

Maintaining and improving our village

A five year plan for Maids Moreton Parish Council

2021-2026



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1. Introduction

The Plan

The Parish Council has decided to produce a business plan for the five year period from 2021 to 2026. It is a statement of our vision for the parish and sets out the council's purpose, objectives and key priorities for maintaining and developing the village.

The council wishes to communicate the plans for the next five years to residents of Maids Moreton to give a clear understanding of how the council works and the aims and goals the council wish to achieve during the five year period.

The plan provides an opportunity for residents to comment and raise questions with regard to the council's plans and intentions.

The plan will be subject to annual review in January of each year after which it will be rolled forward by one year.

Aims and goals

The council's aim is to maintain and improve the quality of life and the environment for the people that live in Maids Moreton village. Wherever possible, the council will involve the local community in significant decision making. The council will always be open to input from the community and will strive to meet the needs and wishes of local people.

2. Parish Council

A parish council is a civil local authority in England and is the lowest, or first, tier of local government.

Maids Moreton has seven Parish Councillors and they are elected by the residents every four years. Elections were last held in May 2016, they were due to be held in May 2020, but were postponed due to COVID restrictions. They are now planned for May 2021. The Council elects a Chairman and Vice Chairman annually at the Annual Parish Council Meeting in May.

The Council meets every month at 7:30pm on the first Wednesday of the month. All Councillors are unpaid and they volunteer their time to maintain and improve the parish.

The Council has a Parish Clerk who is employed part time. The Clerk to the Council is also the Proper Officer and Responsible Financial Officer. The Clerk administers the Council and must carry out all the functions required by law. The Clerk being the Proper Officer is the only person who can sign official documents on behalf of the Council.

The Councillors and Clerk are all listed on the Maids Moreton website.

Village Communication

Residents are invited, and very welcome, to attend Parish Council Meetings. The Maids Moreton Parish Council website is regularly updated with local news. Newsletters are produced and distributed every quarter.

3. Village Data

Geography

The parish covers about 552 ha (1,365 acres), and stretches from just south of Akeley to the North and to the river Ouse south of the Stratford Road and from Chackmore to the west and Foscott Reservoir to the east. See Appendix 1.

Population

The last census in 2011 showed the population to be 847. It is estimated that the population has grown since then to around 940.

Housing and Accommodation

At the census in 2011 the housing stock in Maids Moreton was 351. In 2021 there are 350 houses, 15 flats, and two care homes. Total village accommodation is 365 (not including the care homes).

Conservation Area

The conservation area in Maids Moreton includes the St Edmunds Church, Duck Lake, Scott's lane and Main Street. See Appendix 2. The aim is to preserve and enhance the area and there are additional planning regulations and restrictions relating to the conservation area.

Community Assets

The council manages certain assets that are owned by the village, in general these are:

1. The Playing Fields
2. The Scout Hut
3. The Cricket Pavilion
4. Play area equipment
5. The Allotments and associated buildings
6. Street lights
7. Seating and benches
8. Fencing
9. Litter bins and dog bins
10. Signs and notice boards

A full and detailed list of assets and values can be found on the parish council website at <https://www.maids-moreton.co.uk/>

4. Maintenance

The Parish Council is responsible for the maintenance of the following:

- The playing field and green areas in the village
- The play area
- The Scout Hut
- The Cricket Pavilion
- Street lighting
- Roadside verges (including tree planting)
- Litter bins and dog waste bins
- Some traffic signs
- Rights of way, public footpaths and bridle-ways

Every year the council puts together a budget to manage the maintenance of the above areas and equipment.

The Budget is posted on the Maids Moreton website:

<https://www.maids-moreton.co.uk/reports-and-audits>

5. Improvements and Developments

There are a number of proposed projects to improve village facilities and amenities.

1. Street Lighting

The parish council owns and maintains street lights within Maids Moreton. There is a lack of adequate street lighting on Main Street along the Wheatsheaf pub where there is no footpath. The council will seek to erect a street light in this area to improve public safety.

2. Play Area

A major project will be a programme of improvements to children's Play in the playing Fields. The Council have set up a Play Area Working Group. The group are looking develop a project plan to include the purchase and replacement of play equipment. They will be conducting a survey for local residents to choose any new play equipment, and will be seeking a grant to provide monies for the project.

3. Playing Fields

The council is looking to compete the following:

- i Clearance of shrubs and brambles on the southeast corner of the playing fields.
- ii Set up a dog walking path around the playing fields.
- iii Clear the land to the west of the Bridleway to assist dog walkers and keep them off the playing fields.

4. Scout Hut development

Improvements to the Scout Hut include upgrades to the toilets, the doors and windows and the flooring. In time there will be an extension of the Scout Hut to the right of the building which will replace the metal storage containers with three more accessible and amenable storage units.

5. Cricket Pavilion development

Improvements to the Cricket pavilion include an upgrade of the flooring.

