

# Parish Council Newsletter

Issue Twenty-four August 2017



## Annual Report

*Dear All,*

*I am grateful to the Council to have been elected Chairman again and to have the privilege to guide such a fully functioning and busy Council.*

*The Council is lucky to have such a professional and business like person in our clerk, Dena. She has written a very comprehensive report on the past year. I hope you enjoy this resumé of our council's year.*

*Also included on the centre pages are two pie charts of the income and expenditure for the year April 2016 to March 2017.*



*Cllr. Terry Frostick  
Chairman*

The best way to contact the Parish Clerk, or any other councillor, is by email via [clerk@thaxted.co.uk](mailto:clerk@thaxted.co.uk). Also you can use the old fashioned telephone 01371 831952 or just simply push a note through the library letterbox!

## Thaxted Parish Council 2016 – 2017 - A year in focus

By Dena Ludford, the Parish Clerk

### May 2016:

The month of May is the beginning of the official Council year. This saw **Cllr Terry Frostick** re-elected to the helm once more as Chairman and the re-election of **Cllr Victoria Knight** to the post of Vice Chairman. The Council were introduced to our first newly co-opted councillor **Andrew Frater**. (Andy to us all now.) You can read more about Andy in an exclusive interview within this newsletter.

### June:

The **Queen's 90th Birthday celebrations** were a phenomenal success. All the planning and hard work had come to fruition and many residents and visitors alike were able to join in the celebrations which went on through the day and well in to the evening. Blessed with beautiful English weather this provided a quintessential backdrop to this truly memorable day.

### July:

As the Month of July approached the Neighbourhood Plan was gaining momentum.

We welcomed an application from **Helen Perks** to fill the remaining Council seat. It was RESOLVED to co-opt **Helen Perks** to the Council as from 1st August when electoral role eligibility had been confirmed.

### August:

August saw me, Dena Ludford, join the team as the new Parish Clerk. One of the first items on the agenda was the **mysterious missing Defibrillator!** At first we thought it had been stolen from the cabinet outside the Community Information Centre. This resulted in a report to the Police and the EA Ambulance Service, neither of which could offer any clue as to its location. The prospect of having to view hours of CCTV footage loomed ahead and I, as the new Clerk, was wondering if my days of Retail Management would be set to follow me forever! However, I must have been on a lucky streak as the Deputy Clerk and another spent time watching, amongst other things, a spider repeatedly building a web! One morning the play button was pressed and there on the CCTV screen was the "borrower" of our missing defibrillator. The fact that we are able to provide these valuable pieces of medical equipment meant that on this occasion, potentially a life was saved. The Police closed the file on the

case and the unit was finally recovered for future use having been initially returned to the wrong place.

August also held nominations to the Uttlesford Community Achievement award scheme and the Parish Council were proud to nominate **Michael Collins** for this award. (More on this to follow in December)

**Neighbourhood Plan** progress: the draft Landscape Character Assessment report had been received from Liz Lake Associates and our initial view was that it was of a very good standard with photographs and drawings/plans of an excellent quality. The draft Heritage Views and Settings report had been received from Grover Lewis. We are also very fortunate to have on hand Richard Haynes, who works closely with the Neighbourhood Plan team, and at this time was reviewing certain aspects of this detailed document and expects to have a good comprehensive report when it's finalised.

## September:

There are about to be some significant changes to **Recycling Centres** this year. The introduction to these changes started this month.

Our County Councillor, Simon Walsh, explained how these changes might affect us. He said that drivers of vans and pick-up trucks will be faced with new restrictions at some Essex recycling centres from the beginning of the month and, following operational changes announced in August, vans and commercial vehicles will not be allowed into around half of the county's recycling centres and will face increased scrutiny of their loads at those sites which still offer access. This change will help improve capacity and reduce the amount of illegal business waste entering recycling centres in Essex.

Research undertaken by Essex County Council identified that commercial vehicles make up more than a third of recycling centre users, causing additional queuing and longer unloading times than householders in cars.



Given this change our Chairman thought it prudent to discuss a recent incident involving a significantly bad case of **fly-tipping on Little Sampford Road**, which was reported to UDC by several residents. The Chairman would encourage everyone to be extra vigilant in relation to this and would ask that any such incidents be reported to UDC immediately. (See photograph on the previous page.)

