



# North Weald Bassett Parish Council

Parish Hall at Thornwood Common, Weald Hall Lane, Thornwood, Essex CM16 6NB

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*Clerk to the Council*  
Susan De Luca

19<sup>th</sup> October 2022

**TO: MEMBERS OF THE ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE**

**PLEASE NOTE THE TIME OF THIS MEETING**

*This meeting is open to any other North Weald Bassett Parish Councillor who wishes to attend*

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You are hereby invited to attend a meeting of the **ENVIRONMENTAL COMMITTEE** which will be held on **Wednesday, 26<sup>th</sup> October 2022** at **7.00pm** to transact the business shown in the agenda below.

**This meeting will be held in the Thornwood Common Parish Hall, Weald Hall Lane, Thornwood, with any necessary measures put in place by the Government at the time.**

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**AGENDA**

**1. ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN** 🖐️

To **PROPOSE** and **SECOND** nominations for the Office of Chairman and, if there is more than one nominee, to vote thereon.

**2. ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN** 🖐️

To **PROPOSE** and **SECOND** nominations for the Office of Vice Chairman and, if there is more than one nominee, to vote thereon.

**3. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE** 🖐️

To **RECEIVE** any apologies for absence.

**4. OTHER ABSENCES**

To **NOTE** any absences for which no apology has been received.

5.  **CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES** 

To **APPROVE** as a correct record the minutes of the meeting held on 28<sup>th</sup> February 2022, as attached at **APPENDIX 1**.

6. **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST** 

To **RECEIVE** any Declarations of Interest by Members

*A Member with a personal interest in a matter must consider whether it is a Disclosable Pecuniary, Non-Pecuniary or Other Pecuniary Interest, and declare it accordingly. A Member who is unsure as to how to declare their interest should seek independent advice.*

7. **QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

To **RECEIVE** questions from members of the public.

*In accordance with an agreed procedure, the time allocated for public questions shall be limited to 15 minutes or such other period determined by the Chairman of the Meeting.*

8. **PLAY AREAS** 

a) **Inspections**

Councillors are asked to **NOTE** that weekly and monthly inspections of the Play Areas are completed by Thornwood Grounds Maintenance, who are trained and hold the relevant certificates of competence to complete such inspections. At the start of 2022, the Parish Council signed up to using specific software for this purpose – PSS Live. This software enables access by both the Parish Council staff and Thornwood Grounds maintenance, who are able to report and record any issues or findings via a mobile app which is then directly transferred online. These are regularly reviewed, and action taken to resolve, note or monitor any issues, the decision for this being taken by both the PFO and Clerk. Annual inspections continue to take place once per year, and we are currently awaiting a date for the next inspection (due now). Councillors are asked to specifically note that this Council is currently trialling the self-repair of shrinking Wetpour edges – the PFO will provide an update at the meeting.

b) **School Green Lane Play Area**

The Clerk has received a complaint from a resident regarding School Green Play Area. The resident has suggested that the play area equipment should be updated and the play area itself extended so that older children can use it too. Councillors are asked to **CONSIDER** this matter.

Councillors are asked to **NOTE** that the same resident has complained about the basketball court being neglected, reporting that there are shards of glass all over the surface and weeds growing through the broken concrete. The Clerk has advised the resident that the Queens Hall Charity are responsible for the basketball court and details of the resident's complaint have been forwarded on to the Trustees.

Councillors are also asked to **NOTE** that a new set of flat swings has been installed at School Green Lane Play area, as agreed within the budget for this financial year.

c) **Thornwood Common Play Area**

The Clerk has also received complaints from residents regarding the Thornwood Common Play Area. A report will be given at the meeting.

9. **ALLOTMENTS** 

a) **General Update**

To receive a general update on the current status of allotment sites in the Parish, and matters that may affect the allotments.

**b) Hastingwood Allotment Site**

An update will be given regarding the on-going treatment of Marestail. Members are asked to **CONSIDER** how best to move forward with the management of this invasive weed.

**c) Request for fairness and reduction of fees**

The Parish Office has been approached by a tenant of Wheelers Farm Gardens Allotment asking for justification as to why he is paying the total cost of two small plots (£26 each) when if he had one large plot equal in size to the two small plots he currently leases it would be £31. The tenant has advised that this does not seem fair especially as no large plots were available at the time they got their plots. There are now large plots available and this has been offered to the tenant however he had declined.

