



## North Weald Bassett Parish Council

Parish Office, Queens Hall Community Centre,  
School Green Lane, North Weald, CM16 6EJ

**Tel:** 07572 507591

**Email:** [clerk@northweald-pc.gov.uk](mailto:clerk@northweald-pc.gov.uk)

**Web Site:** [www.northweald-pc.gov.uk](http://www.northweald-pc.gov.uk)

**Clerk to the Council.**

Susan De Luca

30<sup>th</sup> September 2025

---

### NOTICE OF MEETING

You are hereby summoned to attend a Meeting of the Parish Council which will be held on **MONDAY 6th October 2025 at 7.30 pm** to transact the business shown in the Agenda below.  
This meeting will be held in the **Thornwood Common Parish Hall, Weald Hall Lane, Thornwood.**

Susan De Luca  
Clerk to the Council

*Members of the public and press are invited to attend this meeting*

---

#### AGENDA

##### 1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

To **NOTE** any apologies which have been received.

##### 2. OTHER ABSENCES

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

##### 3. CONFIRMATION OF MINUTES

To **AGREE** the Minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> September as attached as attached at **Appendix 1.**

##### 4. 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.*

##### 5. QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

To **RECEIVE** questions from members of the public for a period determined by the Chairperson of the Meeting. **Please NOTE if the Clerk has not been previously notified of the Question, Council may have to note questions and respond to them after the Meeting.**

##### 6. REPORT OF THE CLERK

To **RECEIVE** a report or update from the Clerk on Parish Council matters that staff have been working on.

- Various planning matters, including liaising with resident
  - Various cemetery matters, which include attendance at Cemetery for appointments to view plots for purchase, interments & bookings, carried out Topple Test at Cemetery on memorials in The Hedges and Meadow Brook sections (further details on confidential pages)
  - Thornwood Village Hall, various matters, bookings and HR matter (further details on confidential pages)
-

- d) Assistance to the Queens Hall Charity on hiring matter
- e) Numerous fly tipping matters
- f) Street Lighting matters
- g) Highway matters, including Beamish Close pathway, Hastingwood Road, Mill Street
- h) Wayleave at Thornwood Common, including viewing CCTV due to theft of equipment, liaising with contractors, solicitors and residents
- i) EFDC Local Council Liaison Committee meeting
- j) Parish Council Liaison meeting
- k) Attendance at four EFDC meetings
- l) Dealing with Allotment Matters
- m) Possible HMO - Rowley Mead

## 7. REPORTS & MEMBERS REPORTS

**Councillors are reminded that, if possible, members reports should be submitted in written form for noting only, this enables the meeting to flow smoothly and allows adequate time for discussion of matters appertaining to the Parish.** Written reports, if available, will be reproduced at *Appendix 2*.

- a) **Chairman's Report**
- b) **Vice Chairman's Report**
- c) **District & County Councillors Reports** - District Councillors are invited to submit a written report if they are unable to attend the Parish Council Meeting
- d) **Parish Councillors Reports**
- e) **Queens Hall Charity Report**
- f) **Highways** - Various Road closures

## 8. FINANCIAL REPORTS

- a) **List of Cheques & Monthly Statement of Accounts up to 30<sup>th</sup> September 2025**
- b) **Investments** – Latest available report(s) will be given

## 9. EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL – NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD MARKET

Following a number of posts on social media relating to a confidential item being on the District Councils Cabinet agenda regarding the possible closure of North Weald Market, the Clerk contacted the Leader of the District Council to ask if he would confirm what the situation was. This was in order to stop speculation increasing on social media. Cllr Whitbread responded very quickly with the following comment:

*Thank you for your email. Monday night's cabinet item on North Weald Market was a part 2 report and excluded the public as it contained commercially sensitive information. I'm pleased to say that Cabinet approved capital expenditure to create a new parking area for the market on the Airfield. This is required as the current parking area will be used by Google in the future, so we need to create a new parking area for the market. EFDC has developed an extremely productive partnership with Saunders Markets and (have agreed terms for an) extension to the lease. EFDC and Saunders market will continue to work and liaise with North Weald Parish Council to address any concerns over traffic and provide a popular market that does not have an adverse impact on local residents.*

Members are therefore asked to **NOTE** this comment.

