly gleaned from the Tribune or The Post but both these publications only provide a facility if delivered to every household and on a regular basis and do not necessarily reach the younger generation. Currently there is no form of welcoming pack for new comers to the community.

There was a positive to neutral response on communication in the village being sufficient, newsletters and better notice boards being cited as possible improvements, all of which have been addressed but it was felt that regular events that take place in the village hall should be publicised as well. For those that have a computer and access to the Internet there is now a variety of information as well as a News page on the community web site and E-news letters are sent out to those who have made their e-mail address known. Broadband reception should be available to most of the village.

There was a positive to neutral response about more social events in the village. 87% said they would attend events in Messing. However the Friends of Messing Church have been active in this respect but attendances at a variety of events that they have organised have been nowhere near this percentage and familiar faces are always very much in evidence.

A majority would be more inclined to attend events in Messing than Inworth.

There was a positive to neutral response about a village "to do" list but a majority were neutral to negative about volunteering to do the tasks. The lists have been posted on the notice boards and the web site for some time but no volunteers have come forward to do any of the tasks listed.

### Roads and Transport

Gritting has been addressed but still falls short of what is desirable in that neither Harborough Hall Road, Lodge Road are on the gritting route and have no gritting bins during the winter. Few however have had accidents on icy roads.

## Messing Summary cont.

Parish Clerks in the Borough can attend a forum hosted by the Borough Council which is held bimonthly and road maintenance features in discussions at most meetings. A system of reporting highway defects has been introduced whereby every clerk in the Borough has a defect report form which they can send into the Highways and Transportation Services branch of Essex County Highways. Fly tipping (unless of a hazardous nature), road sweeping and verge cutting are still handled by the Borough rather than the County.

Most were neutral about whether drainage needed improving in the village but clearly most are not affected whereas there are small pockets that are. Most agreed that the bus service needed restoring but the majority would rarely or not use it. This is however an issue on the youth questionnaire. A majority were in favour of improvements to narrow bends, corners, drainage and lay-bys.

### **Street parking**

One of the highest responses returned was on this subject with ninety two percent responding and over sixty nine per cent perceiving that it was an issue that needed to be addressed; the majority citing Barfield Row. The corner of School Road and Kelvedon Road was considered to be the most in need of improvement. More respondents agreed or were neutral as to whether yellow lines would help at this location than disagreed. The majority were not in favour of yellow lines at other locations in the village.

### **Speeding traffic**

Cameras were not favoured at all. It was felt that flashing reminders, speed bumps and extending the 30 m.p.h limit and a 20 m.p.h limit might help with this problem.

### **Environment**

Traffic, dog fouling, rubbish dumping and litter are all perceived as problems. Since the appraisal was made government legislation has been announced that attempts to address dog fouling, rubbish



dumping and litter. Parish Councils have now been empowered to impose fines. Consideration at Borough level is being given to community police officers being given training to enforce these laws which include prohibiting putting out refuse for collection too early, and in particular not noting collection times advised at bank holidays.

A majority would not pay more council tax to improve the appearance of the village. Sixty percent of those that responded said that they would clear litter but just a few familiar faces volunteer for the twice a year litter picking days.

### **Other**

Footpaths, the Church, the village pub, village hall, trees and the Conservation Area are all important to villagers.

#### *Footpaths*

Since the appraisal was made the Parish Council has enrolled in the Parish Paths Scheme (P3). The scheme exists to provide people with the skills and resources to make a difference to their Public Rights of Way network through community action.

#### *Church*

The Friends of Messing Church group has been formed to conserve, maintain, repair and improve

## Messing Summary cont.



the fabric, fittings, furnishings, of the church, churchyard and graveyard and to preserve and protect the church for the benefit of the public. The community's magnificent response to their appeal to restore the fence and lychgate of the graveyard is manifest to the desire expressed in the appraisal.

### *Trees and conservation*

We should consider ourselves extremely fortunate, and respect the fact for the landowner's sake, that the lessee of Conyfield wood, Pods wood and Fan wood (The Forestry Commission), does little to discourage public access. We should always keep in mind that the only rights that may be exercised in these areas are sporting rights and therefore they cannot be considered public places. All but the north east sector of the parish sits within the Messing and Tiptree Countryside Conservation Area and a very large area of the centre of Messing has been designated a Conservation Area. Together with this we are fortunate in that much of the woodland within and adjacent to the parish has been designated as SINC's (Sites of Importance for Nature Conservation). There are seven SINC sites in all including New, Perry's, Inworth, Conyfield, Pods, Fan and Layer Woods and part of The Rampart. The Rampart SINC is an extension of

Pod's wood and comprises coppiced hornbeam. The woods include ancient oak/ash canopy mixes and hornbeam *Carpinus betulus* with a species rich ground flora of bluebell and wood anemones *Anemone nemorosa* and also some conifer plantation with a more acidic floral representation of species such as foxglove *Digitalis purpurea*. It is the intention of the warden of Conyfield wood that over time the conifer element should be removed and replaced with local species.

