

THE THAXTED SOCIETY



ANNUAL REPORT

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2021

*The Thaxted Society
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OUR THANKS

The Society is grateful to the Parish Council for supporting publication of the Bulletin and a contribution to the Thaxted History Project

The Essex Society for Archeology and History for a grant to the THP

We thank Kemi Badenoch MP for her interest and care for Thaxted.

We thank UDC and its Officers for their cooperation and assistance.

And ECC and UDC Cllr Martin Foley for his support and contribution to THP and UDC Cllr Mike Tayler for his support and efforts for Thaxted



...the secret door to the secret garden

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT AGM 2021

It may seem that life, as we rely upon it, is changing but that is very much the natural order no matter how upsetting and in a small place like Thaxted the seasonal regularity of harvest time and even the Morris dancers out again, attest to our resilience as a people. We just keep going, and doing!

This is my last report as Chairman as I hand over to Ben Allen at this AGM. I have relished this work and all that I have learnt but most of all I am happy to have worked with a committee who I count as friends. To all of them my gratitude.

In the past year the Committee met regularly online and when possible in person in a garden. Major concerns were the proposed development by Vistry and the solar farm at Cutler's Green. We engaged robustly on both matters and supported the stance of the Parish Council as well as our own independent responses to UDC.

We are also energetically supportive of the Parish Council initiative in establishing a Community Land Trust to make use of redundant community land for small scale 'local housing' for Thaxted residents. This is a proactive and laudable endeavour and a fine example of local action. The CLT board includes several new younger members whose energies are vital in delivering success for the future.

We raised concerns with both our MP and the Minister, regarding the new NPPF which gives little space to the vexed question of 'enforcement'. Clauses in National Planning Policy Framework are ineffective without the compulsion to comply and the threat of 'enforcement' where this fails.

For Thaxted public transport is of vital importance in proving sustainable growth. We have asked both NEPP: North Essex Parking Partnership, and Highways Essex, to engage with us in providing a strategy for dealing with Thaxted's parking and through-traffic growth. We also consulted on the Transport East proposals.

We are alarmed by suggestions from government for the use of satellite imagery in making planning decisions. Clearly in a sensitive area like Thaxted there is no substitute for a site visits in making sound planning decisions and this position will, I hope, become a matter of policy for the Society.

I want to close by thanking the Society officers: Hon Treasurer Dame Kate Barker, Hon Secretary Maggie Catterall, and Vice Chairman and now Chairman elect Ben Allen, for his unflagging enthusiasm for Thaxted.

I would also like to send our congratulations to Cllr Martin Foley on his election as our Essex County Councilor, it is good to have a friend at the big table.

Lastly may I thank you, the Voting Members, for your ongoing support. This is crucial in giving a professional and respected voice to Thaxted! Thank you!



Michael Culkin
Outgoing Chairman.

ANNUAL REPORT 2020-2021

A challenging year of changed work.

- We continued our campaign for 'traffic relief' through Thaxted and supported the speed limit proposals from the Parish Council.
- We consulted on the Transport East proposals for North Essex and Cambridgeshire corridor
- The Thaxted History project continues with publication of Volume II.
- We consulted on the over-subscribed call for sites and ongoing Local Plan consultations
- The Society's online presence grew on our Facebook pages.
- We updated our policy regarding Outline Planning Applications.
- We further updated our policies regarding 'gaming' the planning system.
- We continued to lobby strongly ECC Highways ref streetlights and highways matters at Thaxted.
- We cautiously welcomed the proposals for a National Model Design Code 2020 which includes an emphasis on tree lined streets. (The Society published its Building Design Code for Thaxted in 2016).
- We raised concerns with UDC about remote working by planning officers often far removed from the area and in some instances the country.
- We continued to work with the Parish Councilors and its Councilors.
- We remain vigorous in our support for the Windmill and its restoration.
- We met with our MP to ask for a question to be put to the Minister.
- We were relieved that Government withdrew proposals to use 'a mutant algorithm' to calculate housing need.
- We were encouraged by the sensible refusal for building on the Bardfield triangle and encouraged by opinion from the excellent Place Services
- We communicated with our MP re infrastructure at Thaxted.
- We attended three UDC Planning Committee meetings on-line.
- We strongly objected to several planning proposals which were contrary to Society policy and the Neighbourhood Plan.
- In common with Wild Thaxted and others we contributed to the new UDC Green Space register.
- We contributed to the update of the UDC legacy assets register



