

# THE THAXTED SOCIETY



## ANNUAL REPORT 2023

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING  
JUNE 7 2023

*The Thaxted Society*  
CIC 7 Town Street  
Thaxted  
CM6 2LD  
[thethaxtedsociety@gmail.com](mailto:thethaxtedsociety@gmail.com)  
[thaxtedsociety.com](http://thaxtedsociety.com)

**AGENDA**  
**ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**WEDNESDAY 7<sup>TH</sup> JUNE 2023**

**Thaxted Parish Church**

1. *Opening Remarks*
2. *Apologies for Absence*
3. *Minutes of the last AGM 2022*
4. *Appointment of the Hon President*
5. *Election of the Committee*
6. *Treasurers Report and draft accounts for 2022-23*
7. *Questions from the floor*
8. *Any other Business.*
9. *Thaxted's Archive Richard Till.*
10. *Closing Remarks*

**RECEPTION**

***With thanks to the Rector  
and Church Wardens for allowing use of the Church***

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### *NOTES TO THE REPORT*

- *Advisors and Compliance*
- *Record of Attendees AGM 2022*
- *Minutes of last AGM 2022*

### *SOCIETY ACCOUNTS*

- *Accounts 22-23*
- *Appendix/ policies*

## **OUR THANKS**

*The Society is grateful to the Parish Council for support of The Thaxted History project.*

*Thanks to Essex County Councilor Martin Foley*

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

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

*And UDC District Councilor Martin Foley and Cllr Mike Tayler for their support.*



*“What we do and then what we achieve may often be done quietly and without fuss.  
For the Society, Thaxted comes first and any recognition of our work, last!”*

**CHAIRMAN'S LETTER AGM 2023**

*My opening paragraph of last year's report holds true today. The war in Ukraine remains a blight upon what we all rely upon, a civilized and free society. It remains a credit to Thaxted and wider Uttlesford that we have continued to respond to this crisis and assist those displaced. All this done while at home, the 'cost of living crisis', proves a challenge, and local response has been equally forthright.*

*Given where tonight's proceedings are taking place, it is proper that I on behalf of the Thaxted Society belatedly welcome Thaxted and the Parish's new Rector the Revd Gerwyn Capon. I and committee members look forward to working with him.*

*An appeal has been lodged for the Cutlers Green Solar Farm. Your society will be attending any hearing and meanwhile urgently cautions against the automatic allocation of 'town funds' for such appeals. Why? Because Thaxted Parish Council could not afford to oppose every appeal with its allied costs, and must choose its battles, so that when it comes to a fight, such as the old Gladman site opposite the rec, we still have the 'fighting funds' to enable this.*

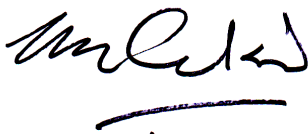
*I am pleased to send our congratulations to the Thaxted Community Land Trust as they move forward in providing homes at Thaxted for local demand. The Trust has now signed the lease for land on the Barfield Road, and hopes to build, in partnership with Rural England, a number of new homes here.*

*During this evening's proceedings Richard Till, will deliver a brief outline of his work with the Thaxted Archive and some of his discoveries with the assistance of Mike Goatcher who is now working his way through this important trove. We hope the Archive will be available to interested folk in due course.*

*Living in interesting times may be a curse when it comes to the likes of Covid but a coronation certainly makes for unique times. Because of Thaxted's volunteers there was plenty of celebrating in Thaxted not to mention Thaxted Fayre & Morris week-end this year. If you noticed and or enjoyed the festivities perhaps it's time to step up and contribute yourself. **Thaxted is its volunteers.***

*Again, I want to make a point of thanking my fellow officers and you the Society members and friends whose support allows our work to continue. This is crucial in giving **a professional and respected voice to Thaxted!***

*Thank you all.*



Michael Culkin  
Chair.

