

Maldon Town Council



The Road to Pesticide-Free Allotments

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Deputy Town Mayor 2026-27

Councillor for Maldon North Ward (2019–present)
Beekeeper • Landscape & Conservation Specialist

Supported by
Lynda Townend
Environment Officer



ASK YOUR COUNCIL
TO GO PESTICIDE-FREE

TAKE ACTION

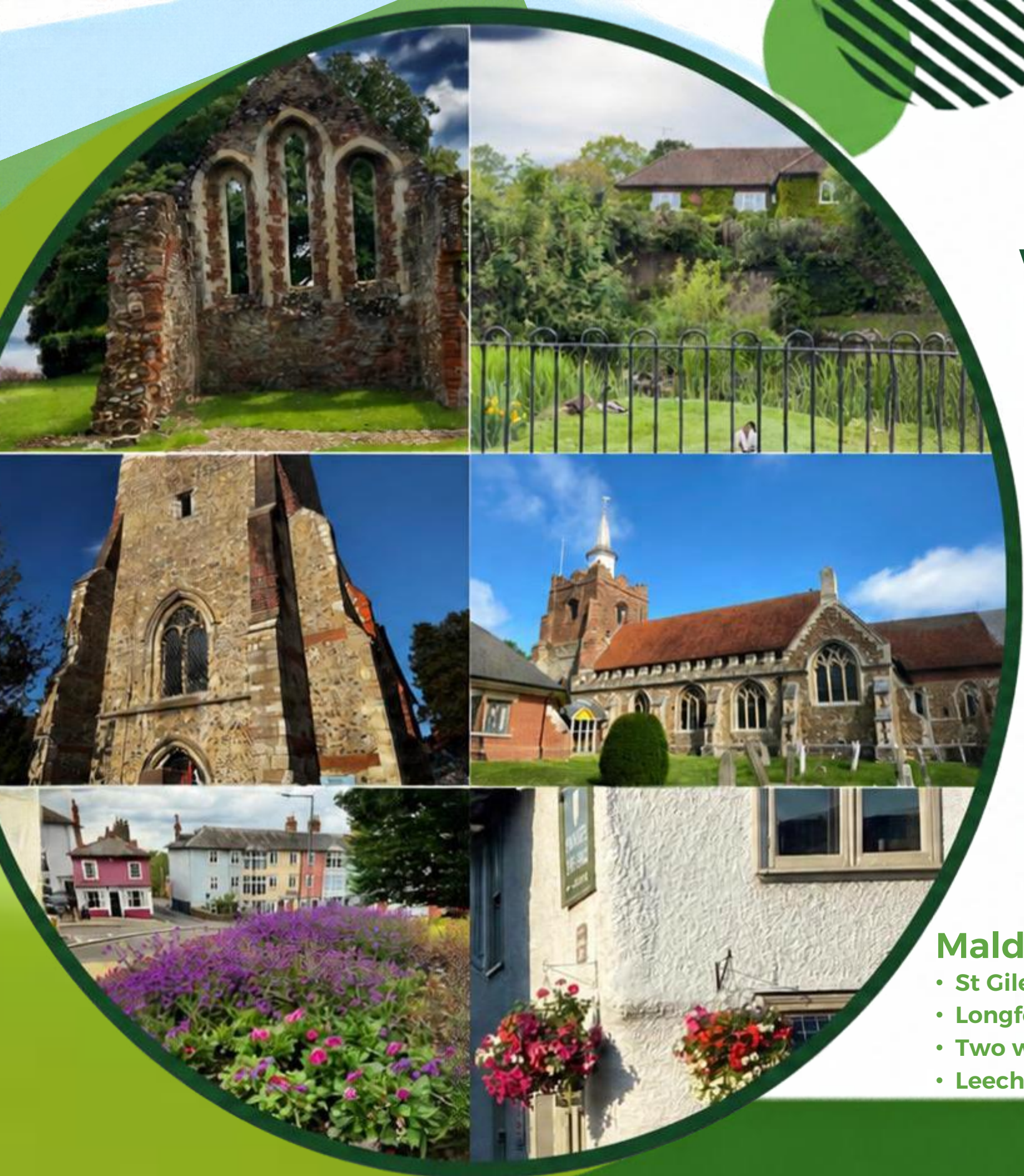


Background: When This Journey Began

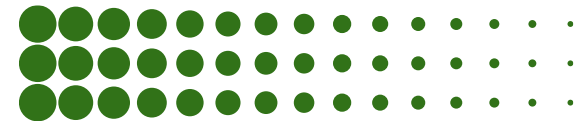
- Grounds Maintenance Contract renewal (late 2021)
- Contract term: Apr 2022–Sept 2025
- Initial 3-year term with option for a 2- year extension
- Reviewed by councillors, officers and Environment Officer

Maldon's Green Estate includes:

- St Giles Ruins
- Longfellow & Coleridge Road green spaces
- Two wildlife ponds
- Leeches Memorial Garden.
- Three closed churchyards.
- Three allotment sites
- Market Hill Gardens.
- Various floral displays & hanging basket scheme



No Routine Use of Pesticides



- Contractors prohibited from routine use of herbicides, fungicides, insecticides and rodenticides
- Rising awareness and environmental responsibility
- Protection of pollinators

“We cannot expect others to stop using pesticides if the Council continues to use them.”