**District Cllr John Freeman** discussed the New Homes Bonus money which was hoped could be used for a seat at the Cricket Club. Residents on the green near the cricket club were happy with the idea and it was resolved to agree with no council objection to make a future purchase of a chair/seat.

This month Thaxted also hosted **"The Rifles - a living history group"**. They set up camp in and around the Guildhall, and based their displays on the effect of the Great War on the Home Front around the time of the Battle of the Somme in 1916.

## Power Cut Information

A new national number was launched specifically designed to support customers during power outages (and let's be fair, we do get our fair share of those here in Thaxted!)

The Parish Council thought it would be good for you to have this information to hand. This is a small press briefing introducing the service:

*105 is a new number that you can call to report or get information about a power cut. It will put you through to your local electricity network operator – the company that manages the cables, wires and substations that bring electricity into homes and businesses in your area.*

*105 is a free service for people in England, Scotland and Wales, and you can call the number from most landlines and mobile phones. It doesn't matter who you choose to buy your electricity from - anyone can call 105.*



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*You can also call 105 if you spot damage to electricity power lines and substations that could put you, or someone else, in danger. If there's a serious immediate risk, call the emergency services too.*

*Don't be left in the dark. Call 105.*

*To find out more, visit [powercut105.com](http://powercut105.com)*

## **October:**

A member of the public commented that the agenda was not on the website. The Chairman responded by alerting the public that we were currently experiencing some very minor web site problems and that the clerk was in the process of dealing with these. What started as a small hiccup soon become evident that a more challenging problem was the cause, and we, in the Parish Council decided to nickname the strange web site hiccups 'Cobwebs', as they just seemed to appear in thin air. It's very strange to think how reliant most of us have become on something we thought we'd never really use!

Moving on from our 'Cobwebs' saw another application being received from **Ian Stewart**, the third new councillor to have a Council seat. It was **RESOLVED** to co-op **Ian Stewart** to the Council as from 6th October 2016 when electoral role eligibility had been confirmed.

**Cllr Brazier** gave an update as to why the 'Green Bin' had been removed from the graveyard. The wall was struck by a car and therefore for safety reasons this had to be removed. Fortunately, no one was hurt during the incident. The green bin is now back and we ask that it is only used for church yard green waste.

The Planning Applications were coming in thick and fast. It was noted that once again Thaxted is faced with contending the planning application for development immediately behind **The Little Maypole**. The Council felt that this was an incongruous application for many reasons. The impact could be far reaching and risks a dangerous precedent being set. The Council and the Neighbourhood Plan were all working hard to protect our community and this added further burden to the already mounting workload. The Chairman was pleased to publicly thank both Hands off Thaxted and The Thaxted Society, who work tirelessly on behalf of Thaxted alongside the Parish Council to defend this beautiful town against these unsuitable proposals. Their swift action has resulted in the determination of the Little Maypole application being deferred, whilst a number of issues and inaccuracies are addressed. Thank you all who wrote to object. It was subsequently refused.

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The recycling changes were implemented county wide. (as mentioned in September)

## November

Winter is here..... (Not a Game of Thrones reference!) and as the dark nights loomed over us, the Council thought some more about the funding for CCTV which was set aside by UDC for us in 2010. Following a consultation with UDC regarding the instillation of CCTV in Thaxted, UDC have allocated monies towards this project. The Council were delighted with the prospect of CCTV at the Windmill. Other locations were to be advised after a site survey which will follow should we wish to continue. It was UNANIMOUSLY AGREED that the **Chairman, Clerk & Cllr Frater** are to progress with CCTV instillation within Thaxted Parish and support this application

On the same winter theme, the Council thought it would be worth reminding our residents of '**The collective energy switching initiative**', which is for people who want to cut their energy bills. It's a free, easy, and secure way to cut energy bills without wasting time comparing prices on comparison sites, and last year residents saved approximately £263 per household. Here are some more useful links you might like to visit.

For more information on **the energy switch** visit: [essex.gov.uk/energyswitch](http://essex.gov.uk/energyswitch).

