



NORTH WEALD BASSETT PARISH COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT AND NEWSLETTER

Review from Parish Council Chairman, Councillor Alan Buckley

Dear Residents,

On behalf of North Weald Bassett Parish Council, I would like to wish you all a very warm welcome to our Annual Parish Assembly. As you will know, this is the first Assembly we have been able to hold since 2019 as a result of the dreaded Coronavirus which hit us in early 2020.

We can all recall that over that period various safety rules and regulations have been in force, for example social distancing, group meetings etc., which has made the operation and functioning of the Parish Council extremely difficult, as it did with all businesses. We reluctantly had to vacate our office in North Weald Library where social distancing was impossible to achieve and by utilising a mixture of Zoom meetings on a regular basis, meetings at the parish hall (when government restrictions permitted) and also working from home, we have been able to carry out the parish duties, albeit at a slightly slower pace than we would have liked.

Details of some of the key issues which the Parish Council has been handling are as follows:

HMRC: When agreement was reached between EFDC and HMRC to provide an Inland Border Facility, to cope with the aftermath of Brexit, the Parish Council got themselves involved with the practicalities of this venture to ensure North Weald Bassett Parish did not get swamped with HGV's 24 hours a day. To help with the smooth running of this facility, the Parish Council produced a 10 point plan to minimise inconvenience to residents and with the support of EFDC, ECC and our local MP, Alex Burghart, we have achieved this.

Anti-social Behaviour: This seemed to increase during 2020, especially on the old golf course on Rayley Lane, Vicarage Lane West and the play area on Weald Common and other areas within the parish. As a result of this growing nuisance and at the request of residents, the Parish Council facilitated a meeting regarding Anti-social Behaviour with involvement from the Police, EFDC officers and residents.

Road Repairs: The conditions of the roads in and around the parish have been a cause for concern and we produced a summary of those areas which needed attention. Some of the areas have been repaired and we continue to monitor the outstanding areas. Of note, the B181 from the Talbot to Wellington Road which has now been completely re-surfaced, with the exception of the site outside the parade of shops, but this matter is in hand.

Christmas Events: For Christmas 2021 we took the decision to install Christmas trees at the garden at the parade of shops and also on the Village Green at Wheelers Farm Gardens. Both were welcomed by many residents and with the goodwill gesture from EFDC we have planted a Norwegian fir tree on the Village Green as a permanent feature. Norway House residents also enjoyed their first Christmas Party for two years and as usual the North Weald Bassett Parish Councillors dug deep into their pockets to provide a much appreciated donation towards the children's chocolates and presents.

Remembrance Sunday: Unfortunately, the 2020 Service could not take place but the Parish Council did lay wreaths under social distancing rules. However, we were able to provide the usual service last year, but sadly our Norwegian friends from the Royal Norwegian Airforce were unable to attend due to Covid rules in Norway. It was very pleasing to see the return of residents to the Ceremony, with the numbers put at around 300 / 400.

2022 – Looking Forward: You will see from the Annual Report and Newsletter that we are in for a very exciting year:

- **Queen's Jubilee Celebrations:** It is expected that halls within the Parish will be holding events over 2nd to 5th June
- **Rededication of the Norwegian Stone and the Parish War Memorial** will be taking place in the Summer.
- **RideLondon to Essex Cycle Event** – We can now announce the forthcoming huge cycle event which will come through North Weald on 29th May when it is expected that some 25,000 cyclists will pass through North Weald High Road on the Sunday morning. Full details of the event and road closures will be notified via social media. This event is organised by The London Marathon Events Team in partnership with Essex County Council.
- **Tree Planting Project:** It has been decided to utilise the two areas of Weald Common in an environmentally friendly way by planting some 3,000 trees on this site. Discussions and plans are underway with ECC's Forestry and Woodland Officer and it is planned to award each child at St Andrew's primary school with their own tree certificate. A number of suggestions are being investigated to make the area user friendly, with the installation of benches etc.

As with all projects, the success does rely on public participation and details of all events will be notified on a regular basis.