6. Roads

Residents have expressed concerns over speeding traffic within the village, especially along Main Street, Avenue Road (by the school), Church St, Duck Lake and Towcester Road. In October 2020 the Parish Council produced a traffic survey which analyses traffic numbers, speeds and vehicle weights, further information can be accessed as this has been set up on the Maids Moreton website.

We will work with Buckinghamshire County Council and other local community groups to ascertain if any traffic calming measures may be viable, to review speed limits, to see if improved signage may help and to investigate any other solutions.

The state of the roads and signage within the parish remains an ongoing concern. The Parish Council will continue to report issues such as potholes to Buckinghamshire County Council who are responsible for these issues.

6. Development Funding

Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 is a legal agreement between an applicant having planning permission and the local planning authority, which is used to mitigate the impact of the new homes on the local community and infrastructure.

New houses will mean more cars on the roads and more impact on local services, such as schools and public transport. Section 106 is effectively a set of planning obligations for the developer.

Part of Section 106 is a financial contribution to the parish for assistance with meeting the needs of new residents in living in the development through improvement of council assets.

The housing development at the site near Scott's Farm Close includes a Section 106 financial contribution forecast to be £57,744. Note that this will only be received when work commences on the site.

Once received this funding will be used for improvements and upgrading of community assets such as the Scout Hut, the Cricket Pavilion and the Play Area.

7. Maids Moreton Help and Support group

The Parish Council Covid-19 Volunteer Support Group was established in March 2020 to provide support to vulnerable residents throughout the current public health crisis, with over 10 households in the area being assisted. There are currently 8 volunteer helpers in the village.

Post pandemic we will continue the Support Group. We will set up a Support Group Committee and nominate a parish councillor as leader to ensure that this happens effectively.

8. Village Events

Community Events:

Maids Moreton has a number of key community led events that not only bring the community together but may raise funds for worthy causes. The Council supports these events wherever it can and is grateful for the work that these dedicated volunteers put into events such as Christmas Carols in the Church and the coffee mornings.

Bonfire Night – A annual event on the 5th November with a big bonfire and great fireworks.

Play in the Park - An annual event which aims to encourage and develop family play and provide a unique day of activities and entertainment for children to celebrate National Play Day.

Additional events:

The council wants to propose and support other events for the village, examples of activities that could use the Maids Moreton Playing Fields include:

- i Business Event – local businesses promote themselves.
- ii Summer Party – including food and music.
- iii Teddy Bears Picnic – free picnic for children with some toys and songs.

9. Planning

It is the intention of the Parish Council to contest any large housing developments which we feel would impact negatively on the character of the village and adversely affect the quality-of-life current residents. The council is amenable to appropriate, well-designed housing developments, such as refurbishments and improvements that maintain the character of the village and do not adversely affect neighbouring residents.

Categorisation for Planning

In 2017, the then AVDC commissioned a Settlement Hierarchy Assessment Report. This reviewed key characteristics of all settlements and allocated all villages into one of three categories. Maids Moreton was designated a medium village but two of the key criteria, an hourly bus service and a primary school were incorrectly ascribed to it. We have challenged this, and will continue to do so, but to date we have not been successful. If we were reclassified as a small village, it would strengthen our hand in terms of housing development proposals.

Neighbourhood Planning Process

The Localism Act 2011 gave Councils the opportunity to develop a Neighbourhood Plan for their communities. Our Plan is the result of significant, skilled work by Parish Councillors and co-opted community members, with the assistance of professional advice.

Following local consultation and refinement the Plan will be submitted to Buckinghamshire Council which will then send it out for professional review by a qualified planner.

We are aiming to have a draft plan available in February 2021 and will provide a written summary for residents to read and comment on. Thereafter, we shall submit it to Buckinghamshire Council for validation. This may mean that some changes are required to ensure it is legally sound but we hope such changes will be minimal. Once the draft plan is accepted, it goes out to public consultation and judging by other villages' experience there are likely to be comments particularly from developers.

After all comments are resolved, the final plan has to be subjected to a local referendum in which all electors will be asked whether or not they approve of the Plan. Provided a simple majority of electors approves the plan, it will then be made into a legal document by Buckinghamshire Council.

Depending on Covid-19 restrictions, it may be possible to have everything completed by summer 2021.

Brief Summary of Maids Moreton Neighbourhood Plan

To be valid, Plans must be compliant with national planning guidance and also compliant with relevant local policies. The most important parts of the plan relate to the designation of green space and the allocation of sites for development. Plans can also include design principles with which any development would need to comply.

We have to accept a share of new housing development but the Plan will aim to accommodate this in a way that is sensitive to the views and needs of current residents and will support Maids Moreton continuing existence as a distinct, thriving rural village offering a good quality of life for its residents and an attractive place to live.

10. Financial Planning

The numbers below provide a financial analysis of the income and expenditure of the Parish Council. The Parish Council is funded by a precept which is collected by Buckinghamshire Council on our behalf as part of the Council Tax on residents. The precept is shown on the council tax bill each resident receives.