## ANNUAL REPORT 2022-2023

A curious & challenging year:

- We consulted in detail on the Uttlesford Local Plan.
- We consulted on the emerging Uttlesford Design Code.
- We will republish our Building Design Guide after publication of the UDC Code
- We published a guide to the work of the Thaxted Society. (available here tonight).
- We continued to manage Thaxed Online and Thaxted Society FB pages
- We contributed to the proposed review of the Neighbourhood Plan
- We endorsed and promoted the 20 IS PLENTY campaign continuing our campaign for 'traffic relief' through Thaxted.
- Work on the Thaxted History Project continues apace with the publication of Vol II by Richard Till, with Vol III in the works for 2024
- We established a Society NEWS page in the ABC&U parish magazine.
- We communicated with our MP re infrastructure and flooding at Thaxted.
- We updated our policy regarding water run off to include private surfacing such as driveways and hard standing.
- We congratulated Cllr Terry Frostick on his UDC Community Award.
- We continued to work with the PC Chair and Councillors.
- We wrote congratulating our newly elected Parish Council.
- We contributed to discussions on the future of the Guildhall and accepted the Management Committee invitation to join it.
- We were pleased to congratulate Thaxted's newly elected District Councillor Richard Haynes, who joins re-elected Martin Folley, at UDC.
- We are committed to raising funds for the restoration of our town signs and have already received welcome support from local business'.
- We remain committed to the Thaxted Archive, now housed in the Guildhall and have contributed to its papers, whilst supporting the work of Mike Goatcher, Hon Archivist.



## MEMBERSHIP

The Society has a current membership of 188 voting members and all Thaxted's residents as non-voting members unless they wish otherwise. The Society has among its members, members and subscribers from overseas, and those who no longer live in Thaxted but still have connections here.

### IN MEMORIAM

In the past year, we have lost friends of the Society whom we remember fondly: **Sheila Doyle, Mick Hughes, Rose Petchey.**  
R.I.P.

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

- publication 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 via our MP
- our work in outreach via the Welcome Pack and the Town map.
- our constant monitoring of planning applications at Thaxted
- publication of Thaxted Society NEWS in the ABC&U.
- publication of occasional articles and lectures.

**Single £10.00 per year - Couple £15.00 per year**

*Angela Clarson*

Membership Secretary



*The new Youth Club skate ramp, an important volunteer driven amenity for Thaxted*

## TREASURERS REPORT

A busy year for the Society and due to generous support, subscriptions to the History Project, prudent spending, and a committed membership, I can report that our finances remain in good shape if somewhat reduced by the pandemic.

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)*
- The Society Lectures *(public subscription)*
- Imogen Holst book launch. *(thanks to Gifted)*
- Thaxted Fayre welcome tent *(sponsorship)*
- Societies and Clubs Fair *( anonymous)*

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

Angela Clarson's work attracting new members with our Welcome Pack, and gathering annual dues is much appreciated. Dues may be paid here tonight and new members are encouraged to do so.

Subscriptions to The Thaxted History project are ring fenced in the Society's general account.

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

*Dame Kate Barker*

Hon Treasurer



*Our town signs are in urgent need of restoration or replacement. The Society is engaged in raising funds for this alongside the Parish Council.*

## THAXTED HISTORY PROJECT REPORT

The Thaxted History project continues to grow and appears to have had a beneficial knock-on effect as other Thaxted related volumes have begun to emerge, not least of which is our President Bruce Munro's wonderful volume of memoirs of Saffron Walden. It is surely true that this all contributes to reaffirming Thaxted's status and value for the whole district. One of the Thaxted Society's central aims.

I have been delighted by finds in the Thaxted Archive and wrote a short piece for the ABC&U about the Alms Houses or rather the Chantry. When history corrects itself in this way you learn something of the truth and also something of the error. Calling Thaxted's Town Street, the High Street, or Main Street even, is one such example of how names may mislead.

In fact, 'high streets' were so called because they were built in such a manner as to avoid flooding, either on high ground or indeed just built high.

I continue my research for Volume III of the History Project and with Brian Smith's assistance, we hope this will be published in the Spring of 2024. Meanwhile, with Mike Goatcher's help, I continue to discover new and fascinating facts about Thaxted which, whilst filling in gaps in our history, also point to our need for care and conservation of this unique town and its records.

*Richard Till*



*The coronation of King Charles III was yet another historic milestone for the country and Thaxted.*



**SOCIETY ONLINE**

The Society's popularity on line grows weekly, and those who follow any of our pages will note the numbers of posts from all over the globe. This represents the very best aspects of social media and how it allows many ex-Thaxtedians to stay in touch with their friends, family, and the town, which they clearly love and miss.

