

Therfield Parish Council Report

July 2025

Councillor Portfolio Updates

Cllr Vanessa Atha

Liaison with Therfield First School:

I was invited by Tara McGovern, Headteacher, to give an assembly about the bats of Therfield (19/6/25)

I was invited to participate in the School's "Values" theme by giving an assembly about "responsibility" (3/7/25)

Liaison with the Conservators of Therfield Heath and Greens:

On 28/5/25, Clive Hall, Chair Of the Conservators, took Cllr Wealthy and me on an informative tour of the 9 Greens of Therfield

I attended a talk on the history of Therfield Heath by hydrogeologist, Jane Dottridge (18/6/25)

Support with Therfield Parish Council's Biodiversity policy:

I wrote an article (with map) for the Parish Magazine about Therfield's 9 Greens

I attended a bat-identification course and a roost count (organised by the Bat Conservation Trust) in order to learn about the bats of Therfield

I organised a talk about bats to be given on 24/7/25 by an associate of the Bat Conservation Trust in Fordham Memorial Hall. Following the talk, parishioners will be able to identify bats from their unique calls - whilst walking around Therfield using detectors provided

Cllr Sally Whitby

The footpath 42 by Fox & Duck was blocked by a fallen tree from a parishioner's garden. Having spoken to the parishioner, they had a private contractor clear it.

New sign to be installed at beginning of Boat 36 Chapel Green as the previous was vandalised.

The church clock will be serviced and repaired in July.

Bench on Hay Green will be repaired and the new Notice Boards will be installed this month.

Cllr Dave Wealthy

Community support:

Discussion with Greene King on the installation of a replacement kitchen extractor fan that extracts onto Fox Lane. The existing grille was being replaced with large metal ducting which would have jutted out into the lane much further than the old one. Hertfordshire planning had not been consulted on whether the new installation was acceptable for the conservation area because Greene King believed it was a like-for-like replacement.

The engineers had another solution which retained a similar grille design and did not jut out further into the lane. In the event that this alternative does not provide the necessary venting from the kitchen then Greene King would seek approval for the original ducting solution from Herts planning.

Liaison with the Therfield Heath and Greens Conservators:

Councillor Atha and I were given a tour of the Greens that are managed by the conservators.

Biodiversity:

Following the good response from villagers on Swift boxes, these have now been installed on people's houses where requested.

The management of Chapel Green continues to be a contentious point between the conservators and local residents. During the tour of the greens with the conservators we believed there was a general agreement that Washing Ditch and Chapel greens would be cut in July as recommended for meadow maintenance. However the grass was cut on 12th June, but areas of long grass remain and grass around trees were left untouched.

Website: Updates and posting have been made on the website as requested by the team. Research of potential suppliers for the new web hosting of a .gov.uk site is complete. The most appropriate supplier is parish-online.co.uk who are recommended by HAPTC and they will ensure the site is compliant to the government guidelines on web accessibility and transparency.

Defibrillator:

Regular checks made of the AED status. The battery health currently stands at 2 green bars. The pads will need renewing by the end of September. At the May meeting we agreed to also purchase a set of pads for children when we replace the adult pads.

Cllr James Danter

Update on Fordham Hall AGM 26/06/25.

The Parish Council were invited to attend the Fordham Hall AGM on Thursday 26th June 2025. The Parish Council was invited to put forward a representative to the Hall as per the trust deed that the Hall is held under, a role which has been vacant for some years. Although no parish councillor was able to commit to be a representative, it was agreed that attendance at the AGM would be assured and I attended in this capacity.

The management committee approved their minutes from the previous AGM before presenting reports from the committee and the treasurer's report. During any other business section of the meeting the Pre-School raised concerns about an impending rise in the Hall's rates and suggested that fundraising efforts could be conducted by the hall in order to provide additional income in order to mitigate the need for a rate increase to the level suggested by the hall. The Hall committee also raised the historic financial contribution which the Parish Council used to provide to the Hall but which has not been done for several years. It was asked if we would consider reinstating the funding.

As a Parish Council, I believe we have a responsibility to discuss and assess the viability of providing financial support to the hall, given its significant use and benefit to the local community. Our aim should be to reach a decision and/or develop a proposal to bring forward at the September meeting.

Cllr Tony Fuller

The current lease for the playground behind the Fox and Duck expires in 2029. This is an important asset for the village. I have reviewed the title deeds with a view taking forward discussions with the land owners on the future of the playground.