You may also be eligible for support towards your **fuel payments**, visit: [gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment/overview](http://gov.uk/winter-fuel-payment/overview) for more information.

For more information on **how to stay well** this winter, visit: [livingwellessex.org/health-and-well-being/taking-care-of-yourself/stay-well-this-winter/](http://livingwellessex.org/health-and-well-being/taking-care-of-yourself/stay-well-this-winter/).

For NHS advice on how to keep healthy this winter visit:

[nhs.uk/LiveWell/Winterhealth/Pages/Winterhealthhome.aspx](http://nhs.uk/LiveWell/Winterhealth/Pages/Winterhealthhome.aspx)

## December

The **Thaxted Surgery** needed the Council to support their extension, their bid to NHS England has now been approved. The council offered their unanimous support. It was resolved that the clerk would write a letter detailing this.

During this month we hand delivered about 300 little survey cards and 50 were given out from the post office and service station regarding **Superfast Broadband**. We had 180 returns off the back of the survey. **Essex Superfast** decided that Thaxted could jump up the priority list and we now have three cabinets which are live. There are a number of reasons why this is good for Thaxted, one of which is that it's an enabling infrastructure for the residents and as part of this Superfast deal, there are some

infrastructures which may provide us with three additional Wi-Fi hot spots which could help support our CCTV. It was resolved to pursue with a view to securing additional Wi-Fi hotspots in Thaxted where the wider community may benefit.

A Special NOTE to our **Deputy Clerk Mike Collins** who is to be congratulated on receiving an **UDC Community Achievement Award for service to the community.**



Deputy Clerk Mike Collins updated the council that the Information Centre is now a holding site for the **Uttlesford Food Bank**, both for collecting by clients and for donations of food.

A warm welcome and introduction to the new **Guildhall custodian Alan Gant** who will be joining us in taking good care of our village and our Guildhall.

## January 2017

**Cllr Knight** suggested that we extend an invitation to Uttlesford District **Cllr Howard Rolfe** to Thaxted to discuss other matters concerning the council. This idea was well received and the Clerk suggested that a presentation be written to show all aspects of Thaxted in the first instance. It was resolved that the clerk would produce a brief presentation including the library and CIC.