Regards,
Cllr Alan Buckley
Chairman, North Weald Bassett Parish Council
April 2022

Weald Common Tree Planting Project



The council is looking to create a woodland area at Weald Common, planting between 2,000 and 4,000 trees, on land adjacent to the access road leading from North Weald Village Hall Car Park. The council is working closely with Essex County Council's officer for Forestry and Woodlands to ensure that the project will not cause any adverse effects to the biodiversity at this important location. It is hoped that the project can be combined with commemorating the Queen's Platinum Jubilee and although many ideas have already been put forward, for example the allocation of a tree to each local school child. The council would like to thank residents for all of their suggestions and comments.

The creation of a new woodland will not only be a legacy for future generations, but it will also help to offset the impact of climate change. Please look out for further details, to be published over the next few months.

Norwegian Spruce - Gift To The Parish



The Parish Council has recently taken delivery of a Norwegian Spruce as a permanent Christmas Tree on the Village Green in North Weald. The tree was given and planted, free of charge, to the Parish by Epping Forest District Council. The Parish Council would like to thank Cllr Nigel Bedford in his position as Deputy Leader of EFDC and Darren Goodey, EFDC Commercial Services Manager, for arranging this donation.

Parish Council Chairman, Cllr Alan Buckley, is pictured standing next to the tree.

Refurbished Village Sign



In 2019, the Parish Council authorised the refurbishment of the village sign on the Village Green at Wheelers Farm Gardens. For a number of years, Members of the now closed North Weald Bassett Preservation Society maintained the box garden in which the village sign sits. The Parish Council would like to thank them for all of their hard work, the society will be missed.

Photographed with Parish Council Chairman Cllr Alan Buckley are (left to right) Gill Green, Chris Deacon, Pat Toulson and June Lawrence.

Norway House

Norway House have continued to hold their annual Christmas Party. Thanks to all who have supported this initiative. Here is one of the Christmas Cards showing a 'Thank You'.



In 2019, the Parish Council was awarded £500 from Essex County Council's CIF Microgrant Scheme to be put towards the Norway House Community Sunflower Project.

The photo shows the 'winning' sunflower.

Epping Forest District Council Local Plan

Created by Epping Forest District Council, the Local Plan (sometimes referred to as 'The Local Development Plan') is a set of policies and land allocations that will guide the future development of the Epping Forest District up to 2033. Started around 10 years ago, this plan is now entering the final stages in the process with the last public consultation ending on 23rd September 2021. The latest update is that the Inspectors' Final Report is expected to be available during the first quarter of 2022. Whilst the Local Plan covers issues such as employment, the economy, tourism, heritage and infrastructure, it also allocates sites for housing development for this Parish as follows:

- North Weald Village – at least 1,050 homes
- Thornwood – at least 172 homes
- Hastingwood (Latton Priory) – at least 1,050



Visit www.efdclocalplan.org for further details.

Neighbourhood Plan

The Parish Council and Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group continued to work towards creating a Neighbourhood Plan throughout 2020 and 2021 - a plan which will help shape the future of any development coming to the Parish. It will provide policy and guidance to both developers and the Local Planning Authority setting out how new homes should be designed to ensure they reflect the character of each of our unique areas. It will help protect our valued open spaces, as well as ensuring our strong history and heritage is both respected and reflected for all future development.

A Neighbourhood Plan must be in general conformity with the strategic elements of the Local Plan, but its strength lies in the ability to focus on elements of design – even down to providing a pallet of materials that should be used for all newly built homes. The Draft Neighbourhood Plan is almost complete, however in light of the current situation with the Local Plan this has been placed on hold until such time as the Local Plan has been found 'sound' by the examiner. Ultimately its important that any money spent on progressing a Neighbourhood Plan represents value for money, and it's vital the Parish Council can be confident of the adopted EFDC Local Plan policies it's working alongside.