## 10. LOCAL GOVERNMENT REVIEW

On Monday 22<sup>nd</sup> September, EFDC Cabinet made the following decision.

***Support for 3-unitary model***

Epping Forest District Council is set to endorse a preferred option for reorganising Essex's local government into new unitary authorities, as required by the Government. 4 business cases have been developed for 3, 4, and 5 unitaries, and after analysis, council's backing at the last council meeting, and resident and stakeholder engagement, **cabinet has agreed to support the 3-unitary model**. This model is projected to deliver the best balance of financial sustainability, service quality, and local representation, with an estimated net benefit of £86 million after 5 years and a payback period of 2.7 years. The new structure would empower local neighbourhood committees, streamline services, and support economic and housing growth across Essex. The council's formal endorsement will be submitted to the government by the deadline of 26 September 2025.

For Members information, the supported 3 unitary model would see Epping Forest District Council merge with Harlow, Maldon, Chelmsford and Brentwood Councils to create the 'Mid Essex Unitary'. For further information, councillors should visit [www.essexlgrhub.org](http://www.essexlgrhub.org).

## 11. PATH AT DEBT OF HONOUR

Members are advised that there is a fairly large crack in the pathway at the Debt of Honour leading up to the Norwegian Stone. As you will know the Debt of Honour is owned and maintained by EFDC, however the Parish Council are Guardians of the Norwegian Stone. The RFO has been to site to assess the path, and yellow and black tape has been fixed on the path. Cllr Chris Whitbread has advised that he will organise the repair of the path. We have advised that Remembrance Sunday events are due to take place there in November.

## 12. TREES

Work to trees identified in the recent risk assessment will begin on 7<sup>th</sup> October 2025. Members will be advised at the next meeting that this work has been completed.

## 13. PATHWAY BETWEEN WEALD COMMON AND NORTH WEALD VILLAGE HALL

Following on from the item on the September Agenda, the Clerk emailed the Chairman of North Weald Village Hall on the 5<sup>th</sup> September. Subsequently, on the 16<sup>th</sup> September the Clerk received the following email and estimate:

### **Email**

*Dear Susan,*

*Following a recent inspection by our appointed tree surgeon, Becker Tree Contracts Limited, we have reviewed the proposal to formalise the existing informal line as a permanent footpath beneath the mature weeping willow at North Weald Village Hall. The tree surgeon's report highlights several significant concerns:*

- The willow is a large, mature specimen (diameter at breast height: 96cm) with a root protection area (RPA) of 11.52 metres, as defined by BS5837:2012 (Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction).*
- The RPA extends beyond the canopy of the tree, and construction of a path within this area is not permitted under the standard (quoted below).*
- There is evidence of storm damage and soil compaction beneath the tree, and mature willows are prone to shedding branches, increasing the risk to public safety if the area is used more intensively.*

### *Regulatory Guidance (BS5837:2012):*

*"Under BS5837:2012 (Trees in Relation to Design, Demolition and Construction), the root protection area (RPA) for this tree extends beyond the canopy. Construction of a path within this area is not permitted."*  
*On the basis of this expert advice, we have voted against formalising a path in the current line. Instead, we will be closing off access beneath the willow by installing a low fence around the canopy's perimeter, as recommended by the tree surgeon. This measure will help protect the tree's roots, reduce soil compaction, and minimise risk to the public. We therefore suggest that signs are erected to clearly show where the current established bridleway exists, being BR87 201.*

*Please let us know if you require any further information or wish to discuss this matter.*

*With kind regards,*

*Trustees North Weald Village Hall.*

### **ESTIMATE INCLUDED WITH EMAIL**

*Weeping willow – Large, mature good condition. DBH (Diameter at breast height) 96cm. Evidence of storm damage on south side at circa 6m. It is proposed to turn a current desire line across private land into a permanent footpath. Using a grid-based foundation, at approximately 2m distance from tree base. Under B55837: 2012 TREES IN REALTION TO DESIGN DEMOLITION AND CONSTRUCTION The root protection area (RPA) for works for this tree would be 11.52m, which extends beyond the canopy of the tree. The construction of a path within this area would not be allowed. A mature willow such as this is prone to shedding branches, so any increased use of the area beneath it would be very unwise and I would strongly counsel against it, especially as it is possible to reroute any path to the side without difficulty. There is evidence of compaction beneath the tree along the desire line. To alleviate this and reduce the target area, I would advise dissuading access to the area beneath the canopy by installing a low fence around its perimeter. This would have the added benefit of moving the desire line.*