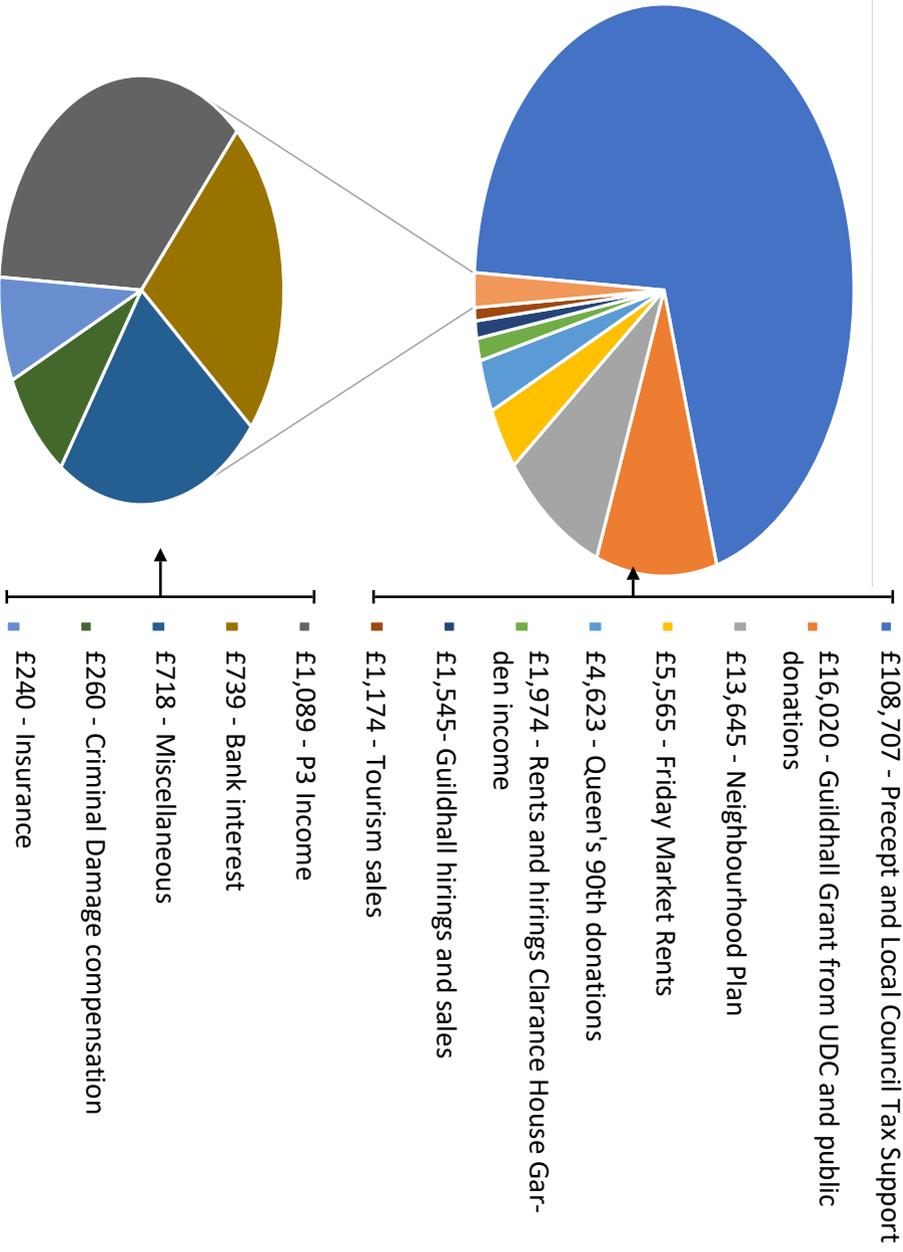
Due to popularity, it was resolved to continue with the **Green Waste collection service** which remains the same as the previous year and will be provided fortnightly. A calendar of dates is available from the Information Centre.

## February

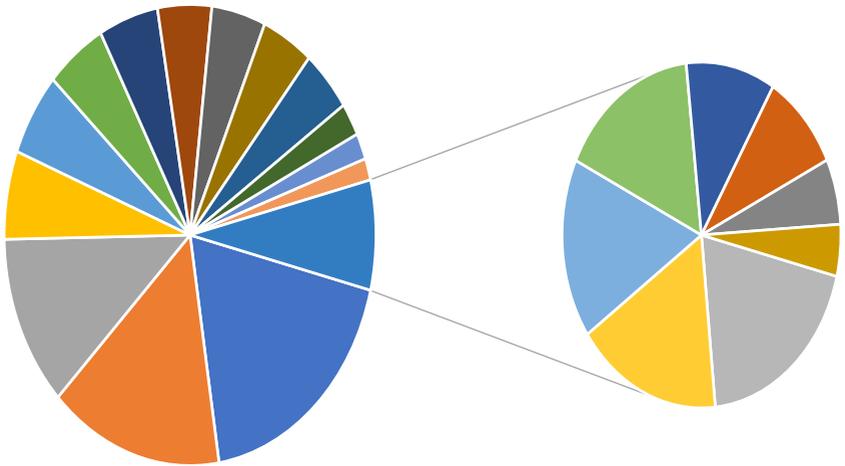
The Chairman told the Council about a meeting that had been arranged at quite short notice. We were happy to receive the **Chief Executive of Uttlesford District Council Dawn French**, along with **District Cllr Martin Foley** who met with the clerk and Chairman here in Thaxted. The meeting was very well received. The Clerk was offered the opportunity to spend time in Uttlesford to forge relationships with principal officers and departments, Dawn had a Degree of empathy in terms of what we are trying to do as a council and the collaborative nature of our library CIC and Council.