The Society is proud to publish not only its own FB page but also Thaxted Online which has a large following from all over. Whilst the Bulletin may longer be published our reach on social media now has combined likes and followers in excess of ten thousand. By this outreach we are able to spread the message of conservation, care, and community, far and wide.

Our own FB page is also a valuable source of district, county, and national news as it affects Thaxted and most especially planning. Despite our local Planning Department at UDC and other departments at Essex, often what may affect or change our town begins with government and such articles and news feeds are a valuable resource for all Thaxted.

Meanwhile our website at ThaxtedSociety.com is the record office online for the Society and has all our Annual Reports as well as policies and the constitution. By having this combined presence, we are truly a twenty first century Society caring for the past.

*Ben Allen*

Vice Chair

Online Coordinator



## 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. Our policy published on our website and available here today attests to this.

- Changing the designation of the town at UDC Planning. (*Ongoing.*)
- Reinvigorating our campaign to discourage pavement parking within the conservation area as per Neighbourhood Plan Policies.
- Encouraging the installation of charging points in all Thaxted's car parks.
- Seeking Ministerial clarification regarding 106 agreements enforcement.
- Commissioning research into the impact of B184 through Thaxted. Lobbying UDC for changes in their Local Plan to reflect this.
- Working with our MP to insist on adequate infrastructure with development.
- Encouraging the installation of further PC Bulletin boards across Thaxted.
- Consulting on proposals for a National Cutlery Museum at Thaxted, whilst supporting and contributing to the Thaxted Archive.
- Developing proposals for 'Thaxted traffic relief' in general. 20 IS PLENTY.
- Lobbying for the retention of the Thaxted Guildhall as a community asset and forming part of its Management Committee going forward.
- Ensuring building regs compliance in all Thaxted's new build and ensuring compliance with the Neighbourhood Plan and UDC Design Guide.

We intend to develop and maintain our productive working partnership with the Parish Council, whilst energetically holding them to account.

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



## NOTES

### ADVISORS - THANKS

*The following deserve of our thanks for their assistance throughout the year.*

- *To Pellys, who via Andrew Arnold remain legal advisors to the Society.*
- *To all the very generous "Thaxted History Project" subscribers.*
- *To Electric Footprint for their ongoing maintenance of the website.*

### THAXTED SOCIETY GOVERNANCE

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

**We currently have two vacancies on the Management Committee and would be pleased to hear from you if this interests you.**

#### Honourary (appointment)

Bruce Munro Esq. Hon. President. 2017

#### Executive Officers

Michael Culkin	Chair.	2013
Ben Allen	Vice Chair.	2018
Dame Kate Barker	Treasurer.	2015
Maggie Catterall	Secretary.	2014

#### Executive Committee Members

Philip Leeder	Life	
Brian Smith	Editor	2004
Angela Clarson	Membership Sec.	2013
Richard Till	Thaxted History.	2015
Trevor Haynes	Building Regs.	2018

#### Co Opted Member-Advisors

Andy Frater. Parish Council rep 2022-24

### REGISTER OF ATTENDEES AGM 2022

Janie Stagg	Heather Bull.	Yvonne Bachush	Kate Barker
Ann Pickhaver	Sue & Robin Faulkner	Richard & Noelle Till	Paul Meader
Vanessa Pedder	Joan Heard	Michael Culkin	Joyce Thomas
Peter Donovan	Cllr. Victoria Knight	Cllr. Terry Frostick	Sybil King.
Ben Allen	Angela Clarson	Ian Barnard	Brian Smith
Joy Green	Joe Hobbs	Mike Goacher.	Bruce Munro
Trevor Haynes	Ian Stewart	Avril & Tim Russell.	Maggie Catterall

**MINUTES OF LAST AGM 2022**  
**Held at the Pam's Place May 30<sup>th</sup> 2022**



**Minutes from Thaxted Society AGM**  
**Pam's Place Thursday May 19<sup>th</sup> 2022 at 7:30pm**

**1) Welcome**

**2) Attendees:-** as per sheet

**Apologies:-** Angela Harbottle, Mr & Mrs J Redgewell, Lyn & Chris Brown, Kemi Badenoch MP, Jackie Farrant, Peter Holt Chief Exec. UDC, Cllr. Evans Chair of Planning, Shioban Evers, Ann Pickhaver, Heather Bull, Mr & Mrs Delahooke, Martin Foley.