Following this communication, the Clerk has liaised with the Parish Councils Health & Safety Officer to review this communication, the outcome of which is as follows:

*I have looked at the information regarding the access point under the Willow Tree to Weald Common being closed off. I have also attached a document for you with my notes and thoughts on the matter. Ultimately, it is North Weald Village Hall's call if they want to block off part of their land, especially as nothing came of the process of formalising it to a public right of way. The Parish Council has no power to stop them, and to all intents and purposes they are being guided by the content of the tree report. However, what is more concerning is that the potential fenced off area could extend to the Parish Council owned car parking spaces. The email states that they intend to fence off around the 'canopy's perimeter', and that the root protection area extends beyond the canopy of the tree. There are no measurements contained within the paperwork which sets out what the canopy is (and thus the fenced off area) however I have used AI by putting in all the details including the root protection area, and it advises the following which gives us a rough guide:*

- Mature weeping willows (*Salix babylonica*) often have a canopy spread of 10 to 15 metres, sometimes more.*
- Given the large RPA, this tree is likely mature, so we can reasonably estimate a canopy diameter of around 12 to 18 metres.*
- That would mean a canopy radius of approximately 6 to 9 metres from the trunk.*

*Therefore, based on this assumption, it seems a possibility that the canopy diameter (and thus fence) potentially extends into the Parish Council owned car parking spaces, which the Village Hall don not have a legal right to do. Therefore, at this stage it is suggested that this Council responds to North Weald Village Hall as follows:*

- 1. It is the responsibility of Essex County Council to provide directional signage for public rights of way. The Parish Council does not have any obligation to direct people a certain way to Weald Common. We do not do this for any other land that we own, and this would potentially cause more problems. Residents need to work this out for themselves. It would however be a good idea for NWVH to place a notice on their fence explaining why they have closed it off.*
- 2. The Parish Council should request a drawing of the proposed fenced off area so that the Parish Council can check it against its records in terms of land ownership.*

The photos and additional notes are attached at **Appendix 3**.

Members are now asked how they wish to **PROGRESS** this matter.

#### 14. REMEMBRANCE SUNDAY

Members are advised that preparations for this years events are well underway. Invitations have been sent and posters are ready to go on the noticeboards. Lunch invites have been sent out to all known Village organisations and Councillors are urged to attend the lunch and, if they can to ask friends and neighbours if they wish to attend. The Parish Council has received an offer by Stuart Poulton to print the service sheets this year. Members are advised that each year 400 Order of Service are printed and the cost of this is usually covered by Sponsorship from local businesses. The service sheets are normally printed five days before. As the last date for responses is Monday, 20<sup>th</sup> October, this allows 10 days for chasing. This year we have 5 sponsors: TGM, LVM, Green Acres, Davis Estate Agents and Exterior Plas. All have sponsored £50 each and we put their Logos on the front of the service sheet. If Members are minded to take up Stuart Poultons offer they need to bear the above in mind. If so, we would need to look at how our sponsors would fit in to this and whether he could facilitate the numbers and the time scale. An example of an Order of Service is included at **Appendix 4** for Members information.

#### 15. YOUTH CLUB

Cllr Ms Wood has advised that the Youth Club has now started in in the Queens Hall, and it seems to be very successful with local children attending.

#### 16. STREET LIGHTING

##### a Street Light Structural Tests

On 1<sup>st</sup> September, structural testing was completed on 47 of the Parish Council owned street lighting columns which were due this year. The testing provides a RAG rating for all street lights that were tested as follows:

- GREEN: Recommend that this unit has no structural defects that affect the columns continuing performance and we recommend the next inspection within 72 months or 36 months for a column that has received just a visual inspection – Risk Score 0
- AMBER: Recommend that this unit has a single or several structural defects that affect the units continuing performance and we recommend the next inspection, or replacement within 36 months - Risk score of 1 to 259
- RED or RED (UPGRADE): Recommend that this unit has a single or several very significant structural defects that affect the units continuing performance and we recommend the unit is replaced as soon as is reasonably practicable – Risk Score > 260