*Continued on page 10*

## Income 2016 - 17 - £156,299



## Expenditure 2016 - 17 - £154,151



- £28,761 - Training, admin and support costs
- £23,241 - Neighbourhood Plan
- £18,684 - Grounds Maintenance
- £9,570 - Guildhall upkeep, improvements and staffing
- £9,061 - Council Office
- £8,045 - Queen's 90th event
- £7,980 - Asset Management
- £7,245 - Public Toilets and Car Park
- £7,234 - Professional services
- £6,898 - Grants to Community Organisations
- £6,812 - Street lighting, electricity and repairs
- £3,565 - Green Waste Service in Car Park
- £2,838 - Clarence House Garden
- £2,351 - Insurance
- £2,322 - Newsletter and website
- £2,000 - Youth Forum
- £1,998 - Play Area
- £1,916 - P3 expenditure
- £1,226 - Subscriptions
- £1,100 - Historic Event
- £730 - Tourism stock
- £575 - Financial Audit

**Leaky dams** was well under way. The timber you see here was harvested just south of Dunmow. **Cllr Knight** wished to thank Charlotte Smith and her team. The flood team has been instrumental in getting the money to support the Culvert in addition to this Charlotte has been a great support to the individual properties as well. The Culvert is testament to the collaborative approach showing Parish, County and District Councils all working together.



Pictured here are **County Cllr Simon Walsh, Sue Barker (Deputy leader UDC) and Chairman of Thaxted Parish Council Terry Frostick**, working together to ensure Thaxted keeps their head above the water. (Roy the horse steals the shot I'm sure you'll agree.)

During one of our council meeting we discussed in detail the signage pointing the Emergency services to **Vicarage Mead**. The Clerk spent some time with a very concerned resident who detailed the problems that Ambulances, in particular were having finding their way to Vicarage Mead: sometimes trying to fit down Vicarage Lane as a result of Sat Nav complications and lack of local knowledge. The result of this meeting was that new signs were made and fitted to give local direction to the emergency services.

This month we also received approval for changing the lights to LED's in both Park Street and Margaret Street Car Park. Both the Clerk and Chairman were thanked for their involvement in acquiring the grants.

## **March:**

The residents of Thaxted took part in "**The Great British Spring Clean**" which took place on 4th March 2017. At 10 am people gathered outside the Library & CIC where Deputy Clerk Mike Collins was on hand to give out plastic sacks and picking tools.

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Pictured here are just some of the bags of rubbish collected in just 2 hours.

The Thaxted P3 Group organises four guided walks each year and Wednesday morning work parties for the maintenance of our footpaths and bridle-ways. They work in partnership with Essex County Council's Rights of Way department. If you have been out walking then you may have seen the mowers in action. You may also know that the iron footbridge at the



end of Watling Lane has been out of action for a long time. There is little news on its likely repair. Meanwhile the detour was via a bank which had become slippery.



Pictured here is the set of steps which has recently been completed by our team of volunteers making the slope easier to climb while still maintaining the bridleway for horses. (*P3 stands for Parish Paths Partnership*) The Parish Council thanks the group for their continued hard work and efforts.

**District Cllr Howard Rolfe** came to visit us here in Thaxted. The clerk put together a brief, but comprehensive presentation which was collaboratively delivered by the Clerk and the Chairman. This was very well received by **Cllr Rolfe** and gave a real 'hands on' representation and a unique opportunity to show what Thaxted has to offer. We were joined by **Vice Chair Cllr Knight and Peter Neal**, the chairman of our Neighbourhood Plan Steering Group.

As last we were pleased to announce the brand NEW Thaxted web site was now fully functional, check it out at [www.thaxted.co.uk](http://www.thaxted.co.uk)

## April:

In April we had received nearly 350 completed **Neighbourhood Plan Residential Questionnaires** (88 on line - survey monkey). This is a pretty good result representing almost 30% of households and is above the average return rate for NP surveys. Daniel

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has analysed the results into a report which is in tabular and pie chart format and clearly indicates Thaxted resident's choices. There are no surprises. This will be circulated shortly.

In the **Guildhall** Alan was busy organising Exhibits. Alan had spoken to various local Crafts People and residents with regard to gaining more exhibits of interest. Raven Armoury have kindly agreed to provide a display at sometime in the future, which will include the Templar Sword they made for me some 15 years ago. The Manager of the Swan Hotel has allowed us first choice of the many photographs displayed in their bar before their refurbishment, 14 of which are now in the Guildhall for consideration. Bruce Munroe has agreed to provide some items of interest from his collection and the Thaxted Potters have now provided a display of ceramics made by local people, which are displayed in the glass cabinet on the top floor.