Finance

North Weald Bassett Parish Council		Precept request	
Precept Request	2021 to 2022 £ thousands	2022 to 2023 £ thousands	
Leisure / recreation	£ 36,500	£ 49,800	
Community Services	£ 67,931	£ 80,962	
Administration	£ 142,064	£ 145,314	
Other	£ 9,584	£ 3,944	
Use of Balances / Income Received	£ 35,703	£ 50,254	
Precept	£ 220,376	£ 229,766	
The Parish Council precept for 2022/2023 is £229,766, resulting in the Parish Council element of the Council Tax being £88.49/year for a Band D Property (£1.70/week).			

Play Areas



The Parish Council maintains three play areas within the parish. These are located at:

- Weald Common, North Weald
- Memorial Playing Field, School Green Lane, North Weald
- Thornwood Common

In 2020, £1000 was received in grant funding from Tesco Bags of Help, which was put towards the purchase of new play equipment for the Memorial Playing Field and Thornwood Common Play Areas.

The Parish Council continues to support Epping Forest District Council's Play In The Park in both North Weald and Thornwood.

Allotments



The Parish Council maintains four allotment sites within the parish. We have seen an increase in uptake for allotment plots over the past two years.

In 2021, a Community Allotment Garden in Wheelers Farm Gardens allotment site was unveiled. Volunteers worked together under the guidance of Epping Forest District Council's Community Development Officer. This project was as a result of grant funding received from Essex County Council.



Allotments are available to residents both within and outside the parish, however if there is a waiting list, priority will be given to those who live within the parish. If you are interested in renting an allotment please contact the Parish Office on 07572 507591, or email clerk@northweald-pc.gov.uk

Parish Hall, Thornwood



The **Parish Hall at Thornwood Common** is the only hall in the parish which is owned by the Parish Council. The hall is available for Parishioners to hire at reduced rates, including bookings for parties, wedding receptions and family events. If you are interested in hiring the hall, please contact the Parish Office on 07572 507591, or email clerk@northweald-pc.gov.uk

The **Parish Office** relocated to the hall in July 2020 and is open to the public on Monday's, Wednesday's and Friday's 9.15am to 12pm. Please note that these times are subject to there not being any other hall bookings. All staff continue to work from home when not in the office.

Street Lights



All Street Lights in the Parish are numbered. If the Street Light in your road begins with a '6' it is the responsibility of the Parish Council to maintain. These lights are normally located on Residential Streets but not on Main Roads. Please contact the Parish Council if your light is not working.

Remembrance



In November 2020, due to Covid restrictions, the Parish Council was unable to host its usual Remembrance Sunday events. A socially distanced wreath laying service was held at the Airfield Memorial and Debt of Honour, with residents being encouraged to 'Remember at Home'.

In November 2021, government guidance allowed Remembrance Sunday events to go ahead as normal. In excess 350 people were in attendance at the Parish Council's Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving, with 38 wreaths being laid on behalf of various organisations and societies. The service was led by Reverend Lee Batson and Jaimee Summers. The Last Post and Reveille was played by Bugler, Mr Michael Wood.

Maintaining Links with Norway



In November 2019, the Parish Council dedicated a bench in the North Weald Bassett Cemetery to commemorate the 75th Anniversary of the Royal Norwegian Airforce. The Royal Norwegian Airforce was represented by Sgt Simon Wergerland Solemdal and Andreas Øglænd from 331 Squadron.



Rededication Ceremony



On the 19th June 1952, HRH, The Crown Princess of Norway, Princess Astrid, unveiled a granite obelisk on behalf of the people of Norway and the two Norwegian squadrons (331 and 332) based in North Weald during WWII. The gift was to show their gratitude to the People of North Weald, the Royal Air Force and the RAF Station North Weald. The obelisk, which is now incorporated in the RAF North Weald Memorial (Debt of Honour), commemorates the Norwegian Airmen who were based at the Airfield during WWII. The Memorial commemorates all those who served.

Sunday, 19th June 2022 will be the **70th Anniversary** of the unveiling of the Norwegian Stone and to commemorate this, the Parish Council will be holding a Rededication Ceremony. On the same day, the Parish Council also hopes to hold a Rededication Ceremony for the Parish War Memorial in St Andrews Churchyard. Further details regarding both events will be announced nearer the time.