Item	Actual 2019/20	Forecast 2020/21	Budget 2021/22
Receipts			
Precept	£30,440.00	£31,962.00	£31,962.00
Bank Interest	£8.95	£5.32	£5.00
Cricket Pavilion Rent	£310.00	£150.00	£550.00
Rugby Field Rent	£0.00	£1,670.00	£1,670.00
Scout Hut Rent	£150.00	£2,000.00	£1,200.00
Bucks CC re devolved services	£1,513.88	£1,513.87	£1,513.87
Neighbourhood Plan Grant	£0.00	£7,646.00	£0.00
Total Receipts	£32,422.83	£44,947.19	£36,900.87
Payments – Admin			
Clerk Remuneration	£6,118.05	£5,100.00	£6,528.00
Clerk Expenses	£2,103.94	£240.00	£240.00
Office Expenses		£200.00	£200.00
Clerk Payroll	£0.00	£261.00	£261.00
Clerk Tax/NI	£15.00	£0.00	£0.00
Handyman Remuneration	£212.00	£300.00	£500.00
Audit Fees	£605.00	£300.00	£300.00
Other Prof fees	£2,595.00	£1,000.00	£0.00
Meeting Costs	£150.00	£200.00	£200.00
Website	£211.86	£444.00	£144.00
Communication & Marketing	£0.00	£300.00	£400.00
Insurance	£1,629.81	£1,700.00	£1,700.00
Subs	£294.18	£350.00	£350.00
Clerk – Training	£249.07	£301.00	£200.00
Councillors – Training	£0.00	£200.00	£200.00
Elections	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
CLLr Allowance if required	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Total Payments Admin	£14,183.91	£10,896.00	£11,223.00

Item	Actual 2019/20	Forecast 2020/21	Budget 2021/22
Payments - Public Lighting			
Street Lighting Electricity, [unmetered]	£4,270.00	£2,750.00	£3,000.00
Street Lighting Maintenance	£73.10	£500.00	£500.00
Total Payments Public Lighting	£4,343.10	£3,250.00	£3,500.00
Payments - Parks and Open Spaces			
Play Area inspection and maintenance	£71.00	£90.00	£100.00
Playing Field maintenance	£0.00	£2,500.00	£2,000.00
Grass cutting (park and playing field)	£1,260.00	£1,760.00	£2,000.00
Rose Garden	£850.00	£100.00	£1,000.00
Maintenance of Parish	£1,875.56	£1,780.00	£2,000.00
Capital Improvements	£0.00	£1,178.10	£500.00
Waste Bin Emptying	£126.54	£150.00	£150.00
Dog Waste Bin Emptying	£545.28	£800.00	£800.00
Highways Devolved Village Verges	£1,850.00	£2,000.00	£2,000.00
Highways Devolved Hedges & Trees	£718.00	£700.00	£700.00
Highways Devolved Pavement weed killing	£350.00	£350.00	£350.00
Highways Devolved Signs/gate maintenance	£49.50	£100.00	£100.00
Total Payments Parks & Open Spaces	£7,695.88	£11,508.10	£11,700.00
Payments Buildings			
Buildings - Fire Check	£52.75	£65.00	£65.00
Buildings – Electricity	£887.32	£450.00	£900.00
Buildings – Water	£173.78	£100.00	£200.00
Cricket Pavilion Repairs & Maintenance	£0.00	£2,000.00	£2,000.00
Cricket Pav. – Gas	£365.06	£200.00	£400.00
Scout Hut Repairs & Maintenance	£2,598.09	£500.00	£6,000.00
Scout Hut – Gas	£552.90	£500.00	£700.00
Total Payments Buildings	£4,629.90	£3,815.00	£10,265.00
Exceptional Spend			
Village Events	£1,229.98	£0.00	£1,300.00
S137	£0.00	£0.00	£0.00
Neighbourhood Plan	£0.00	£7,646.00	
Traffic Survey	£0.00	£3,200.00	£0.00
Village Grants	£440.00	£1,450.00	£1,500.00
Total Exceptional Spend	£1,669.98	£12,296.00	£2,800.00

Item	Actual 2019/20	Forecast 2020/21	Budget 2021/22
Summary:			
Total Receipts	£32,422.83	£44,947.19	£36,900.87
Total Payments Admin	£14,183.91	£10,896.00	£11,223.00
Total Payments Public Lighting	£4,343.10	£3,250.00	£3,500.00
Total Payments Parks & Open Spaces	£7,695.88	£11,508.10	£11,700.00
Total Payments Buildings	£4,629.90	£3,815.00	£10,265.00
Total Exceptional Spend	£1,669.98	£12,296.00	£2,800.00
Total Spend	£32,522.77	£41,765.10	£39,488.00
Difference between receipts and spend	-£99.94	£3,182.09	-£2,587.13

APPENDIX 1

Maids Moreton Parish Boundary



APPENDIX 2

Maids Moreton Conservation Area