Park Farm a fine example of restoration conservation and sympathetic development.

MEMBERSHIP

The Society has a current membership of 136 voting members and approximately 2846 non-voting members. Anyone who receives the Thaxted Bulletin is a non-voting member of the Society unless they wish otherwise.

The Society has among its voting members, members overseas, and those who no longer live in Thaxted but still have relatives or friends here. Sadly, we have lost friends of the Society whom we remember fondly:

**Norma Hobbs
Peter King
Barbara Longaretti
Stuart McDonald
Gwen Phillips**

The membership dues, payable at the AGM or up to two months thereafter, remain unchanged. We consider this an appropriate contribution to our work:

- publication of the Bulletin and maintenance of our online presence.
- design & publication of the Thaxted History Project.
- our lobbying on planning, conservation and legislation.
- our interface with ECC, UDC, and Westminster including our MP
- our work in outreach via the Welcome Pack and the Town map.
- our constant monitoring of planning applications at Thaxted.
- publication of the Tabula Rasa paper ref the UDC Local Plan.

Single £10.00 per year - Couple £15.00 per year

Angela Clarson

Membership Secretary

It is possible to contribute more if you wish. Your gift's use and an acknowledgement can be agreed.



TREASURER'S REPORT

The draft accounts attached attest to the kind of year it was, for us all. Despite the exigencies we remain financially healthy though clearly costs of the history project Vol II are yet to be paid.

Many people have been additionally generous this year both with general donations and those specifically for the THP they have our thanks. I want also to thank 'anonymous' for their generous donations.

It remains Society policy to fund projects on a project-by-project basis. This year we have raised funds for:

- The Thaxted New History project, *(public subscription)*
- AGM hospitality fund. *(Committee Members)*
- Online Publication of the THP *(subscription)*
- ongoing publication of Thaxted Bulletin. *(advertisers & sponsors)*

Membership dues are ring-fenced against running costs and core activities as set out in the Constitution.

Membership waxes and wanes, however Angela Clarson's hard work attracting new members with our Welcome Pack, and gathering annual dues is much appreciated.

Subscriptions to The Thaxted History project are ring fenced in Society accounts.

There are accounts attached to this Report and I will be happy to answer any questions through the Chair.

Dame Kate Barker
Hon Treasurer



BULLETIN EDITOR'S REPORT

I am pleased to still be here and writing this short update on activities or rather lack of them over the past year.

The pandemic and all its knock-on effects got the better of my efforts in publishing a Bulletin last winter and so: '*you read it here first folks*', I am now finalising copy and advertising for an edition this Christmas, 2021.

I say nothing much happened but Richard Till and I have been shoulder to the wheel in finalising the next volume, the second, of the Thaxted History Project.