The Queen's Platinum Jubilee



This year is the Queen's Platinum Jubilee, with many celebrations and events being organised for the special Bank Holiday weekend 2nd to 5th June. A Jubilee Working Group Committee has been set up, headed by Cllr Dawn Wood and Cllr Shirley Hawkins, together with residents representing each village in the parish. If you have any comments or suggestions, or would like to volunteer with the organisation, please contact the Parish Office on 07572 507591, or email clerk@northweald-pc.gov.uk

Services and Functions

In 2020 and 2021, the council responded to the many challenges faced as a result of the coronavirus pandemic. Below are listed some of the functions that we continued to provide whilst the country was in partial/full lockdown:

- Adapted in holding meetings via Zoom.
- Parish council staff adapted to a new way of life in working from home, whilst moving office from North Weald to Thornwood.
- Continued to monitor open spaces, play areas, allotments and other community services whilst in lockdown in order to ensure safety regulations were complied with.
- Ensured that all of the above services were COVID-19 secure.
- Continued to provide cemetery services within government guidelines.
- Successfully applied for grant funding towards food banks, reflection benches, tree planting initiatives.
- Councillors were involved with Essex County Council's pot hole initiative, highlighting areas requiring urgent repair
- Continued to operate County Councillor and District Councillor surgeries throughout lockdown

Despite being unable to meet in person, the Parish Councillors and staff continued to liaise with both Epping Forest District Council and Essex County Council on behalf of residents:

- Reporting public nuisance
- Reporting fly tipping, pot holes and issues with public byways.
- Reporting planning enforcement matters
- Raising resident's concerns with regards to the Inland Border Facility (IBF), based at North Weald Airfield.
- Safer Communities: installation of CCTV in various locations within North Weald and Thornwood.
- Ensured maintenance of Defibrillators in North Weald and Thornwood, as well as the addition of a defibrillator in Hastingwood. The locations are as follows;
 - Methodist Church, North Weald (Opposite the parade of shops and village garden)
 - Parish Hall at Thornwood Common, Weald Hall Lane
 - Hastingwood Village Hall, Hastingwood Road

Planning Committee

The Parish Council Planning Committee continues to be led by Chairman Cllr Baden Clegg. Councillors are always keen to welcome members of the public to attend Planning Committee meetings where they can make representations of objections or support on Planning Applications. At the present time, meetings continue to be held remotely, please contact the Parish Council for further information.

Public Nuisance



The Parish Council has worked closely with local residents, Police, ECC and EFDC with regards to motorbikes and quad bikes using public bridleways and footpaths to access the Golf Course located off Rayley Lane.

Over the past 18 months, we have experienced numerous spates of vandalism and anti-social behaviour at Weald Common and in Thornwood. This has led to the installation of CCTV in and around these areas in an attempt to deter this behaviour. Incidents are continuously reported to the police for further investigation. The newly planted 'Eldridge Wood' at Weald Common has particularly been targeted vandals. The Parish Council and Police continue to monitor the situation.

Community Speedwatch

Coordinated by Cllr Baden Clegg and assisted by local resident Mr Jimmy Walters, the volunteer led Community Speedwatch team continues to operate around the parish. The team have highlighted Upland Road, Weald Bridge Road and Hastingwood Road, amongst others, as being areas of particular concern.

What do the Parish Council Do?

Listed below are some, but not all, of the Parish Council's responsibilities:

- North Weald Bassett Cemetery
- Looking after open spaces (including hedge and grass cutting on Parish Council-owned land)
- Allotments
- Maintaining Play Areas
- Street Lights (columns are identified with a number beginning '6')
- Street furniture, including bus shelters and emptying dog bins
- Planning applications (the council is a statutory consultee)
- Organisation of Remembrance Sunday events, including a service at the Airfield Memorial & Debt of Honour followed by a Community Luncheon
- Attendance at community days
- Noticeboard updates
- Liaise with other organisations and councils
- Provide recycle bags
- The Parish Council is a facilitator, passing problems and concerns raised by residents onto District and County Council who will ultimately decide if any action is required

