



## Theydon Bois Parish Council

Parish Office, The Village Hall, Coppice Row,  
Theydon Bois, Essex CM16 7ER

Clerk to the Council: Mrs Julia Gale  
Assistant Clerk to the Council: Mrs Sarah Gysbers

Minutes of the Full Council Meeting of the Council held at the Village Hall  
7:30pm on  
Thursday 16<sup>th</sup> May 2024

**Councillors Present:** Cllrs Gooch (Chairman), Purkiss, Amos, Blake, Burn, Gill, Morton, Cowup,

**Officers Present:** Julia Gale, Clerk to the Council, Sarah Gysbers Assistant Clerk, Jane Souness, Planning Officer.

**Members of the Public:** The meeting was attended by 2 members of the public.

**1734. Apologies for Absence.** Cllr Hannibal

**1735. Election of the Chairman:** Cllr Amos nominated Cllr Gooch and Cllr Purkiss seconded the nomination. Cllr Gooch accepted the position of Chairman. All Councillors approved.

**1736: Election of the Vice Chairman:** Cllr Gill nominated Cllr Purkiss and Cllr Amos seconded the nomination. Cllr Purkiss accepted the position of Vice Chairman. All councillors approved.

**1737. To discuss Committee members.**

The following Councillors agreed to be members in the following Committees:

**Finance and General Purposes Committee**

**Mike Hannibal**

**Peter Gooch**

**Clive Amos**

**Linda Blake**

**Elizabeth Burn**

**Anthony Purkiss**

**Planning Committee**

**Peter Gooch**

**Mike Hannibal**

**Elizabeth Burn**

**Clive Amos**

**Ian Morton**

**Linda Blake**

**Highways and Environment Committee**

**Anthony Purkiss**

**Peter Gooch**

**Pat Gill**

**Cemetery Committee**

**Anthony Purkiss**

**Peter Gooch**

**Clive Amos**

**Pat Gill**

**Allotments Committee**

**Anthony Purkiss**

**Peter Gooch**

**Pat Gill**

**Bev Soutar (volunteer)**

**Community Engagement Committee**

**Pat Gill**

**Ian Morton**

**Linda Blake**

**Peter Cowup**

**All Chairs to be elected at the first meeting of the committee.**

## Responsibilities

Health & Safety – Parish Clerk

Bank Signatories – Councillors Peter Gooch, Mike Hannibal, and Anthony Purkiss.

Complaints - Councillors Mike Hannibal, Peter Gooch and Linda Blake

Transport Rep -TBA

Health/GP Liaison - Clive Amos

Police Liaison - Anthony Purkiss

## Parish Councillors Representing the Council on External Bodies

Buxton Trust -	Cllr Anthony Purkiss
Local Council Liaison -	Cllr Anthony Purkiss; Cllr Elizabeth Burn
National Playing Fields -	Cllr Mike Hannibal
Theydon Newsdesk -	Cllr Elizabeth Burn
Theydon Bois Rural Preservation Society -	Cllr Anthony Purkiss
Tree Strategy -	Cllr Anthony Purkiss; Cllr Elizabeth Burn
United Charities -	Cllr Mike Hannibal
Village Association -	Cllr Peter Gooch

## Parish Council Nominated Persons on External Bodies

Theydon Bois Youth and Community Trust      Cllr Peter Gooch

**1738. To discuss and approve the minutes from 25<sup>th</sup> April 2024. [Approved.](#)**

**1739. Disclosure of Interests with regard to specific items on the agenda** (existence of any Disclosable Pecuniary Interest, or existence and Nature of other Pecuniary Interest or a Non-pecuniary Interest). The Council has adopted Essex Public Law Partnership Code of Conduct - [None.](#)

**1740. Clerks Report.**

There have been some complaints regarding long grass on green, but because of bad weather Qualis have been slow to do the first cut. They have promised to flail the edges next Monday and hopefully cut the rest later in the week. I have also asked them to cut the cemetery as we have had complaints about that, even though that has had one cut.

**1741. Reports from Parish Council representatives on outside organisations**

Cllr Peter Gooch attended the Village Association meeting. He stated that the only thing to report was the update on the new Parish Council website. A new tab has been added so that the Village Association can have their details on there.

