



Theydon Bois Parish Council

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

Clerk to the Council: Ms Julie Taylor

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting Held at the Village Hall at 8.00pm on Thursday 20th May 2015

Councillors Present: Cllrs Philip, Gooch, Howard, Hannibal, Vincent, Wood and Howard

Apologies: Councillors Purkiss, Hammond, McDonald, Jones, Young

Officers Present: Julie Taylor (Parish Clerk & RFO)

The Chairman will announce the Theydon Bois Lifetime Achievement Award and formally present the Theydon Bois Community Rose Bowl.

1. Chairman's Welcome

Cllr Philip welcomed everybody to the meeting and began with the award. Villager of the Year has been renamed the Lifetime Achievement Award and this will be the title going forward. The first recipient is Bob Day.

Although it was decided by the Parish Council to award Bob the rose bowl several weeks ago, Bob died last Thursday: we are announcing the award now and will arrange a presentation date with his family in the near future. His funeral will take place on May 27.

Bob Day lived in Theydon Bois his whole life and contributed significantly to the village all along: as a choirboy and later head chorister at St Mary's, then working in agricultural businesses and then the motor trade in the area. Knowing how important trees and arboriculture are to Theydon Bois, Bob was a tree warden, and due to his encouragement the tree warden scheme flourished. The new Village Hall was built when Bob was treasurer of the Village Association and he was a driving force behind the development; he was also an excellent President and Chair of the Rural Preservation Society in the village. Bob will be much missed by many.

2. To receive Apologies for Absence

Councillors Purkiss, Hammond, McDonald, Jones, Young

3. Chairman's Annual Report 2014-2015

Cllr John Philip: There are many small things to report – regular business matters that help keep the village the way we like it.

Youth & Community Trust

We will keep working with them and we are due to hand over freehold of Community Hall to them: it's in the legal stage now. When we acquired the site of this hall, ECC had planning permission to build 10 houses – but this has not happened and we have a great community resource which will go from strength to strength when the formalities are concluded.

Parish Council Budget

From October 2014 to January 2015 we have worked hard on this – we did not want to raise the precept but there were some significant items we had to allow for. Therefore the precept is now set at 5p per dwelling per week. The revenue will go towards:

- **Establishment of traffic regulations on the Green** – a petition has helped our scheme reach the top of the list for this, however the process will not be fast.
- **Planning advice** – we need expert advice in some cases, especially larger proposals with far-reaching effects.
- **Local Plan** – This will come up for consultation in the next council year. We will also be looking at the Neighbourhood Plan, and it would be wise to have money set aside for this.

We are running a negative budget this year – we have the reserves to deal with this. Next year if we are not over budget we will have the precept flat.

Community Liaison Committee

Cllr George Howard: This has had a busy year. The quarterly Seniors Events have been really popular and entertained 40-50 people each time, including the Christmas party with performers from the Brick Lane Music Hall. Thanks go to our volunteers who work hard to make the events a success – Sue, Graham, Caroline, Joyce, Sally, Fiona, Heidi, the office staff and more.

The Christmas Market took place on November 28 2014 and was well-attended and enjoyed: we have already started planning the 2015 Christmas fair. The fundraising at the market was a great success – we raised over £600 for St Clare's Hospice, which according to the hospice fundraising co-ordinators is double the amount usually garnered by an event of this size.

Theydon Bois has also been entered into the Best Kept Village competition – we came second in 2013 and were not entered last year.

Doctors' Surgery – we are still working on this. We have taken it up with NHS England and the Clinical Commissioning group and await feedback.

Cemetery Committee

Cllr John Philip: this is well run and the clerk is very competent. Things are going smoothly at the moment and we have new developments to be implemented in the coming year.

Planning

Cllr Peter Gooch: This committee is to review planning applications that affect the village. There have been some large cases this year, involving large organisations:

Sixteen String Jack closure and proposal for 13 flats on the site: was refused by EFDC Committee and we await the next move.

Transport for London: a proposed car park at the other side of the railway bridge. There is as yet no full planning application for this – a prior approval was refused and a drop-kerb application accepted. We await their next move.

The organisations concerned need to get around the table with us and discuss their plans, but this has not been happening, compared to other developments such as that at the Railway Arms. Overall, there is concern in the village that proposed houses are getting larger, extensions are getting larger, bungalows and cottages are being converted and extended and prices are being pushed higher. Hopefully the Neighbourhood Plan will give us the power to direct development in Theydon Bois.

Many thanks to all on the Planning Committee – it is fortnightly so is the busiest committee associated with the Council. Thanks also to organisations who assist and support us such as T-BAG and the Rural Preservation Society.

Highways & Environment

Cllr John Philip: This committee has been working on many projects. They look after tree wardens and dog-waste bins and various other small but vital local amenities.

Lobbying Essex Highways: we part-fund a works scheme each year and get a lot of maintenance done.

Recent projects include:

- Traffic regulation on the Green
- Woodland Way resurfacing – this was recently done very well
- Pothole repairs around the village

Other Matters

Administrative work has been done with the Village Association to arrange some extra storage space for us.

Thanks to all councillors and officers:

- Julie Taylor has been attending a course for a Parish Clerk's qualification which will enable us to be a Quality Council
- Elizabeth Thomas started in November 2014 as Assistant Clerk
- Thanks to councillors for working together so well and for giving up your time to the Parish Council: your levelheadedness and businesslike attitude is appreciated; we achieve a lot.

4. Close of Meeting

Chairman John Philip closed the meeting at 20:30.

Julie Taylor
Clerk to the Council

Councillor John Philip
Chairman of the Council