Working With Contractors



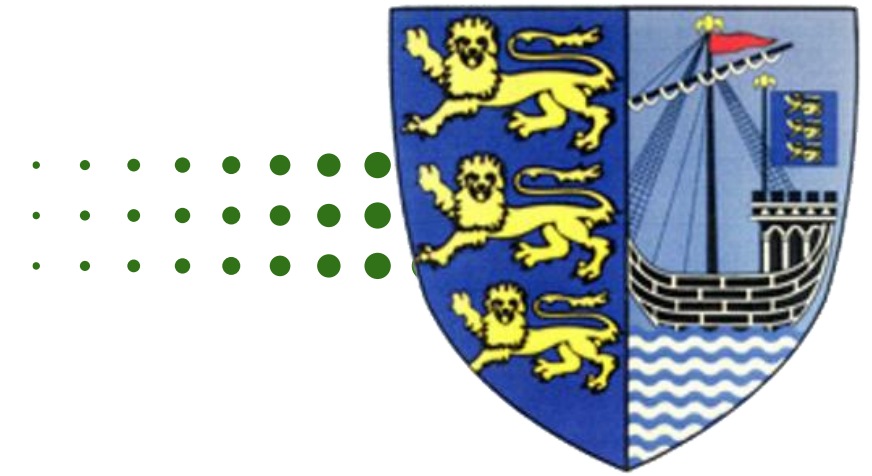
- Requirement discussed with all bidders
- All contractors willing to adapt
- Formal request required for exceptional pesticide use
- Invasive weeds must follow national methodologies

Outcome since 2022:

No contractor requests

Two authorised uses requested by Town Council:

1. Sycamore seedlings at St Mary's
2. Oak processionary moth at Leeches Memorial



My Perspective as a Beekeeper

- Beekeeping for nearly 15 years
- Glyphosate found in honey samples
- Pesticides kill bees
- Authorities often blames husbandry or genetics
- Testing is costly and time-critical

The Allotment Incident (2024)

- Report of pesticide drift 
- Impossible to prove who, what or when
- Spraying in breezy weather
- Limited awareness of neighbouring impact





Two Years of Consultation

STUNNING PLANTS THAT BRING BUTTERFLIES TO YOUR DOOR

Butterfly Bush  Nectar-rich and butterfly-friendly.	Marigold  Bold color attracts pollinators.	Coneflower  Easy, vibrant, butterfly favorite.
Milkweed  Host plant for Monarchs.	Lantana  Colorful clusters draw butterflies.	Verbena  Compact with steady nectar.
Lavender  Scented and pollinator-rich.	Phlox  Fragrant and butterfly-friendly.	Joe-Pye Weed  Tall blooms attract swarms.
Black-Eyed Susan  Sunny native	 Sunny native butterflies love	CREATE YOUR BUTTERFLY GARDEN Use sunny spots and skip pesticides.



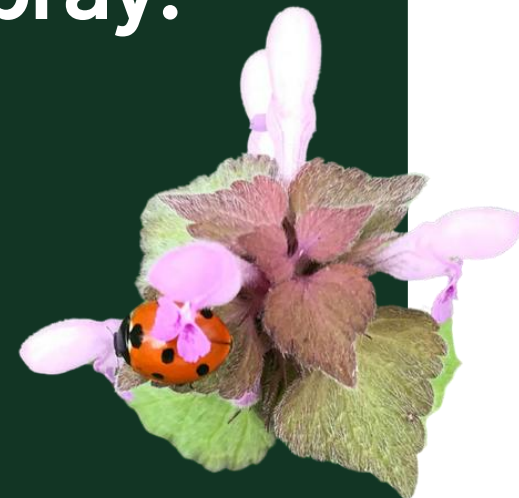
What we did:

- Explored alternatives: rhubarb spray, fairy liquid and vinegar, garlic spray.
- Explored training sessions

Both became rabbit holes

Why a ban was needed:

- Protect bees, butterflies, moths, flies and other insects
- Improve soil health
- Support allotment biodiversity



The Decision: Zero-Pesticide Allotments



- Zero tolerance across all allotment sites
- Exceptional use only by formal request
- Mirrors Grounds Maintenance contract success

