



Danbury Parish Council

Strategic Business Plan 2018 – 2021



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Introduction

The Strategic Business Plan aims to provide Danbury Parish Council residents with a clear understanding of the Council's priorities and objectives for the next four years to coincide with Chelmsford City Councils New Local Plan being renewed.

The largest focus over this period of time will be a Neighbourhood Plan for Danbury which will coincide with Chelmsford City Council's New Local Plan. These two documents will be used for the future planning of Danbury from 2021 – 2036 and are very important. Currently the Danbury Planning Framework is still used as a supplementary planning document for Danbury and taken into account by developers until 2021.

Some issues facing the village are areas which are not directly under the control of the Parish Council. The Council will seek to use its influence to ensure that service providers such as Chelmsford City Council, Essex County Council, Rural Community Council of Essex, National Association of Local Councils, Essex Association of Local Councils and the Government, provide services that are relevant to benefit of Danbury Village residents. This list is not exhaustive of the providers that the Council deal with.

The Parish Council also responds to the needs and aspirations of the residents.

The document will be reviewed on an annual basis and any updates will be given via the newsletter, annual report or the web page.

The Parish and its Council

The Parish Council has been in existence for over 100 years and was established in 1896. Danbury is part of the District of the Chelmsford City Council with the centre of Chelmsford being only 4.5 miles away. Danbury Parish Council deals exclusively with the residents who live within the parish. It is situated on the busy A414 that runs east – west in the village. The road is a heavily overloaded major route and needs to be kept to a high standard of repair.

Danbury has a population of around 6,000 with an electorate of 4057 as of July 2015. At the 2011 census over 1000 residents were children and 1100 were over 65 years of age.

The Parish Council owns the 11 acre site called Dawson Memorial Field including the following buildings: the Sports and Social Centre, the Tennis Club, the Bowling Club, the Old Pavilion and Robin's Nest which is used by the Council's only groundsman and the equipment necessary to carry out his work. There are also five areas of Village Green which are maintained by the Parish Council at Elm Green with the War Memorial, Runsell Green/Pond, Copt Hill and an area in Bell Hill Wood and the Chantry. Eves Corner is owned by the National Trust but the Parish Council maintains the grass and the pond through a lease. Dial Common and Pedlars Path are other area owned by the Parish Council. Griffin Meadow is also maintained by the Parish Council on behalf of the Diocese. The trees for both these areas are looked after and maintained by the respective owners. There is also a small allotment site which is owned by the Parish Council at the end of St Cleres Way.

The Parish has retained its rural character with many beautiful walks and places of interest. It has community spirit in abundance.

Danbury is situated on one of the highest points in Essex and with this dominance assumes a special importance in the map of the local area.

The Council became the first Parish Council in the Country to achieve the Local Council Award Scheme Quality Gold in January 2015, and has previously held the Quality Councils status for a period of 10 years.

It communicates with the village via newsletter and noticeboards. All minutes and agendas and financial matters are placed on the web site. There is also a Facebook Page and a web site which has recently for example circulated information regarding roadworks to 1600 people. Major issues have in the past been dealt with through village meetings, and this will continue.

The Council establishment consists of 15 councillors, currently there are 12. It employs one full time groundsman, a Clerk and two assistant clerks who work on a part time basis. The Parish Council has also employed a Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator on a part time fixed term contract.

This document has been prepared following consultation with all the Parish Council's Committees, (Planning, Environment, Facilities and Resources) and with residents via the Danbury Times and staff.

The Vision for the Council

To develop and sustain a sense of community within the Parish of Danbury by addressing environmental, social, economic and planning matters and delivering quality services to the residents within the resources available, while being mindful of Government Legislation which affects the remit of the Parish Council.

The Principles of the Council

Be a good employer.

Maintain the status of Local Council Quality Council Award or its equivalent.

Ensure that the Council's precept income is spent effectively, and wisely, ensuring that value for money is achieved.

Be aware of and implement any changes required by new Government legislation.

Undertake Council business legally and ethically.

Maintain a communications strategy such that Council business is conducted openly and transparently and Parishioners have easy access to information and advice.

Development of the village to be undertaken in accordance with the guidance provided by the Danbury Planning Framework which is in place until 2021, working and producing a Neighbourhood Plan for the village of Danbury to follow on from this date.

Undertake Council business with reference to the Danbury Parish Plan.

Provide effective leadership to the village on community matters of interest.

Maintain regular contact/liaison and where appropriate, partnership working with local authorities and community service providers and businesses.

