

TDC Update – Manningtree – March 2018

TENDRING RESIDENTS URGED TO TAKE PART IN AONB CONSULTATION

Residents in Tendring are being encouraged to take part in a consultation over plans to extend the boundaries of an Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB).

Natural England is looking to widen out the Suffolk Coast and Heaths AONB into parts of Essex, including Tendring.

Under the proposals, the AONB area would extend south of the River Stour to include the waterfront from Manningtree right along to the edge of Parkeston, including Mistley, Bradfield and Wrabness.

Some inland areas would also be included, such as woodland south of Manningtree, and land stretching up from the coastline up to 2km inland in some areas.

The consultation still runs until April 20, and Tendring District Council is urging people to have their say.

For more information about the plans and to take part in the consultation, visit <https://consult.defra.gov.uk/natural-england/suffolk-coast-and-heaths-aonb> or email sc&haonbdesignationproject@naturalengland.org.uk to request a consultation pack.

COUNCIL TAX LETTERS TO SOON DROP ON DOORMATS ACROSS TENDRING

All residents and businesses across Tendring will soon be receiving a letter containing details of their council tax or business rates bill for the coming year.

The annual letter details the precept for 2018/19 set by Tendring District Council (TDC), along with that set by Essex County Council, and the Essex Police, Fire and Crime Commissioner, and any town or parish council if relevant.

TDC collects council tax on behalf of all the authority, but only keeps its share – which is less than 10% of the total bill not including town or parish precepts.

The 78,000-odd letters will be issued on March 14, and people can expect them within a few days of this date.

People are urged to check their bill, and if their circumstances have changed or if they have a query to contact TDC by using the online form found here:

www.tendringdc.gov.uk/council-tax/changes-you-need-tell-us-about

Any queries about other organisations' elements of the council tax bill should be addressed to that authority directly.

Also included within the letter are details of the Tendring Free Householders' Permit, which will automatically renew on April 1 without residents having to do anything.

However, if you are applying for a permit for the first time go to www.tendringdc.gov.uk/travel-and-parking/parking/season-tickets-and-permits - or, to change your address or your vehicle call 01255 686969.

Carlo Guglielmi, Cabinet Member for Finance and Corporate Resources at TDC, said the letter was nothing to worry about.

"The annual bill is a routine letter, and this does not contain any surprises over previously published council tax rates," he added.

"However it is a good opportunity to check that the details are correct, and I urge you to contact TDC via the online form if there is anything that needs changing."

INSPECTOR GIVES GO AHEAD TO PLANS FOR 67 NEW HOMES IN MISTLEY

The green light has been given to a developer to build up to 67 new homes on land within Mistley Conservation Area.

Tendring District Council (TDC) last April refused the application for the development on land off New Road, Mistley.

It was turned down as the Council felt the development would erode the green gap between Mistley and Manningtree and harm the Conservation Area.

Both Mistley Parish and Manningtree Town councils opposed the scheme.

The applicants contested the decision and took it to appeal.

Now a Planning Inspector has reversed the Council's decision and granted permission for the site to go ahead.

In his decision, the Inspector ruled that the site did not contribute to the Conservation Area and so development on it would not harm the area. He also ruled the visual impact would not harm the surrounding countryside.

However, the Inspector did reject an argument made by the developer that TDC could not demonstrate a five-year supply of housing, stating that the Council could demonstrate an effective supply. Despite this, he allowed the appeal.

A Tendring District Council spokesperson said: "Tendring District Council is disappointed with the decision of the Planning Inspector, particularly as he appears to have gone with an 'on balance' decision rather than finding that the Council made any errors in its judgement of the application.

"The Council is now looking at potential next steps with regards to the application."

A new planning application is needed for details of the development, except access and layout which formed part of the outline proposals now given the go ahead.

Note from Alan Coley: Tendring District Council is in the process of seeking legal advice with a view to challenging this bizarre decision.

RALLY EVENT WILL BRING BOOST TO DISTRICT

With six weeks to go until England's first-ever stage rally on closed public roads comes to Tendring, council leaders are revving up their support for the event.

The Corbeau Seats Rally will test drivers as they compete against the clock on a series of timed tests across the District, with the main hub of the event located on Clacton seafront.

Organised by Chelmsford Motor Club (CMC) and sanctioned by the Motor Sport Association, Essex County Council and Tendring District Council (TDC) have been behind the event from the off.

Neil Stock, TDC Leader, said the rally was a fantastic opportunity for the area.