**LED lighting** has now been installed in **Margaret Street Car Park and Park Street Car Park** - whilst there are mixed opinions documented in world news re the light emissions & ambience, the Council are keen to promote the safety aspect of these new lamps in addition to the cost savings both for the council and ultimately for the parishioners.

## May 2017:

The month of May came around so quickly and again represents the beginning of the official Council year. **Cllr Terry Frostick** was again re-elected to the Post of Chairman of Thaxted Parish Council. **Cllr Victoria Knight** was also re-elected to the post of Vice Chairman.

As we reflected on the year at our **Annual Parish Assembly** we were reminded of the winter months with our the gritting lorries, aptly named Gritney Spears and Alexander the Grit, who helped keep our highways safe for all to use during the winter months.

## June:

Sadly there appears to have been a rise in **domestic crime** such as dwelling, vehicle and outbuilding burglaries in recent months and these seem to be being professionally executed. Thaxted Parish Council made note that having no visible local police to speak of simply does not help. The Clerk attended a **police conference** where this topic was hotly discussed.

There is a drive to recruit **Special Constables** which is in full swing. The following information, which the Parish Council thought of interest, is provided by the Police & Crime Commissioner (PCC):

*Special Constables are volunteer police officers, holding the same office and the same powers as regular officers. They wear the same uniform, carry the same equipment and are deployed to the same incidents. They are not paid, but can claim mileage and duty allowances. The Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) has made the commitment to double the size of the Special Constabulary by 2020. This means the force is looking to achieve a headcount of 700 officers. The PCC has also committed to having a Special in every community. Together they made a significant contribution to local community policing.*

*People interested in becoming a Special Constable can apply via the Essex Police website (<https://www.essex.police.uk/join-the-police/special-constabulary>). The website contains additional information on eligibility and the role.*

June also saw the return of the ever-popular **Morris Weekend** and as the beautiful weather prevailed many local residents and tourists alike were drawn to the festivities. At the end of June, a **Fun Fair** visited the recreation ground, there are plans for this to be rescheduled for next year which will include dodgems, hot dogs and hamburgers.

## July

The Council welcomed Allison Howells to the council as a Co-Opted member.

The manufacture of “The Commemoration of the Fallen Memorial” is well and truly underway. There is a strong desire to unveil the long awaited oak plaque on the 11th November this year, although this cannot be guaranteed. A booklet is being produced which gives details on how to donate. Anyone still wishing to donate may do so by cheque made payable to “Thaxted Parish Council”. Please write on the reverse of the cheque ‘ref: 1208’ alternatively by bank transfer using the following details:

Bank: Co-Operative Bank plc  
Sort code 08 92 99  
Account number 65382569

Many thanks for the generous donations already received.

*Dena Ludford - Parish Clerk*

## Interview with a Councillor

Thaxted Parish Council elects 11 members who serve a term of 4 years. Each councillor must register any interests they may have and agree to abide by the code of conduct. Thaxted Parish councillors are all open and approachable individuals, and as such, subject themselves to newsletter worthy exclusive interviews (as permitted by the Councils media Policy and directed by the Clerk) such as this one that follows....as promised.

### **An exclusive interview with Cllr Andrew Frater.**

**Dena:** *Tell me how you first got involved with the Parish Council*

**Andy:** Well, I first met Terry Frostick in the Maypole Pub and was listening to all the good things the PC were involved in and after about half an hour, he said "and you know we have a vacancy?" so that was it! A co-opted Councillor since May 2016!

**Dena:** *What was your first impression of Parish Council?*

**Andy:** That all of the Councillors have such a passion for Thaxted and being impressed by the huge amount of local knowledge that's held between them. It's certainly not all about dog bins and bunting!

**Dena:** *What do you wish other people knew about Parish Council?*

**Andy:** I suppose that would be for people to see the amount of lobbying, cajoling and sometimes general harassment of other bodies the PC undertakes on behalf of Thaxted residents. Everything from broadband to planning to yellow lines, Councillors seem to always have something on the go.