Cllr Gill attended the Epping Forest Liaison meeting at the Warren with the City of London. He said that the only things of note were: the decision by The City of London to ask for average speed cameras in the Epping New Road from Woodford up until the Warren. The approval of sixty new management staff and the fact that the City of London are looking for new keepers.

**1742. Chairmans report**

The Chairman reflected on the past year and thanked all the Councillors for their contributions. The Council is a proactive one and has performed well over the past 12 months.

The sad loss of Cllr Annie Wood during the past year was noted.

Special thanks were given to Julia, our Parish Clerk and Financial Officer, for all her efforts over the past year. Thanks also to Jen, our former Clerk, and to Fiona who served the Council so well as our Burial Clerk over the past 16 years. The efforts of Sarah and Mary, our new Assistant Clerk and Burial Clerk respectively, were also recognised and had fitted in well to their new roles.

The busiest Council Committee is the Planning Committee which meets fortnightly. The Chairman expressed his special thanks to Cllr Liz Burn and Jane, our Planning Clerk, for all their efforts and contributions over the past year.

Finally, thanks to Cllr Anthony Purkiss for his Chairmanship of the Highways & Environment Committee which continues to make improvements to the Village environment, and also to Cllr Peter Cowup for leading the project to renew the Village Emergency Plan which has been well received in all quarters.

Cllr Amos proposed a vote of thanks to Chair, Peter Gooch for all his hard work over the previous years. This was taken up by all the Council.

**1743. Finance Committee.**

**1743.1 As Cllr Hannibal is away the Finance report was deferred until a later date.**

**1744. Planning Committee.**

**1744.1 To receive annual report on planning matters for the last year.**

Since the time of the Parish Council's AGM in May 2023, 87 planning applications were registered with Epping Forest District Council ('EFDC'), of which 77 have been determined. All applications were viewed by the Planning Committee, in line with its regular two-weekly meetings. Of the above-mentioned proposals, 46 Full Planning Applications were approved by EFDC, with 20 having been refused. However, revised applications resulted in approval in some cases, allowing for appropriate development to proceed.

Of the eight Certificate of Lawful Development (CLD) applications registered, four were found to be Lawful, of which one application was objected to by the Planning Committee. One application was found by EFDC to not meet the relevant criteria, one was withdrawn, and one was 'not-determined' within the allocated time-frame, which subsequently went to appeal with the Planning Inspectorate.

Three Prior Approval applications were received, of which two were found to meet the relevant criteria, the decision on the third application being outstanding. The Committee also considered 10 'Approval of Details reserved by a Condition' applications – all of which were approved by EFDC.

Seven Planning Appeals were decided by the Planning Inspectorate, six of which were in regard to planning applications refused by EFDC prior to May 2023. Two of the three Appeals which were dismissed by the Inspectorate related to Green Belt sites where the Inspectors found both proposals to represent inappropriate development in the Green Belt. The Planning Committee continues to scrutinise proposals on all Green Belt sites, and submits comments to the Planning Inspectorate for all appeals where third party comments are accepted.

The most significant Full Planning Application to come before the Planning Committee this year was a revised application for 38 New Dwellings in the field at the end of Forest Drive. Despite the Parish Council's robust objection to the proposal, submitted with an independent appraisal of the development from a chartered town planner, engaged by the Planning Committee, members of Epping Forest District Council's Area Planning Sub-Committee East narrowly voted in favour of the development at a meeting in January 2024.

Another of the three locations in Theydon Bois identified in the Epping Forest District Local Plan (2011-2033) for development is the Balti House restaurant site in Station Approach. Outline plans for the redevelopment of this site were presented by developers to residents at a public meeting in the Village Hall in May 2024.

More generally, members of the public continue to raise concern with respect to development that is perceived to impact on the character of the village and its surrounding environs, although the number of residential developments, by way of extension, has been lower than in previous years. The Planning Committee takes into account the views of all parties who wish to propose, or comment upon, planning applications.

Planning enforcement matters still continue to take up a considerable amount of Committee time, and the Parish Council is committed to working alongside EFDC to effect satisfactory resolutions for the village where instances of planning breaches occur.