The results identified 1 red status light, 23 amber status lights, and 23 Green status lights. Given the status of the red light, the Clerk has under delegated powers for reasons of Health and Safety instructed the replacement of this street column as soon as possible, the cost of which is £4,809.60, which will be taken out of the Rolling Street Light Replacement Earmarked reserve. Out of the 23 amber lights, 1 was indicated to have additional recommended works to conduct a retrospective design assessment according to BSEN40-3-3:2013 to ensure the column can safely carry the current loads, at the earliest opportunity. The PFO has obtained a quote for these additional works, along with a quote to replace the column, and will provide an update at the meeting for Councillors consideration. Out of these 23 amber status lights, the highest risk score was 112.50, and as a result, it is recommended that the next inspection takes place within 36 months. Councillors are asked to **CONSIDER** these matters.

##### b) Street Light George Avey Croft

In addition to the 47 street lights tested above, the Parish Council has been advised of one light which underwent a structural survey test in April 2024 and as such was not due to further testing this year. This street light is located in George Avey Croft has been identified as leaning. The Clerk visited the site and looked at the light on Thursday 25<sup>th</sup> September, and viewed the 'lean' on the light column to be considerable, however the column is situated on a grass verge. The column is a concrete swan neck column. The Clerk therefore asked the Council's contractors to visit the site and assess the situation and see if the lamp column could be straightened. If not, the Contractor had advised that a new column would be necessary, with a connection via UK Power Networks. Members will recall that these connections do take a considerable length of time for connection. If a replacement is needed the cost is expected to be between £4-6,500. **At the time of writing the Agenda we have now been advised that a repair to the lamp column was undertaken and it was straightened in situ.**

## **17. NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN**

Councillors are asked to **NOTE** that the PFO and Cllr Blanks met to make the necessary amendments to the draft Neighbourhood Plan, and that this document has been submitted to EFDC for an informal review. The regulation 14 consultation is expected to take place in the coming months.

## **18. THORNWOOD COMMON 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY**

Members are reminded that the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebratory event will be held on Thursday 28<sup>th</sup> October 2025, with a simple plaque unveiling. Details of this will be provided at the meeting. Councillor Shirley Hawkins has asked all Councillors to place this date in their diary.

## **19. HASTINGWOOD VILLAGE HALL – INVITATION TO PARISH COUNCILLORS TO ATTEND AN OPEN EVENING**

Councillors have been invited to attend a formal event to view the new flooring and works to the Hastingwood Hall, which were carried out with various grant funding. The Hastingwood Village Hall Management would like to welcome Councillors to the Hall on **22<sup>nd</sup> October at 7pm**. Refreshments will be available and they hope to see as many councillors there as possible.

## **20. ANNUAL ASSET INSPECTIONS**

Members are advised that the Annual inspection of Council owned Assets were carried out over the last month by the Council's RFO and H & S Officer. A full report will be presented at the November meeting.

## **21. UKPN WORKS ON THORNWOOD COMMON**

As Members will be aware works to Thornwood Common commenced on 21<sup>st</sup> August, however these have not been without technical difficulties. Additional works have been necessary due to the requirements of UKPN which were outside the control of the contractors. In addition, the theft of the Excavator and the Dumper Truck from the site also caused some issues. This has resulted in the Clerk having to view the CCTV, and provide details to the police. However, it is hoped that the works should be completed within the next two weeks.

## **22. BRIDGE BETWEEN WEALD COMMON AND WEALD COMMON WOODLAND**

It has been reported that the bridge between Weald Common and the Weald Common woodland seems really unstable. Also the chicken wire is a little problematic. The office staff have contacted Countrycare if they can assess the problem as they have been maintaining the bridge since its installation.

## **23. BATTLE OF BRITAIN SUNDAY**

The Parish Council hosted the Battle of Britain Commemorative Event on the 14<sup>th</sup> September at the Debt of Honour. 14 wreaths were expected to be laid (there was one no show at the event) however this was laid later on the day. All wreaths were taken the following morning to the Cross of Sacrifice. The Clerk has written to



the PCC at St Andrews Church to ask if they wish to organise next years event. However no response has been received at the time of writing the agenda.

#### **24. FLAGPOLE AT THE OLD ENTRANCE GATE TO NORTH WEALD AIRFIELD**

The Clerk has received an email from the Airfield Manager to advise that the flagpole has been removed as it is damaged beyond repair, and it will not be replaced in its current position. Members are asked to **NOTE** this.