**Dena:** *When your friends/family found out that you had become a Councillor, what did they say or ask?*

**Andy:** As I have a background in Human Resources, they all thought I had become a counsellor, can you imagine! When I explain it's a Parish Councillor, the general reaction was "What do you do then?" I take pride in explaining what we do, especially lately with the work on the Neighbourhood Plan that the Council is supporting with members of the public, the Thaxted Society and HOT to ensure Thaxted remains a very special place to live, work and relax

**Dena:** *What do you do when you aren't attending Council meetings or answering questions for the Parish magazine?*

**Andy:** Luckily, as an Assistant Principal of a Sixth Form College, I do enjoy a very generous holiday entitlement. I get to tour Europe at least once a year on my motorbike, recently, I and few friends rode to Ypres for the Passchendaele battle 100 year commemoration at the Menin Gate which was very moving.

*Andy is Pictured here outside the Town Council offices of Jelenia Gora on a recent trip to Poland! (Editor comments, maybe this is what Andy means by 'Touring Europe'?!)*



## **THAXTED PARISH COUNCIL REQUIRE A CARETAKER**

Up to £8.50 per hour depending on experience

The Parish Council is responsible for the maintenance and upkeep of many varied assets within the parish of Thaxted. The Parish Caretaker will be responsible for assessing the everyday cleanliness of the Village. The Hours of Duty will vary depending on the needs of the community. Primarily the initial needs are Friday Afternoon's to support the thriving local market street scene.

Post holder requirements include:

- \* Understanding of basic and practical DIY skills, and cleanliness;
- \* Competent in the use of basic tools.
- \* Knowledge of health and safety procedure for working in a public place;
- \* Able to give written reports on work;

- \* Flexible approach to ensure reasonable availability to work;
- \* Good communication skills;
- \* Able to deal with the public in a professional manner.
- \* The post holder will be on a Zero hours contract or self-employed.

All associated tools will be provided for the successful applicant.

More detailed information is available from [clerk@thaxted.co.uk](mailto:clerk@thaxted.co.uk)

Applications: by email to [clerk@thaxted.co.uk](mailto:clerk@thaxted.co.uk) or letter, should be sent to: The Clerk: Dena Ludford, Community Information Centre, 7 Town Street, Thaxted CM6 2LD. Closing dates for application is: 3rd August 2017

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**Clerk: Dena Ludford**

**CIC 7 Town Street, Thaxted, Dunmow, Essex CM6 2LD**

**Tel: 01371 831952.**

**Email: [clerk@thaxted.co.uk](mailto:clerk@thaxted.co.uk) Website: [www.thaxted.co.uk](http://www.thaxted.co.uk)**

## Parish Councillors

To contact any of the Parish Councillors please, in the first instance, contact the Parish Clerk's office. Your enquiry can then be dealt with in the most appropriate way.

Cllr. Terry Frostick, (Chairman)

Cllr. Victoria Knight, (Vice-Chairman)

Cllr. William Brazier

Cllr. Andrew Frater

Cllr. Alison Howells

Cllr. David Morgan

Cllr. Helen Perks

Cllr. Ian Stewart

Cllr. Antoinette Wattebot

Cllr. Ray Williams

1 Vacancy

## Council Meetings

Council Meetings are open to the public. Minutes are available on application to the Clerk and to download from the website. Agendas are published on the noticeboards at the Information Centre and on [www.thaxted.co.uk](http://www.thaxted.co.uk).

## Community Information Centre & Library

We are sure that most of you will know about the Community Information Centre and Library. This partnership has been working well now for over a year.

Did you know that on Monday and Friday mornings Margaret a **UDC officer** is available?

Did you know you can drop off donated food for the **Uttlesford Food Bank**? It is also a collection point for those in need.

Did you know there are unique **Thaxted themed gifts** including mugs with views, Dick Turpin mugs and Thaxted Morris mugs? Also our best seller the Thaxted tea towels.

Did you know you can use the inside **notice board for posters** for events and the outside one for **lost & found and small adverts**?

## The Thaxted Parish Council Newsletter

Published periodically. It is delivered to as many homes as possible. Copies will be available from the Community Information Centre and the text is on the website.