Key Objectives

The Council has the following priorities for the forthcoming years. The table below is then followed by the finances of Danbury Parish Council.

Action	Committee	Timescale	Comments
Neighbourhood Plan	Parish Council	2017 – 2021 or earlier	This document must respect policies in Chelmsford City Council's Development Plan. Ideally it will be adopted in line with or close to the adoption of Chelmsford City Council's emerging Development Plan.
Upgrading and Improvements to Sports and Social Centre	Parish Council	Ongoing	Continue with upgrading the centre: e.g. monitor roof, look to the future to sustain the building through a lease from 2021 – 2036. Consider items such as

			storage and the showers including the water tank.
Upgrading of and Improvements to Dawson Memorial Field	Facilities Committee	Ongoing	Investigation into path slippage at the present time including looking at Bowling Green. Continue to keep Play Area maintained. Keep Football Pitches and cricket wicket maintained.
Monitoring the Statutory Right to Bid for the Library and the Old School House	Parish Council	Ongoing	The new partner is Jesters who are a before and after school service, nursery and plan to be a school holiday care service.

Neighbourhood Plan

As already stated, Danbury's current Planning Framework is part of the Chelmsford City Council's Local Plan and must be taken into account when its Planning Committee consider applications.

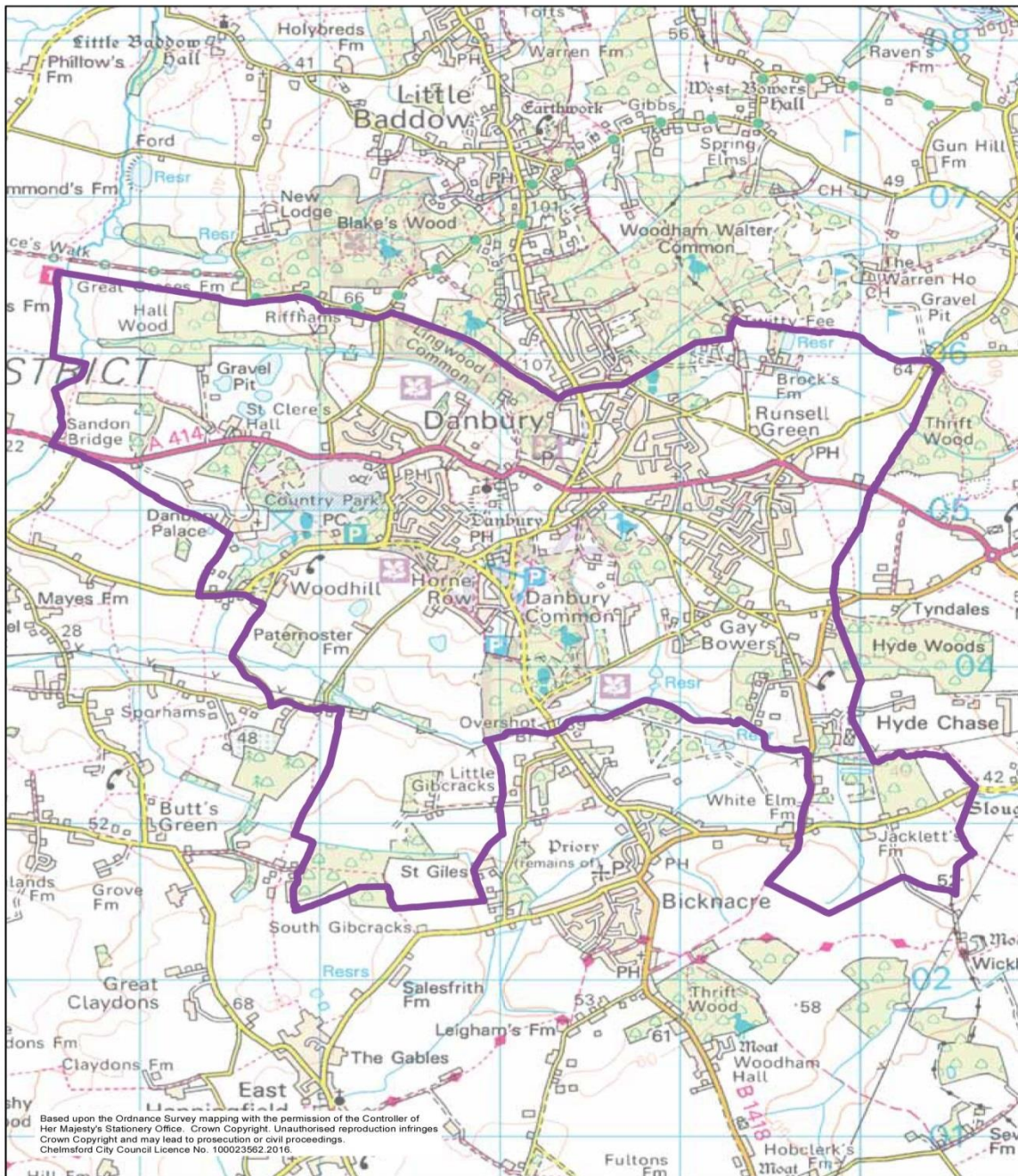
However, the current Planning Framework will last only until 2021.