### **Leisure**

A play area for the younger element of the junior population in Messing has been provided with funding obtained from three sources. Our success in obtaining the grants to be able to do this was due to the fact that it was backed by results from the village plan. The issue of the monetary contribution from the developer of the Green for play equipment (Section 106 or planning gain contribution) has not been resolved at the time of writing. With new equipment on the village hall green, play areas within the grounds of The Red House and facilities at the school it was not felt by the Parish Council to be desirable for parents who had offspring of differing ages to be torn between yet another play area. The money that was given by the developer of Messing Green for play equipment was very small in terms of purchasing public play equipment therefore consideration is being given to small movable and unobtrusive items. There were 51 % in favour of The Green being kept as a green space. On the question of a hard court sports area, fifty three per cent agreed that it would be an asset to the village and sixteen per cent were neutral. This together with a meeting place was an important issue in the youth questionnaire. A quarter of adult respondents would use the hard court area which is reflected in the demographics of the village but less would be willing to maintain it.

# Inworth Summary



## Housing and development

The majority of Inworth residents believes that the local authority planning process should support the village by keeping new development to a minimum, using only infill sites and protecting against encroachment from neighbouring villages e.g. Tiptree and Feering. It is also regarded as important to ensure that developments are more in keeping with existing buildings and that buildings and building materials are eco-friendly.

75% were in favour of preventing further major developments.

91% favoured protection against encroachment of neighbouring villages

89% felt that it should be ensured that any developments are more in keeping with existing buildings

76% felt that the local planning authority should be ensuring buildings and building materials are more eco-friendly.

## Roads and Transport

61% of residents in Inworth are concerned about the speed, volume and size of traffic using the B1023. The expansion of Tiptree both in terms of housing and industrial use has led to a significant increase in the volume of all types of traffic. Various forms of traffic control and calming are favoured including speed cameras, flashing reminders and improvements to narrow bends and corners. It is also suggested that the 30 m.p.h zone should be extended further along the B1023 and along Windmill Hill and that the 50 m.p.h limit be reduced. Existing speed limits should be enforced. Gritting of Windmill Hill was desirable.

## Environment

One of the major environmental issues concerning Inworth residents is traffic (see comments above under Roads and Transport). The following percentages showed the degree of concern about other issues in this section;

Rubbish dumping 57%

General litter 39%



Noise pollution 31%

Importance of the Church 61 %

Importance of Footpaths 80%

Importance of Conservation Area 35%

## Community

The majority of residents are satisfied with the level of communication in the village, do not express a wish for more social events in the village but would attend events in Inworth in preference to Messing. A significant number said that they would be prepared to help with clearing litter in the village but the majority would not be prepared to pay extra Parish Council Tax to improve the appearance of the village.

There was a limited degree of support for a village shop in Messing but it was felt that if located in Messing it would be of little benefit to Inworth residents.

There was no real enthusiasm for a village to do list and it was apparent that the level of support was not high for helping with tasks.

## Leisure

The majority were neutral about the citing of the children's play area and would not use or maintain a hard court sports area as these issues mainly concerned Messing.



## Youth Summary



The majority of the young person respondents received information by word of mouth, less from school, the news, or The Tribune and Post. There was an almost equal opinion as to whether there was enough information about what was going on. Communications could be improved by more leaflets and notices on the notice boards. A majority favoured the idea of a youth council to have their views listened to and felt that this would help or begin new ways to help in the village. In general they felt safe in the area and thought that there should be more litter bins in the village. There were a high percentage of respondents who wanted a youth meeting place with a preference for the village hall as a location. In answer to suggestions for new clubs, groups or activities in Messing most favoured a hard standing play area but a place to play music with food and drink also featured prominently. Opportunities for football and provision of football equipment were mentioned many times. Provision of transport at the weekend was an issue with many citing Colchester as the most favoured destination.

# Environmental recommendations

Action	How Funded	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Priority	Timescale	Notes
Install litter bin purchased for village hall playground. Evaluate need for further litter bins Maintain all litter bins and ensure they are emptied regularly		Parish Council	CBC	High	Start immediately On going	
Evaluate requirements needed to address dog fouling and nuisance issues and implement where necessary		Parish Council	Parish Council Local Police	High	December 2007	
Monitor the times refuse is being put out for collection Clarify if Community Police are to be trained on the issue of on the spot fines for offences committed regarding dog fouling		Parish Council	Essex County Council Local Police Neighbourhood Action Panel	Medium	December 2007	
Evaluate what support there would be in each village for an adopt a road scheme for litter picking		Parish Council	Residents	Low	December 2008	
The Parish Council to be aware of and resist if consulted any visually intrusive development on the northern fringes of Tiptree and in particular those that might disturb the ecology of the area and support any group founded		Parish Council	Tiptree Parish Council Colchester Borough Council Residents	High	On going	
The Parish Council to encourage the screening through tree planting of any new visually intrusive modern farm buildings and to conserve and restore the existing hedgerow network where gappy and depleted		Parish Council	Colchester Borough Council Local farmers	Medium	On going	
Evaluate the viability of sharing an odd job man with another parish and or the School		Parish Council	Other Parish Councils School Governors	High/ Medium	December 2007	
Increase the frequency of visits by road sweeping and drain cleaning contractors to alleviate flash flooding in lower areas of Messing and Inworth		Parish Council	Colchester Borough Council	High	November 2008	
Publish a map detailing tree preservation orders in place		Parish Council	Colchester Borough Council	Medium	February 2009	