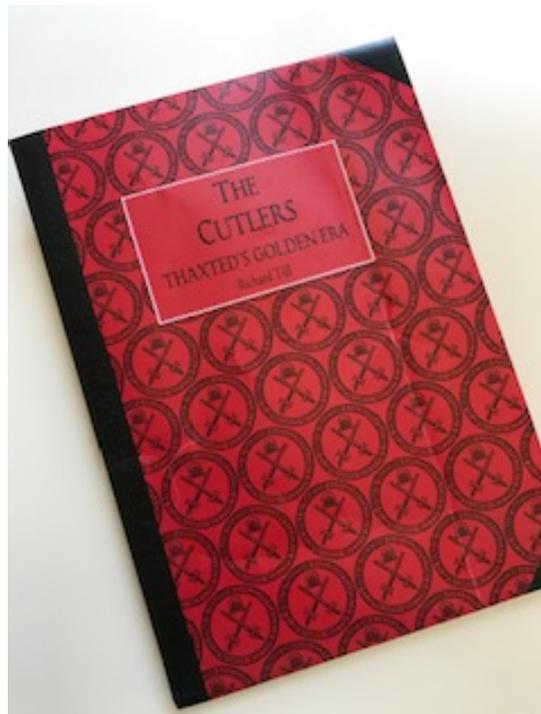
This is a fine award-winning work redolent with much new and startling information. Richard's forensic research into the cutlers of Thaxted will rest a laudable and hugely useful resource for future generations.

My thanks therefore to all the Subscribers for supporting this volume especially the Essex Society for Archeology and History for their grant to enable its publication.

Also, I want to thank the Bulletin advertisers, many of whom I count as friends, for their essential support for the Bulletin. Without you we could not publish at all!

I said it last year, and am amazed that I am still here to say it again, I am pleased and happy to be still doing what I enjoy.

Brian Smith
Editor & Publisher



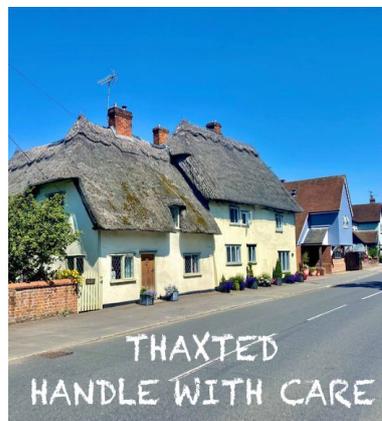
Volume II of the Thaxted History Project by Richard Till

POINTS FOR THE FUTURE

We remain committed to '**raising our town's status**' as one of the surest methods of creating protection for the town.

- Undertaking a robust review of the UDC Planning Services enforcement policy 2017 and encouraging an expansion in enforcement activity.
- Reinvigorating our campaign to discourage pavement parking within the conservation area as per the Neighbourhood Plan.
- Supporting the Parish Council initiative in establishing the Thaxted Community Land trust and all its aims.
- Encouraging the repainting of lampstands and post and rails at Thaxted
- Encouraging the installation of charging points in all Thaxted's car parks also encouraging the installation of further PC Bulletin boards across Thaxted.
- Working with our MP to demand planned and provided infrastructure with any development.
- Consulting on and supporting a museum & archive for Thaxted.
- Consulting on the Uttlesford wide review of parking with a proposal for small satellite parking on entry to Thaxted to encourage Park'n'Stroll.
- Investigating building regs compliance in all Thaxted's new build and ensuring compliance with the Neighbourhood Plan and National Building Regulations.
- We intend to develop and maintain our productive working partnership with the PC, whilst energetically holding them to account.
- Supporting the PC initiative for traffic speed control measures at Thaxted
- Holding a watching brief on the various iterations of the NPPF and reviewing planning guidance as released by the Head Planner at HCLG.

Until we exert the influence such a remarkable town merits we are at risk.



...our handle with care campaign, bumper stickers are available!

NOTES:

THAXTED SOCIETY GOVERNANCE

The Thaxted Society is constituted under guidance and regulation of the Charities Commissioners and this AGM is one of the requirements of that guidance, and as set out in our adopted Constitution. The following are standing for re-election or appointment at this year's AGM.

Honourary (appointment)

Bruce Munro Esq. Hon President 2017

Executive Officers

Ben Allen	Chairman.	2021
Michael Culkin	Vice Chair	2021
Dame Kate Barker	Treasurer	2015
Maggie Catterall	Secretary	2014

Executive Committee Members

Philip Leeder	Life	
Brian Smith	Editor	2006
Angela Clarson	Membership Sec	2013
Richard Till	Thaxted History	2015
Trevor Haynes	Building Regs	2018
vacancy		
vacancy		

Co Opted Member-Advisors

Andy Frater	Parish Council liaison 20-22
Rachel Wicks	Thaxted Society online
John Arkwright.	Estates and buildings.
Michael Turner.	Legal advice.