Councillors are reminded that the system of rental fees is based on the size of the specific size of the plots as follows:

- Under 50sqm = Extra Small £24.00
- Between 51sqm & 100sqm = Small £26.00
- Between 101sqm & 150sqm = Average £27.00
- Between 151sqm & 200sqm = Large £31.00
- Over 201sqm = Extra Large £33.00

This sizing scheme was agreed by Council to ensure appropriate administration of the allotments, as allotments are not charged per meter squared. Councillors are now asked to **CONSIDER** this matter.

**10. CEMETERY** 

**a) Complaint regarding Cemetery Fees**

The Clerk has received a complaint from an owner of two plots in the Cremated Remains Section regarding the costs associated with interment of ashes, the purchase of a plaque and boulder and also transfer fee costs. The Clerk has advised the owner that the fees are considered each year and that the Parish Council must consider the on-going maintenance of the cemetery, which is factored into the fees. Councillors are asked to **CONSIDER** this matter. A copy of the current fees is attached at **Appendix 2**.

**b) Request for Memorial Bench – Spring CR Section**

The Clerk has received a request for a Memorial Bench to be placed near to Spring CR 17 and 18. Councillors are asked to **CONSIDER** this request. Further information is attached at **Appendix 3**.

**c) Cemetery Bin**

Following incidents of fly-tipping of building rubble being found in the cemetery bin, Councillors are asked to **NOTE** that the bin is now padlocked.

**d) Cemetery Audit**

Following attendance on a Cemetery Compliance Course by the Clerk and Senior Admin Officer, an Audit was undertaken, with cemetery maps checked against Cemetery Registers. Councillors are asked to **NOTE** that all was found to be in order.

**11. REPAIRS TO BRIDGE AT HIGHAM VIEW**

As Councillors may be aware, the Parish Council is responsible for the maintenance of the bridge which links Higham View to Weald Common. Repairs to the bridge have been undertaken on a number of occasions over the past few years and the handrails have now broken away from the main structure. Following a recent inspection, the Parish Council's contractor has recommended that the bridge is replaced as soon as possible. The Clerk has made enquiries and Epping Forest District Council have said that the Highway Rangers would be willing to replace the bridge provided the Parish Council pays

for the materials. Further information will be given at the meeting.

**12. WEALD COMMON PLAY AREA PATH**

Councillors will be aware that the Parish Council's contractor inspects the play area at Weald Common on a weekly basis. These inspections also include the access pathway. The maintenance of the path has always presented a challenge and as a short-term solution the contractor has been asked to fill any gaps / holes to ensure that it remains safe for use on a weekly basis. The Parish Council contractor is using a different mix of materials, and so far these materials are holding firm. The contractor will continue to use this mix to fill any holes, and it will be monitored over the winter months. If this solution fails, Councillors will be asked to consider a better more permanent solution.

**13. ANNUAL ASSET CHECKS**

Councillors are asked to **NOTE** that the Annual Asset Checks are in the process of being completed by the Principal Financial Officer.

**14. ANNUAL TREE RISK ASSESSMENT**

Councillors are asked to **NOTE** that the Annual Tree Risk Assessment is scheduled to be carried out during October.

**15. REVIEW OF ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY** 

Councillors are asked to **AGREE** to a statement being added to the Parish Council's Environmental Policy in relation to the proposed Weald Common Tree Planting Project. The statement will relate to the recycling of the plastic tube guards which are required to protect the whips. It is proposed that the guards will be removed and recycled 5 years after the trees have been planted. As Councillors will be aware, the Parish Council is working closely with ECC's Senior Forestry and Woodland Officer who has sourced a supplier that will take back the guards and recycle at the end of their use.

**16. DOG WASTE BIN COLLECTION**

A report regarding the collection of dog waste will be given at the meeting.

**17. WEALD COMMON TREE PLANTING AND SWALE PROJECT**

An update regarding progress will be given at the meeting.

**18. CHRISTMAS LIGHTS** 

- a) Councillors are asked to **CONFIRM** arrangements for this year's Christmas Lights:
- Christmas lights to be displayed on Norwegian Spruce – Village Green, North Weald.
  - Christmas lights to be displayed on the front of the Parish Hall, Thornwood.
  - Last year two Christmas Trees were decorated with lights and placed in the garden at the parade of shops in North Weald. Both trees were replanted near to Eldridge Wood. Councillors are asked to **CONSIDER** if they would like the same arrangements to be made for this year.
- b) As in previous years, a contribution to be made to Hastingwood Village Hall, to be used towards the purchase of a Christmas Tree. Suggested contribution is £50.00.

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