Your Councillors

WARD	PARISH	DISTRICT	COUNTY
North Weald (Village)	Cllr Alan Buckley (Chairman) Cllr Nigel Bedford Cllr Terry Blanks Cllr Mrs Anne Grigg (Vice Chairman) Cllr Mrs Sheila Jackman, MBE Cllr George Mulliner Cllr Mark Stroud Cllr Andrew Tyler Cllr Ms Dawn Wood	Cllr Peter Bolton Cllr Jaymey McIvor	Cllr Chris Whitbread
Thornwood	Cllr Baden Clegg Cllr Mrs Shirley Hawkins Cllr Richard Spearman	Cllr Les Burrows Cllr Chris Whitbread Cllr Holly Whitbread	Cllr Holly Whitbread
Hastingwood	Cllr Paula Etherington Cllr Andy Irvine	Cllr Richard Morgan	Cllr Chris Whitbread

Local Councils – Who does what? Within the borders of Essex there are three tiers of council: County, District and Parish. All have clearly defined roles, although there is some duplication and overlap of responsibilities.

Full details of services, including information on how to contact your local councillor, can be found on the following websites:

Essex County Council
Epping Forest District Council
North Weald Bassett Parish Council

www.essex.gov.uk
www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk
www.northweald-pc.gov.uk

North Weald Bassett Parish Council, Parish Hall at Thornwood Common, Weald Hall Lane, Thornwood, Essex CM16 6NB
Tel: 07572 507591 email: clerk@northweald-pc.gov.uk Clerk to the Council: Mrs Susan De Luca

The Parish Office is open Monday's, Wednesday's and Friday's 9.15am to 12pm. Please note these times may change at short notice due to the availability of the hall. All staff continue to work from home when not in the office.

RideLONDON-Essex

Roads through Epping, North Weald, Ongar, Fyfield, Stanford Rivers and Stapleford Abbots are on the route of the RideLondon-Essex cycle ride which is set to feature 25,000 cyclists on Sunday, May 29. Full details of the route at <https://bit.ly/RideLondon-Essexroute>

RideLondon, described as "the world's greatest festival of cycling", will be in Essex for the first time for the RideLondon-Essex 100, 60 and 30 mass participation rides. In total there will be 65 miles of Essex roads included in the event routes. Essex will also host two stages of the RideLondon Classique, a three-day UCI Women's World Tour stage race for the best female riders in the world. The start and finish of the first stage on Friday, May 27, will be in Maldon while the second stage will start in Chelmsford and finish in Epping.

The full 100-mile route will see the cyclists head out of London, and reach the local area via Woodford New Road, Buckhurst Hill and Epping New Road.

The route will then go through Epping High Street before turning onto The Plain to head through North Weald turning right at the Talbot roundabout onto the A414 to Ongar, then heading left at the Four Wantz roundabout through Fyfield.

After heading out towards Dunmow and Chelmsford, the cyclists will head back to the Four Wantz and turn left through Ongar High Street and Stanford Rivers to Passingford Bridge, then turning right into Hook Lane in Stapleford Abbots to Lambourne Road and Chigwell Road back into London for a finish on Tower Bridge.

As a result of the new partnership between RideLondon and Essex County Council, communities across Essex will benefit from funding from The London Marathon Charitable Trust – funding that will inspire activity and support people of all ages and abilities to participate in sport and physical activity. During the first seven years of RideLondon communities hosting the event were supported with more than £4.9m of funding to local people and projects.

RideLondon-Essex 60 follows the same route as the 100-mile event, until it reaches Ongar where it will then turn back towards central London again.

The RideLondon-Essex 30 reaches as far as Woodford before heading back to central London.

For more information on the routes, visit ridelondon.co.uk

For a GPS link to the full route [CLICK HERE](https://ridewithgps.com/routes/38539436)

<https://ridewithgps.com/routes/38539436>



The Parish Council would like to thank David Jackman of Everything Epping Forest for providing this editorial.