#### **1745. Highways, Cemetery and Environment Committee.**

##### **1745.1 To receive annual report on Highways, Cemetery and Environment matters within the Village.**

Cllr Purkiss gave an update on behalf of the Highways, Cemetery and Environment committees. Overall, the Highways Committee has had a positive year with good outcomes and upgrades for the village. We are very pleased with our contractor Harringtons Brothers who have assisted greatly with the upkeep of the village.

We continue to have problems, as do other parishes with the poor workmanship and lack of accountability with Ringway- Jacobs/Essex Highways. They barely meet Statutory obligations, offer poor value for money and dismiss demands made of them by the parish. Unfortunately, the contract runs until 2027, when we expect a change. After 3 years the refurbishment of the footway and kerbing in Loughton Lane is finally underway. Despite funding from the parish, there is no desire from Ringway Jacobs to work with the parish. One of the agreed aims at the start of the project was to use Theydon Bois as a pilot whereby funding from a parish council was meant to accelerate much needed works and then roll it out across Essex. But it was met with such determined resistance from Essex Highways Officers that it was only through the efforts of a few that we have now seen the work take place in the Lane to benefit the school children and pedestrians alike.

Some of the work completed by the Parish council's Contractors are:

A refurbished path on The Green, upgrading of around the four main trees on Forest Drive, adding wooden posts to protect the corners. We have also arranged for numerous potholes and patching in Poplar Row and on the viaduct, drainage works in Abridge Road and Coppice Row. In the cemetery, we have obtained a significant grant to build a Ha-Ha and landscaping for ashes scattering in the new section of the Cemetery. Keeping the cemetery in good order and the appointment of a new burial clerk. We are also establishing a new section of the cemetery for consecrated burials with a new hedgerow.

We have maintained and upgraded our CCTV system and look to enhance in the coming year, including Station Hill and the completion of 360 coverage of routes in and out of the village.

We look to do further works in the coming year to keep our village up to the standard we all enjoy and cherish.

#### **1746.1 To receive annual report on Community Engagement matters within the Village.**

Cllr Gill gave an update on behalf of the Community Engagement committee;  
The monthly litter pick on the first Saturday of every month has continued through the year, led by Cllr Cowup and supported by a small band of regular litter pickers.

Theydon Bois Open Gardens Day took place on Sunday 18th June. The event was a great success, despite the bad weather forecast and the Central Line being closed, raising over £2000 for St Clare's Hospice.

A tree was planted on the village green in October by the Lord Lieutenant of Essex to commemorate the King's Coronation. The tree is a small-leaved lime and is the tree for the county of Essex donated by the King. The planting was organised by the City of London Corporation and was attended by several councillors and many villagers. The Parish Council has taken on responsibility for watering the tree over the summer months, using the recommended rainwater, and has bought a water bowser to facilitate easier watering,

The Christmas Market was a successful event well supported by villagers. Thanks go to Phil Hughes for improving the sound system for the lighting of the Christmas tree at the Village Hall. Nik O'Flynn was presented with the Villager of the Year Award and she turned on the Christmas tree lights.

A Disability Equipment Loan Scheme has been started, sourcing unwanted equipment through appeals on social media. The items are checked over at the Repair Café and are stored in the Parish Shed, for free short term loan to villagers. Several requests for items have been fulfilled at short notice.

Three successful Warm Hub Events were held at St Mary's Church Hall over the winter, supported by a grant from the Parish Council and run by Lisa and her Community Cuppa team. The sessions were for an extended period covering lunchtime and were fitted in between the regular Community Cuppa events. Going forward, the Parish Council will cover the rent of the Church Hall for the regular Community Cuppa sessions.

The Village Emergency Plan has been finalised thanks to Cllr Cowup's hard work, and a training session for volunteers is planned.

A village family event to commemorate the 80th anniversary of VE Day in 2025 is in the very early stages of planning.

#### **1747 Any Other Urgent Business for report (without decision).**

**None.**



**1748. Public Participation session with regard to items of interest to the Parish.**

A member of the public mentioned the flooding at the Zebra crossing every time it rains heavily and asked if more drainage could be put in to address this.

Cllr Purkiss said that this had been looked at but there is nothing that can be done.

He also advised that the flooding problem that occurred recently on the viaduct has now been addressed by Essex Highways. They have recently pumped out the first (and biggest) drain so that should solve most of the problem.

**Meeting closed at 8.18 pm**

Signed: .....

Dated: 27<sup>th</sup> June 2024