

## **Chair's Report: July 2025**

### **Councillor Tim Jeffries.**

Cllr Jeffries has resigned. We extend our sincere thanks for his dedication and valuable contributions to the Council, particularly in his work on Highways and his liaison with the Police. We are especially grateful for his efforts to get potholes filled and his perseverance with issues regarding the Local Transport Plan.

### **Alice Lawrence**

Our Clerk, Alice, has formally resigned, with her last working day being Tuesday, 22nd July. We extend our sincere thanks to her for working beyond her paid hours in order to ensure that Therfield Parish Council is complying with the legal and regulatory obligations for parish councils.

### **Future clerk**

It should be noted that there is a shortage of clerks who are qualified in parish council administration. Alice currently holds the position of Therfield Parish Council's Proper Officer and this means that she is qualified to ensure that the business of the Council is conducted in accordance with the law.

Moreover, she holds the position of Responsible Financial Officer for Therfield Parish Council and this means that she is qualified to ensure that the Council's financial transactions are properly authorised and recorded.

We have already advertised the vacancy and will keep the public informed regarding the status of the recruitment. In the meantime, members of the public can continue to contact the Council via the Clerk's usual email address. If the role remains vacant, a councillor will monitor the inbox to ensure communication is maintained.

### **Cllr Tony Fuller and Cllr James Danter**

We have welcomed two new councillors to the PC. Cllr Fuller will liaise with the Police, deal with leased land and legal issues. Cllr Danter will liaise with Highways.

### **Lunch Club (8th Oct)**

Thanks to Linda Laing for the invitation to attend the bi-monthly lunch club. It is a wonderful initiative carried out by dedicated volunteers. Cllr Whitby will

attend the October club. We hope to ensure attendance by at least one councillor at each date, depending on availability at the time.

### **Boteman Charity**

Councillor Small has offered to serve as the Parish Council's representative on the Charity. This will be considered by the Charity at its next meeting in September. Following discussion and legal guidance from Herts Association of Parish and Town Councils (HAPTC), it has been clarified that "the Parish Council cannot approve individuals as 'Parish Council Representatives' unless they are serving Parish Councillors."

### **Educational Foundation**

Cllr Small has offered to be the PC representative on this Foundation.

### **Fordham Hall Management Committee**

The Parish Council won't appoint a representative but Cllr Danter attended the AGM on 26/6/25.

### **Grant to Fordham Memorial Hall**

Regrettably, the Parish Council does not have the available funds to offer a grant in the 2025/26 financial year.

### **No Parking signs**

The Parish Council has requested that the Conservators continue the trial and leave the No Parking signs as it is observed that they do deter people from parking at the bottom of Pedlar's Lane - which has been a safety hazard in the past. We have been advised by the Chair of the Conservators, Clive Hall, that "the trial cannot continue indefinitely. This is because structures on the village green must have a consent from the Secretary of State to be legitimate. Any structures that are not legitimate can be removed by someone applying to the county court." This topic will be discussed by Parish councillors at the earliest opportunity.

### **Grass-cutting at Chapel Green**

The PC has been in communication with Clive Hall, Chair of the Conservators, about the cutting of Chapel Green this year. The PC is mindful that the grass has not been collected this year and hopes that the Therfield Heath and Greens Ranger, Ellie Nadin, will organise a cut and collect next year in July in order to encourage favourable conditions for a greater diversity of wild flowers.

**Church clock**

This will be serviced and mended in July.

**Bench on Hay Green -**

This will be repaired by Andrew Dodgkin at his earliest convenience at a small cost to the PC.

**Notice boards**

These will be installed by Andrew Dodgkin at his earliest convenience.

**Polite reminder**

We kindly remind all parishioners that members of the public should not visit Parish Councillors at their homes to discuss parish matters. Such visits are considered an invasion of privacy. We do recognise that some parishioners may have personal friendships with councillors and casual visits between friends are, of course, a normal part of community life. However, when it comes to official parish business, we ask that all enquiries and concerns are directed to the Parish Clerk in the first instance, via email.

**Therfield Playground health and safety measures**

The aerial runway was taken out of use yesterday by Broadmead Leisure due to health and safety concerns arising from decaying support posts. Additionally, the playground rubbish bin, which has been broken for some time, has been removed. The total cost for these removals is £120. The bin is not serviced by NHDC and has been maintained voluntarily by members of the public. We have received advice that this practice should cease for health and safety reasons. Thanks to Mike Inns for printing the signs to inform the public. Thanks too to the Whitbys for emptying the bin weekly until now.

**Therfield Playground Refurbishment - see report**