ADVISORS - THANKS

The following are deserving of our thanks for their assistance throughout the year.

- *To Pellys, who via Andrew Arnold remain legal advisors to the Society.*
- *To John Arkwright at Arkwright & Co for ongoing advice and support.*
- *To all the very generous "Thaxted History Project" subscribers.*



MINUTES OF LAST AGM 2019 REPRODUCED AS THERE WAS NOT AN AGM IN 2020



**Minutes of Thaxted Society AGM
Thursday May 16th 2019**

- 1) **Honorary President's Opening Remarks**
Bruce Munro welcomed all attendees and gave thanks to the committee. He offered to arrange a Thaxted Walk & Talk in July as a future event of the year.
- 2) **Welcome & Introduction, and any apologies received**
Michael Culkin gave a warm welcome to all members who have joined the committee in attending the AGM this evening. He gave particular welcome to guests Richard Haynes and Cllr Terry Frostick PC Chairman. The apologies read were as listed at the end of the Minutes.
- 3) **Minutes of AGM 2018 and matters arising**
The minutes were accepted as a true record of the meeting and, there being no matters arising, were duly signed and dated by the Chairman.
- 4) **Appointment of the President**
Bruce Munro was re-appointed as our Honorary President.
- 5) **Election of the Committee**
The Chairman proposed re-election of existing committee with the addition of Glyn Pritchard who was unanimously elected. The Chairman indicated that this would be his last AGM as Chair though he hopes to remain an active member of the Committee. On retirement of Brian Smith as Vice Chairman, Michael was pleased to report the unanimous election of Ben Allen as Vice Chairman.
- 6) **Chairman's Report**
The Society has worked hard to contribute to Thaxted having one voice. We want to reach out to other organisations and to agree with one voice as a way to achieve much more for the town. We must never lose sight of two things:
 - ❖ Thaxted's uniqueness
 - ❖ We have a responsibility for ensuring that remains the case moving forward.One way to help is to support and vote for Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan when the referendum comes. Even the imperfect may serve a greater purpose and so it is with the Thaxted NDP. We are delighted to welcome members of the steering company and Peter Neal it's chairman whose relentless hard work and diligence Thaxted will come truly to appreciate over the coming years.
Please note two new policies, adopted by the committee, feature in the appendix items 10 & 11. They are essential in our planning work and policies going forward.
To clarify the position regarding the Thaxted Bulletin, we intend to publish an edition this Christmas and we are hugely grateful to Brian Smith and to Angela Clarson who has taken over the advertising accounts. Between now and then we hope to develop a new team to take this award-winning publication forward.
- 7) **Treasurer's Report. Kate Barker**
We are grateful for the various generous donors to the Society in particular to the History Project and our 100th edition of the Bulletin. We do only raise money when we have a specific project on which we want to spend it.
- 8) **Parish Council Chairman's Statement Cllr Terry Frostick**
The Parish Council are volunteers who put up with considerable abuse at times just for doing their jobs. Terry welcomes the listening discreet ear of our Chairman and yes it is all about working towards the big picture. Traffic remains a big issue and the need for a design for living that is informed by the historic nature of our town. The adoption of the Neighbourhood Plan by a large majority, and an astonishing upheaval in the political landscape, has to be a milestone for Thaxted and for Uttlesford unique nationally. Work of PC continues and there is positive news about Guildhall repairs and new Broadband provision. PC enjoy a sensible and productive relationship with the society and are pleased that the Society may often say and do what we may not for Thaxted's good. For a small town we are lucky that many different voices can come together when needed and that factions and frictions are a thing of the past. At the PC we remain aware of challenges to come and count this Society as an important contributor strategic thinking.
- 9) **Questions**
Heather Bull felt that irrespective of PC or Thaxted Society the planners pay no attention – witness 9x3 storeys @ Little Maypole. Problem with consultation is that an expression of direct opinion to devolved body does not guarantee you get what you want. NP will put us in stronger position. Criteria for refusing planning applications if we are providing our 5year land supply moving forward. Maypole has been approved because we had no demonstration of land supply. Local Plan is also on the way to help.
- 10) **Date of next AGM to be advised.**
- 11) **Thaxted History Project Update. Richard Till**
We have worked on this project having established link with Leicester University and Lucy Brown. In 1350-1470 Thaxted would have had a broad road leading up to the Guildhall recognisable as it is today. Originally the town would have surrounded the Anglo-Saxon Church with Manor to the right of the Guildhall in a nucleated settlement with those working on the agricultural estate and craftsmen and tradesmen Stoney lane would have been the main shopping street. From Cutler's Green to Tilty, Lords of the Manor set up satellite settlements for workers. Middle men could organise Agricultural villages. Settlement at Richmond Green adjacent to Great Park wooded hunting ground which needed maintenance up until beginning of C 16th The market was at the top of Fishmarket Street. Cutlers moved 1360-1380 from London. They needed water for forge or leather work. Posh cutlers moved east from Margaret Street to junction with Tanyards with workshops built behind them. They were rich, built good houses and survived in the Manor around the Guildhall with workshops, brewery and so on in Park Street.