## Housing and Development recommendations

Action	How Funded	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Priority	Timescale	Notes
Develop a village design statement (VDS) for Messing and Inworth	RCCE	Parish Council	Residents, Volunteers from both villages	High	End 2008	
Ensure the views contained in the VDS statement are incorporated in the planning process at higher levels of government		Parish Council	Residents Colchester Borough Council	High	On going	
Object to any large scale development in order to maintain Messing and Inworth as separate villages and ensure village envelope in Messing is not expanded		Parish Council	Residents Colchester Borough Council	High	On going	
When considering planning applications the infrastructure, existing open views, attractiveness or rural nature of the villages must be taken into account		Parish Council	Residents Colchester Borough Council	High	On going	
The parish Council to ensure developers make sufficient contribution through planning gain/S106 to any projects requiring funding at the time of development and to register such interest with the Community Development Co Ordinator at CBC		Parish Council	Colchester Borough Council	High	On going	

## Community recommendations

Action	How Funded	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Priority	Timescale	Notes
Promote the need for extra volunteers. Clarify that volunteers can set limits to their involvement and that these stipulations will be respected		Parish Council Working Group	FOMC, village hall committee, village green, residents	High	December 2007	
Establish a working group to quantify the need, defining the offering and develop strategy for coordinating volunteer groups		Parish Council Working Group	FOMC, village hall and village green committees	High	December 2007	
Publicise mobile library times on village notice board, website and Post magazine		Parish Council	Parish Clerk and editors of web site and publications	Low	May 2007	
Evaluate costs and resources required to publish and circulate an independent free publication to determine if this could be sustained		Parish Council		Medium	December 2008	
Promote the use of the website to groups/clubs and residents and monitor usage		Parish Council Clerk, web site manager	Parish Council web site manager	Low	February 2008	See how many hits on website
Promote the aims and funding obligations of FOMC (Friends of Messing Church)		FOMC Committee	Residents	Medium	December 2007	

## Road and Transport recommendations

Action	How Funded	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Priority	Timescale	Notes
Continue to lobby ECC highways to fully renovate Kelvedon Road	ECC	Parish Council	Essex County Council	High	On going	
Identify solution/s to parking outside Barfield Row	To be examined	Parish Council	Barfield Row residents Land owner	Medium	December 2007	
Continue to lobby for the installation of kerbing on the white lines at School Road/ Kelvedon Road and around the triangular island junction outside Messing School	ECC	Parish Council	Essex County Council	High	On going	
Grit Harborough Hall Road Windmill Hill in bad weather and provide grit bins	ECC	Parish Council	Essex County Council	Immediate		
Identify the requirements of a youth Saturday transport service and ascertain if the service can be organised by parents initially	To be examined	Parish Council/YPC	RCCE / Bus Company Youth representative Parents	December 2008		

## Leisure recommendations

Action	How Funded	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Priority	Timescale	Notes
Evaluate the viability of a hard court sports area	Grants	Parish Council	Land Owners/residents	High	September 2008	
Evaluate the suitability of the current village hall and required improvements	Grants	Village Hall Committee	Residents	High	September 2007	Parking is an issue
Identify footpaths in need of attention and produce action plan	P3	Footpath Officer	Residents/P3	High	August 2007 & on going	
Obtain portable goal posts for Messing Green and ensure workable scheme is set up for their administration. Examine the cost and siting of the installation of a basketball/netball post	Village Green Committee	Village Green Committee	Youth Parish Council Colchester Borough Council Football bodies	High	July 2007	
Evaluate the desire and feasibility of setting up a football/cricket pitch by renting the land adjacent to the school & Hillside	Grants/Parish Council	Parish Council	Landowner	Low	March 2009	Query change of use required and implications

# Youth recommendations

Action	How Funded	Lead Responsibility	Partners	Priority	Timescale	Notes
Set up a Youth Parish Council (YPC)		Parish Council	Youth residents	High	July 2007	
YPC to be given a direct link with the Parish Council and should discuss with them the best solution to the communication problems. OR Chair of YPC to be invited to attend Parish Council meetings to provide a direct link between the YPC and the Parish Council		Parish Council	Youth residents	High	July 2007	
Youth Support Group (YSP) to provide practical help and assistance to the YPC in delivering its agenda		Parish Council	Youth residents	High	August 2007	
Identify the requirements of a Saturday transport service and ascertain if the service can be provided		Parish Council YSG	Parents	Medium	December 2008	
Identify the demand for additional activities and organise those with largest interest	To be examined	YPC	YSG/Benefice Youth Group	Medium	Start November 2007 ongoing	
Evaluate options for a shelter and seating at the proposed hard court sports area if this proceeds	Grants	YPC	Parish Council/YSG			
YPC to be given their own pages on the Parish web site and the recommended Parish publications		Parish Council	YPC	Medium	December 2008	

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