**3) Minutes of last AGM 2021** unavailable due to technical difficulties.

**4) Appt Hon. President** Bruce Munro accepted the role for another year. Thanked for his active committee involvement.

**5) Election of Committee** . All members remain. Michael remains pro tem while election of a new Chairman is pending

**6) Treasurer's Draft Accounts.** Kate expressed thanks to all who have donated towards our projects and to Angela for all the work she does. We raise money for purposes. Currently funds are used for Bulletin and History Project, republication of the BDG.

**7) Annual report** . We are considering the future life of the Society. Who do we act for to achieve our goals? Our central driving policy is to raise the status of Thaxted to protect it. We act for all of Thaxted not just for our members. We have the thanks of Thaxted for this. Confusion arises when dissemination of information is general eg Bulletin and Online pages and not member specific. To achieve aims we need to be exerting influence beyond our borders. We have no power regarding the growth of the town. We need to talk with the widest audience possible in language they understand – to engage as widely as possible with those who have some interest enthusiastically embracing what we can achieve. Need to be passionate about and enthusiastic for this unique place, respect for the past, care for the environment, **and shape the future**

Are new development occupants not feeling part of us? Difference between campaigns saying no, to making what *may* be built better for all of Thaxted. We are engaged in the latter. Part of our policy.

**Questions from the floor**

**YB New residents engagement?** We note what they say online. Youth Parliament – worried about the planet – where you live didn't come high on the agenda. People are not interested in meetings, discussions, planning. But without engagement in 'the process' we are not shaping the future. We work hard to reach out – 900 follow us on Facebook of which 450 are local.

**TF Hands Off Thaxted doesn't make Thaxted seem very welcome with Green Signs saying NO to New Housing remaining up once campaign is over.** Saying no does not shape the future. Raising status is a long-term strategy. Various voices and opinions express their concern for Thaxted, but without an evidence and process based holistic approach, no is simply no.

Building Design Guide has changed the way things work. Most recent levelling up – building beautiful places. There is a difference between not talking about it and doing so. Try to influence how things look and how they fit.

**BA** Raising status of town is very important.

Meeting continued with Bruce Munro inviting guests to raise a glass to toast Her Majesty. Informal discussion followed.

**SIGNED**.....

**DATED**.....

## AGM of The Thaxted Society 2023

### THE THAXTED SOCIETY ACCOUNTS

#### Closing balance 2021-2022

Community a/c	£1,507.85
Premium a/c	£565.90
<b>Total</b>	<b>£2,073.75</b>

#### Income 2022-2023

Membership	£460.00
Bulletin advertising	£0.00
History proj books	£255.00
donations	£20.00
Committee contrib	£0.00
Interest	<u>£1.23</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£736.23</u></b>

#### Expenditure 2022-2023

THP costs	£65.27
Web hosting	£148.12
Room hire	£60.00
Expenses/ print & AGM	£623.74
CPRE sub	£36.00
Fayre Jubilee	£92.99
ESAH sub	£15.00
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£1,041.12</u></b>

#### New balance 2023

Closing balances	
Community a/c	£1,201.73
Premium a/c	£567.13
<b>Total</b>	<b><u>£1,768.86</u></b>

#### CARRIED FORWARD TO 2023-2024

### NOTES TO THE ACCOUNTS.

- \*membership dues are ring fenced for the costs of running the society
- \*contributions to the History Project are ring fenced for that purpose

**APPENDIX**

**Thaxted Society Adopted Policy 2023**

- i. To: oppose all building outside the current development limits ref NP 2019. (Except: where the accepted and recognised harm is outweighed by enforceable and contractual benefit provided by the developer, builder, landowner or applicable part.)
- 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 the creeping urbanisation of Thaxted and 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, carports, and parking in any form resulting in the loss of parking.
- 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 the use of concrete kerbstones and asphalt 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, 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 details designated unique, 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 the change to cleaner power.
- xvi. To urge the removal of publicly displayed posters, and notices after advertised event.
- 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 the need of intervention by the Conservation Officer.
- xx. The Society is resolved to object to all 'split-planning' applications, where the evident purpose is to avoid Low-Cost Housing contribution or other legal requirements.
- xxi. The Thaxted Society discourages the use of non-drained land hard standing/parking at properties where adequate flood run off mitigation is not in place

*\*(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)*

*\*\*\*\* (adopted unanimously March 30<sup>th</sup> 2023)*