AGM of The Thaxted Society 2021

Workers houses for Cutlers were mostly in Middle Row, Orange Street and Mill End; also Tanyards into Copthall Lane to Kent's Bridge. Sheep Cote Lane linked with Weaverhead Lane where woolen industry existed from C15th. John Kent was Thaxted's Master Cutler lived on site of Folly cottage opposite first Guildhall of Cutlers which became Kent Lane and later Copthall Lane. In C15th due to the volume of cutlers more land was needed in Park Street as far as St John's Ambulance shop. In the mid 1500's they demolished outbuildings and built a line of houses on West of Town Street and into Stoney Lane. Steward need house which was Recorders hence Edward's coat of arms. Guildhall was needed for Cutlers and then there was the market house Mercat Cross

Lucy Brown archaeologist took meter square by depth pits in some gardens of central Thaxted to obtain a sample of the archaeology. She would like or do more of this. Perhaps this brief paragraph indicating what Lucy has done gave us a tiny insight into Thaxted and the politics of the time, sufficient to whet our appetites to dip into her book. Lucy thanked Thaxted Society for support during completing her thesis

We concluded the evening with a reception

SIGNED *Michael Culkin*

DATED 16/05/2020

**REGISTER OF ATTENDEES AGM 2019
THERE WERE NO ATTENDEES AS THERE WAS NOT AN AGM IN 2020.**

APPENDIX

Thaxted Society Adopted Policy 2021

- i. To: oppose all building outside the current development limits ref NP 2019.
- ii. To: encourage actively the use, protection, and designation, of Thaxted's public open green spaces in perpetuity for the benefit of all.
- iii. To: resist all matters of creeping urbanisation of Thaxted and most vigorously the Historic Core [Clarson Clause]
- iv. To: discourage parking on pavements, ancient pathways, and ancient cobbles.
- v. To: oppose all planning for the conversion of garages car-ports and car parking in any form resulting in the loss of parking for said dwelling.
- vi. To: resist and oppose change of use from commercial / business to residential.
- vii. To: encourage the use, style and form, of hanging signs in the conservation area.
- viii. To: discourage robustly the use of concrete kerbstones and asphalt on pavements and pathways.
- ix. To: defend vigorously and seek conservation of our original gas light lamp-stands and to robustly discourage installation of modern unsympathetic public lighting.
- x. To: oppose all Outline Planning applications which: impinge, abut, or affect, in any manner the Historic Core including the Conservation Area.
- xi. To: insist that reserved matters, and their conditions, respond adequately to both Thaxted's historic and local vernacular as well as those details designated unique and particular whilst complying with the Essex design guide and the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan.
- xii. To oppose all Outline Planning applications which: impinge, abut, or affect, in any manner, the Historic Core including the Conservation Area of Thaxted.
- xiii. The Society expects reserved matters and their conditions to respond adequately to both Thaxted's historic and local vernacular as well as those details designated unique and particular whilst complying with the Essex design guide and the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan.