#### **25. NORTH WEALD BASSETT CEMETERY PEDESTRIAN GATE**

Members are asked to **NOTE** that the Cemetery Pedestrian Gate which has been in place for 27 years now has to be replaced as it is damaged beyond repair. A new gate has been ordered and will be installed by the Parish Councils contractor as soon as it has been received.

#### **26. FLOWER TROUGH BY SIGN ALONG THE HIGH ROAD**

The Clerk has been advised that the 2 local residents who have been planting and caring for the plants in the flower trough under the entrance sign to the North Weald Bassett Village have advised that due to personal reasons they are no longer able to continue to do this. They have been looking after this flower trough for well over ten years all at their own time and cost. The Clerk will give members a verbal report on this at the meeting.

#### **27. BENCHES WITHIN THE PARISH**

Members are aware that the Parish Council owns and is responsible for numerous benches in the Parish. All Parish Council owned benches that are over 2 years old are treated with the relative wood treatments annually, and washed and cleaned every 3 months. However there are still a number of benches that do not seem to have any 'owners', these are as follows:

- At the junction of Kiln Road & High Road possibly owned by EFDC
- At junction of Dukes Close & High Road possibly owned by North Weald RBL
- Opposite North Weald Library – Unsure
- Outside the Parade of Shops by the Garden – Update: Lease checked and falls under responsibility of the Parish Council.

Members are asked if they wish to **ADD** these 3 Additional Benches to the Parish Council Maintenance Schedule, thereby taking responsibility for them.

#### **28. EFDC TOWN AND VILLAGE PARTNERSHIP**

Following a meeting with the Clerk, the Chairman of the Parish Council, EFDC Officers and the Community Champion for North Weald early in September, further details were received regarding this project. However the understanding that the Clerk had was not what was discussed at the meeting. What would be expected was the setting up of a community partnership, with the Parish Council working to identify all businesses operating within the parish and inviting them to attend a meeting to set up a partnership group. The Parish Council had thought that the remit of this project was completely different, and was a project to tidy up the High Street. As such the two hours that we would have been allocated to a member of staff to undertake the project, however clearly this would be nowhere near enough. Also the initial funding from EFDC was set up at £1,000 for Administrative Costs and not £5,000 as originally thought. To identify all small business in the area including those who work from home or are off the grid is a mammoth task, and also it was not clear what the actual 'end game' would be for this. A comment was made which was why were EFDC looking to identify all small and working from home businesses – what is the reason? Therefore as we do not have the staffing resources and are not clear on the purpose of the project, the Clerk has advised that this Council is unable to take them up on their offer of working with them on this occasion.

---

## 29. DOG BINS

a) **Weald Common** – The Dog Bin on Weald Common is being used as a receptacle for household waste. This situation is being monitored

b) **Elm Gardens** - The newly installed Dog Bin is not really being used. The Parish Councils contractor has advised that there is very often no dog waste in the bin and he is monitoring the bins use at this time.

## 30. WHEELERS FARM GARDENS STREAM

Following the District Councillors Surgery at Thornwood, the Clerk had advised Cllr Chris Whitbread of the problems this council was having associated with cutting back the undergrowth at the entrance to the Allotments at Wheelers Farm Gardens. This has now been sorted and Qualis contacted the Parish Council and have cut back the area. The area belongs to ECC and the Environment Agency, with EFDC cutting an area on behalf of ECC. Members are asked to note this is an example of partnership working and the speed that this was done as soon as the wheels were set in motion.

## 31. COUNCILLORS SURGERY

Councillor Tom Bromwich will be holding his Surgery on 11<sup>th</sup> October in the Council Chamber at the Queens Hall between 10am and 12noon. The Clerk will place Posters on the Notice Board, and we will advertise on PC Facebook Page.

## 32. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC AND THE PRESS

In the event that the Agenda contains Exempt (pink) pages, or an item needs to be discussed confidentially, to **CONSIDER** the following motion to be proposed by the Chairman:

“That the public and the press be excluded from the meeting, the Council believing that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business about to be discussed. However an item may be placed in the Confidential part of the meeting so long as it is accordance with the Statutory Guidance.

<b>There is currently ONE confidential item to be considered</b>
--