

Clerk's Report – 23rd March 2026 Bures Hamlet Parish Council

Works completed or in hand: All grounds maintenance completed as per contract. JPB Landscapes re-contracted until 31st March 2027. Costs to be held until that date. Contractor using New Way weed spray. Grasscuttings being collected at river bank and Normandie Way playarea at each cut - JPB. Sweeping completed around village – CS/JPB. Station Hill cleared of leaves and debris and weed sprayed – CS. 4 Benches still to be re-varnished when weather improves – NN. Edge of Station Hill garden still to be tarmaced – NN, FP7 damaged sign to be repaired – NN. Grasscutting at Station - JPB

Street Scene Agreement: The BDC Street Scene Agreement 2026/27 has been signed and forwarded to BDC Operations. The parish council will receive £935.39 towards its grounds maintenance costs for 2026/27. Activity reports to be completed twice yearly.

Waste management: Matt Ward kindly moves out the trade waste bin on alternate Mondays for emptying by BDC. The waste is from the various waste bins in the parish emptied by JPB via his Parish Street Scene contract with the parish council.

Public Rights of Way improvements: Dedham Vale National Landscape & Stour Valley are asking for projects in our parish to be put forward as they have money to improve the network across Suffolk and Essex. Clerk to check if the Millennium footpath drop could be classed as a suitable project.

Invaluable habitat disturbance: A complaint has been received that the ivy, south facing has been removed from the stream entering the river from Colchester Road, The parish council has had no involvement in this matter.

Station Hill garden: A £950 BDC Microgrant application has been successful. This will enable the garden to be refreshed with some new bedding plants, peat and an additional planter. Leaf fall has been cleared ready. Clerk revisiting the suggestion to tarmac over the end section of garden around the green telephone box as this area only attracts chickweed.

DaRT 3: The transport service serves North East Braintree area. Details have been advertised and the Clerk has circulated a supply of advertising leaflets at the markets.

Essex Knowle traders: The Thai food trader is visiting the Essex Knowle on the first Thursday evening of the month on a regular basis. Howes fish'n'chips visits every Monday evening and Pizza on the Green every Friday evening.

Grit & Sandbags: The Clerk completed the Salt Partnership Scheme request form. No further grit is needed for the coming winter as plenty of stock in hand. A supply of sandbags is stored in the village for those residents in need. Some gritting has been done in early January.

Riverbank at Millennium footpath: The willow trees are under the care of R Fordham Tree Surgeons for at least 2 further years. Fencing is the parish council's responsibility. Landowner of the riverbank remains unknown following the sale of the land to Strat Land.

Items reported on Highways reporting tool:

Damaged road signs at Colchester Road reported – Ref 29339426. Drain cover at Station Hill reported – Ref 2895767. Blocked drain at River House reported – ref 2970019. Blocked drain at Parsonage Hill – reported Ref 4000557. Request for Bridleway signage at Bakers Hall - Ref 4006093. Station Hill missing island bollard replaced. Blocked drain at The Paddocks junction reported – Ref 4021192.

Flytipping: Flytipping on the concrete pad near Ferriers Lane has been reported to BDC, however this is the responsibility of the landowner.

Road Regulation Orders: Intended road closure at Hornes Green Road due to commence for 2 days on 16th March for the safety of the public while Openreach undertakes pole replacement. Intended road closure at Parsonage Hill/Colne Road Bures Hamlet and Bures Road, White Colne to commence on 12th July for 17 days for the safety of the public while ECC undertakes micro surfacing.

Housing Briefings: Briefings are held at Causeway House, Braintree District Council and are aimed at Parish Councillors to give an overview of the Gateway to Homechoice system and Allocations Policy. All members welcome and list of dates circulated.

Training: The training record has been updated and can be found on the parish council website. Any questions relating to the law process or procedure of local councils should be forwarded by the Clerk to EALC – legal@ealc.gov.uk The parish council now able to claim 75% EALC training bursaries for both Clerk and Councillor training.. Training courses are now being delivered through a network of regional training hubs located across the county. New training E-bulletin 2026-27 calendar circulated to members.

BDC Supporting Communities meetings: Clerk has been attending these virtual meetings with other parish clerks and BDC Officers during the past year. Varying topics covered and the meetings allow Clerks to maintain good contact with Officers. From 2026 the meetings will be reduced to twice yearly. The February meeting highlighted the forthcoming Devolution.

Recycling sacks: The Clerk holds a stock of recycling sacks enabling local residents to collect a single roll of recycling sacks if they run out. These will be available at the Saturday markets for residents. Clear recycling sacks will cease to be available when the new Simpler Recycling Scheme comes into force in June.

NHW/Police: The Clerk continues to circulate NHW newsletters via her emailing list. Essex Police newsletters advertised on the parish council website. Six monthly newsletter circulated. Garage and shed security information advertised.

Messages of interest via Cllr Schwier – all circulated, advertised and details held on file:

ECC – Essex unveils progress towards a more caring, connected future - update on work to tackle rising pressures across the county's health and social care system

ECC – Landowners encouraged to cut vegetation ahead of bird nesting season

ECC – Essex County Council has set out its budget proposals for 2026/27 which focusses on protecting essential services, supporting the most vulnerable and investing in the county's future while keeping council tax low

ECC – Notification that majority of council-backed bus services are set to continue serving local communities

ECC – People living or working in Essex encouraged to consider running for election to the County Council at the upcoming elections on 7th May 2026

ECC – Huge boost to winter road maintenance begins in Essex following an extra £6 million in highways repairs and improvements

ECC – 97% of children offered places at preferred secondary schools in Essex

ECC – Heddingham Division Annual Report 2026-26 – posted on website

ECC – launch of a new countywide campaign MetalMatters to encourage residents to recycle their metal packaging

ECC – Information on Parish self-fund highways schemes via the LHP

ECC – Electrifying Essex Campaign – highlighting the benefits of switching to an electric vehicle (EV) following an £8.3 million investment by ECC

ECC – support available to help residents live healthier and happier lives – free local services to improve health and wellbeing

The Clerk is in receipt of the following and all circulated and held on file:

Details outlining the giving of grants from parish councils to churches for specific purposes.

Draft NHP for Toppesfield Parish

Details of GoStart, an independent voluntary organisation providing accessible community transport for older people, individuals with disabilities, community groups and local charities

BDC Local Plan Review – launch of Regulation 18 consultation 2nd February to 17th April 2026

City of London Police has announced the full public launch of Report Fraud which has now officially replaced Action Fraud

Local Bus Consultation 2025 has been finalised and published

Have your say about how to improve buses in Essex for older adults and those with disabilities

<http://www.smartsurvey.co.uk/s/>

Information on the BDC Chairman's Community Showcase on Thursday 2nd April at 10am to 2pm at Braintree Institute – an event to support local organisations and community groups as they exhibit and share their services

BDC AgeWell Fair - 9th April 10am to 1pm at Halstead Leisure Centre

The National Lottery Community Fund – funding webinar 25th March – application process