- xiv. To support the development and use of solar panels and allied climate change mitigation at Thaxted including their appropriate use within the conservation area.
- xv. To encourage public bodies to install electric charging points throughout Thaxted to meet growing demand and encourage change to cleaner power.
- xvi. To urge the removal of publicly displayed posters, flyers, and notices after advertised event has occurred.
- xvii. To support and assist in the delivery of the Neighbourhood Plan through its detail, conditions, and intent and thereafter to so monitor effect and compliance.
- xviii. To discourage the use of plastic: plants, trees, flowers, shrubs, and grass, outside reducing the polluting effects of plastic particles upon the soil and groundwater.**
- xix. The Society expects and encourages the proper care and maintenance of all listed buildings at Thaxted without and before any needed intervention by the Conservation Officer.**
- xx. The Society is resolved to object to all 'split-planning' applications were the evident purpose is to avoid mandated Low Cost Housing contribution or any other legal requirements.**

**(Adopted unanimously by the Executive Committee on April 26th 2018)*

*** (adopted unanimously by the Executive Committee on the 27th June 2019)*

****** (adopted unanimously by the Committee on January 23rd 2020)***

ACCOUNTS 2020-2021

ACCOUNTS 2020-2021		
Balance brought fwd from 19-20 accts	£ 3,373.19	funds brought forward from previous year
Bulletin repayment	£ 444.16	repayment of an advance and repayment of exps
interest paid	£ 0.50	on savings account
UDC grant	£ 500.00	UDC grant towards HP Vol II
Parish Council grant to Bulletin	£ 300.00	PC grant towards publication of Bulletin
Anonymous donations	£ 85.00	further to subs paid
book sales	£ -	
members subs	£ 674.00	subscriptions for year 2020
total income 2020-2021	£ 2,003.66	
outgoings		
IT FB services	£ 240.00	monthly fees for IT and FB services 2020
Website hosting & maintenance	£ 148.12	Website annual hosting fees
contrib to Bulletin	£ -	Society grant to Bulletin capped.
total outgoings 2020-2021	£ 388.12	paid January 5th 2021 by cheque
Balance carried forward	£ 4,988.73	

NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS 2020-2021

- *Subscriptions to the Thaxted History project of £3499.99 are ring fenced for the purpose.
- *Membership dues are ring fenced for the running costs of the Society only.
- * The Society has supplies of the Thaxted Welcome folder (360)
- *The Society has supplies of the 2016 BDG. (100)
- *The Society owns several gazebos and pop up display stands. (7)
- *The Society retains supplies of Volume I the THP (60)



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
Thursday September 16th 2021 at 19:30
to be held online

AGENDA

- 1 Welcome.
- 2 Any apologies received.
- 3 Minutes of the AGM of 2019 and any matters arising (there are no minutes for 2020 as there was no AGM).
- 4 Appointment of the Honourary President.
- 5 Election of the Committee.
- 6 Treasurer's report and draft Accounts for 2020-2021.
- 7 Annual Report. (attached)
- 8 AOB

THE THAXTED SOCIETY

Supporting the work of the Thaxted Community Land trust



Thaxted Community Land Trust was formed as a result of the housing needs identified in the Neighbourhood Plan, with a desire to offer affordable housing for the benefit of the community and is an initiative of the Thaxted Parish Council

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