Allotment holder response:

- Initial skepticism
- Some felt vilified
- Most supportive

Success factors:

- 1.careful wording,
- 2.counteracting criticism,
- 3.listening,

and

“ask us if you want to use them”



Why This Works



- Accept you cannot police - consent
- Allotments holders were part of the process
 - *They shaped the policy
 - *They understand the environmental benefits
 - *Trusted the Council's reasoning
 - *Agreed the fair exceptional cases



Pesticide-free zone

The Winners



- Allotment holders: healthier soil, biodiversity and stronger crops

- Maldon Town Council: leadership and fewer complaints

Pollinators: bees, butterflies, moths and flies

- Vegetable production: improved yields and natural resilience

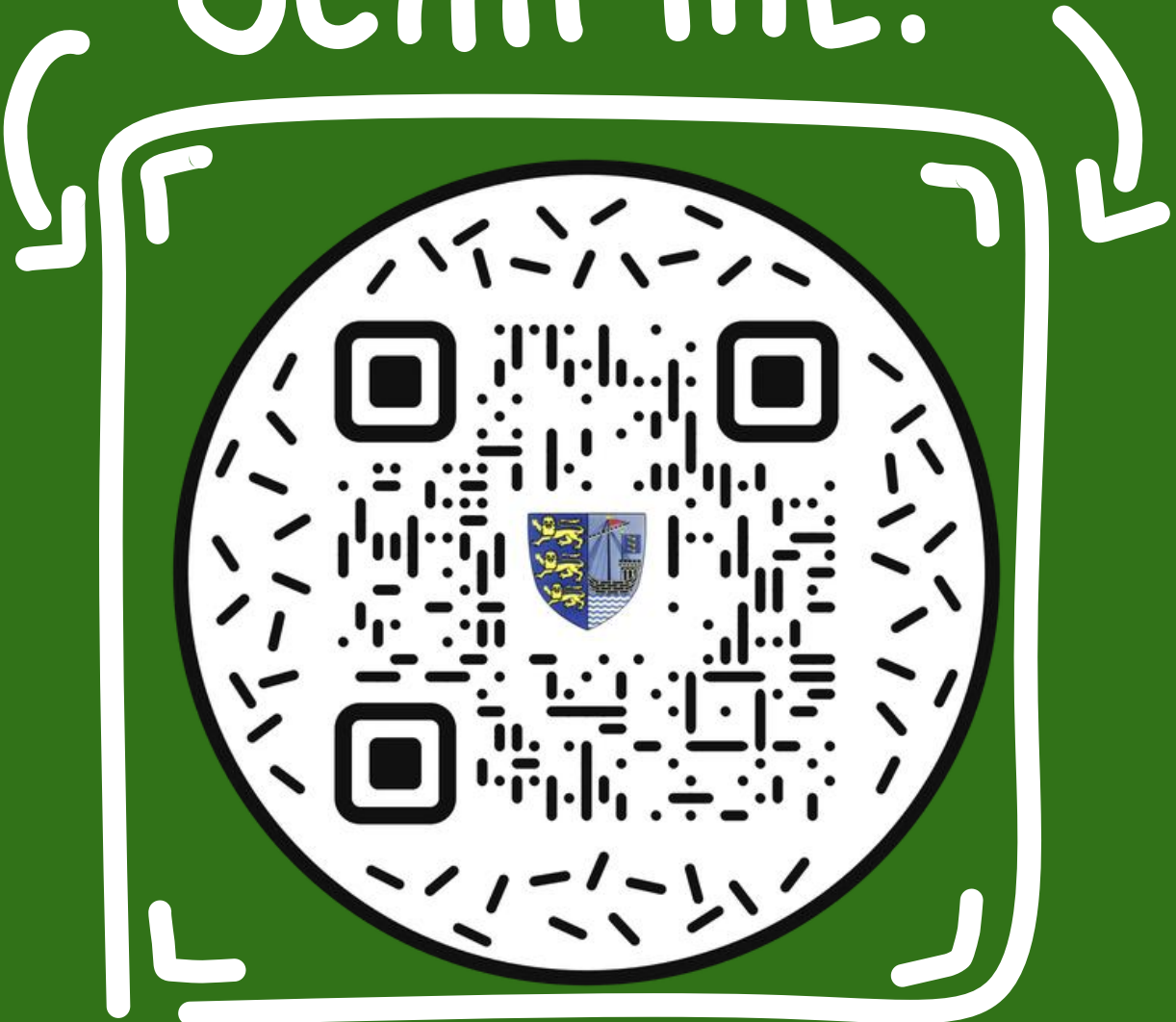
“Maldon is proving that local leadership can make national-level environmental change.”



RESOURCE PAGE



SCAN ME!



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