The Parish Council represents the residents but may not create a Neighbourhood Plan by itself. The plan cannot be produced without the input of local residents. There will be a variety of ways to get involved such as attending workshops, completing a questionnaire, responding to an eventual referendum or joining the Steering Group. There are 2 councillors on the group but at present there are 12 residents who have volunteered for the group. The first meeting of the group was held on 5th October, 2016 but a Neighbourhood Plan Coordinator has been employed on a fixed term, part time basis to coordinate this group.

Danbury Neighbourhood Plan would give Danbury more control over the type, location size, pace and design of development. It would enable protection of trees, green spaces such as fields or allotments and of views as Assets of Community Value. It would allow residents to shape or retain the identity of the village.

The Neighbourhood Plan also has to identify potential sites for development within the Danbury Parish area which has already been agreed with Chelmsford City Council.

DANBURY PARISH BOUNDARY



0 500 1,000 Metres

MARCH 2016

Directorate for Sustainable Communities
Civic Centre, Duke Street, Chelmsford, CM1 1JE
Tel: 01245 606606 Fax: 01245 606642
Web: www.chelmsford.gov.uk



Above Designated Area for Neighbourhood Plan

Finances

The precept – this is the element of the Council Tax which is requested by Danbury Parish Council. It is public money and it is the Council's highest priority to make sure that it is spent effectively and wisely.

We scrutinise every penny, looking for value for money and the elimination of waste while still delivering a high quality of service and projects which residents have come to expect. We have insisted on the most robust and scrupulous controls to ensure that we meet the highest standards of accountability and all our activities are fully transparent.

The Parish Council would like to set the lowest council tax it can but must cover the financial commitments. In order to achieve this other funding sources will continue to be explored from Grants, Section 106 monies and any Community Infrastructure Levy monies (this means paid developers to the City Council as planning gain these monies will be more if the Parish council has a Neighbourhood Plan) available to the Council.

The Parish Council is very conscious that it is spending residents Council Tax and therefore always looks for the most cost effective solutions ensuring that quality is not compromised.

In the Autumn of each year Resources, Environment and Facilities Committee look at the spends against budget together with any items which need to be maintained or new projects to draw up a budget which is then taken to Full Parish Council at the end of November for ratification to form the precept which is the sum of money the Parish Council requires to run the Council each year.

The following table sets out the Council's budget for 2018/2019 together with a projection

This finishes when the Business Plan finishes in 2021.

	2017/18	2018/19	Projected 2019/20	Projected 2020/2021
Rental and other income	£ 34,541.00	£ 34,541.00	2.0% increase £ 35,231.00	2% increase £ 35,935.00
=====				
EXPENDITURE				
ENVIRONMENT	£ 3,405.00	£ 5,850.00	£ 6,025.00	£ 6,205.00
FACILITIES	£ 69,739.00	£ 74,144.00	£ 76,458.00	£ 78,751.00
RESOURCES	£ 52,498.00	£ 52,990.00	£ 54,579.00	£ 56,216.00
GRANTS	£ 1,500.00	£ 2,481.00	£ 3,000.00	£ 3,000.00
ADMINISTRATION	£ 95,995.00	£ 100,328.00	£ 102,635.00	£ 104,995.00
NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN	£ 8,000.00	£ 4,000.00	£ 8,000.00	£ 8,000.00
Total	£ 231,137.00	£ 239,793.00	£ 250,697.00	£ 257,167.00
PRECEPT	£ 196,596.00	£ 205,252.00	£ 215,466.00	£ 221,232.00
Tax Base	£ 82.63	£ 85.50	£ 89.75	£ 92.15
2400.63				
	6.40%	4.40%	4.97%	2.67%