"This event will really put Tendring on the map and help to raise our profile nationally and even internationally," he said.

"We understand there have been some concerns from residents along the routes, and the organisers CMC have been working alongside us and other partners to manage, mitigate and minimise all the points raised.

"However, the overwhelming view we have had when officers have been out on the route is a positive one, including from many farmers who are supporting the race with hay bales and land for spectator areas."

As well as providing a spectacle Zoe Fairley, Cabinet Member for Investment and Growth at TDC, said it was driving up investment in Tendring.

Research by Sheffield Hallam University estimated nationally such rallies could be worth £40million a year.

"Before we get to visitor numbers, there are around 50 senior organisers – plus up to 500 marshals – and an estimated 600 people in the driving teams. All of these will be staying over, buying food and the like, and spending in our local economy," said Cllr Fairley.

"This then helps to drive regeneration and investment in the area."

Although hard to tell as it is the first road event in England, it is hoped there will be 5-10,000 spectators coming to Tendring for the rally.

Mick Skeels, Cabinet Member for Leisure and Tourism, said with the rally being the first of its kind in England it could see national interest.

“An event that draws people from across the country all to Tendring has to be good thing,” he added.

“During their time here we have the chance to really showcase our District and all it has to offer. In that way, we hope that rally spectators will then come back at other times to enjoy our wonderful coastline, rural idylls and perhaps other events on offer such as the Clacton Airshow.

“I also understand that the rally itself will be televised, and this all combined means the rally has the potential to be a brilliant advert for Tendring.”

Although the first of its kind in England, such rallies already take place in Northern Ireland and National Parks, and so many of the practical challenges of staging such events are known to the organisers and routes have been designed to provide a test for competitors whilst also being mindful of the environment.

For further information on comment on the rally itself, contact event director Tony Clements from Chelmsford Motor Club on 07486 604929.

A specialist motorsport production company will be televising the event, and it will be shown Europe-wide on Motorsport TV (Sky Channel 447) from Friday, May 4. Other channels are waiting on transmission dates.

CHECK OF COUNCIL TENANTS RESULTS IN MORE THAN £50,000 SAVINGS SO FAR AS KEY AMNESTY LAUNCHED

A review of Tendring District Council-housed tenants has so far saved the authority more than £50,000.

A tenancy audit began in September 2017 where Council officers have been checking tenancies to ensure they are still eligible and are not committing fraud.

Tenancy fraud could include subletting, leaving a property empty, or providing false information.

It followed an amnesty held the previous year, which gave tenants the opportunity to inform the Council of any changes to their circumstances without fear of a fine or prosecution.

The amnesty saw 33 referrals, of which 14 resulted in action. These led to £28,000 being saved in housing benefit payments by the council, while £4,000 in additional council tax was also collected and five homes re-allocated to tackle the waiting list.

Since the start of the audit in September, officers have so far visited 238 properties. From these checks, five homes were abandoned or being sub-let – which are now waiting to be given to those on the waiting list – and a further £23,500 in financial savings for the Council have been identified.

To accompany the ongoing audit the Council is re-launching its Key Amnesty for the month of March, during which time tenants who are committing any type of tenancy fraud have the opportunity to hand their keys back, without fear of fine or prosecution by Tendring District Council (TDC).

If you wish to return your keys these should be put in an envelope clearly marked KEY AMNESTY together with the address of the property. If you do this during March you will not face any further action from TDC. After this period any tenants who are found to be committing tenancy fraud could face up to two years in prison and a fine of up to £50,000, and TDC will also start legal action to end the council tenancy.

Paul Honeywood, Cabinet Member for Housing at TDC, said it was important the Council made checks such as these.

“As the figures from the first steps of this audit show, there are serious savings to be made by TDC through ensuring our council housing stock is being used properly,” he added.

“Like local authorities across the country Tendring has people on its waiting list looking for a home, and this activity will help those who are eligible to find a council house.

“The audit also has the potential to uncover wrongdoing by people who are abusing our council house stock for their own benefit, and in doing so potentially denying others who need housing.

“I would urge anyone who has concerns over the potential misuse of a council house to get in touch.”

If you have any address you feel should be looked into by the Fraud Team contact fraud.hotline@tendringdc.gov.uk or call 01255 686544/686208. Alternatively you can use the Anti Social Behaviour hotline at housingasb@tendringdc.gov.uk or call 01255 686359.

General Information:

If anyone witnesses any fly tipping occurring please contact TDC's Waste Management Team on 01255 686768.

Alan Coley & Carlo Guglielmi

