



An Introduction

to

The Thaxted Society

What we do.

How we do it.

Why.



Many of Thaxted's original names remain and the Thaxted Archives contain a rents ledger which provides detailed records of names and properties dating to the 16th century. Some time, at the turn of the century, Thaxted got its first Post Office



Georgian and Victorian rural cottages and shops lean on each other for support. The streets are free of the cloned monopolies of building societies and mini-supermarkets. There is an overindulgence of pubs, and a church that is too grand for this market town, and beside it a windmill. It was paid for by the great post-feudal wool boom. This neat and congenial town, with its greens, a clock mender and merchants' houses, is surrounded by a vale of gently decrepit farmland. It is everything the vile Cotswolds aspire to plagiarise.

A. A. Gill

a little history...

Since its foundation in 1963, August 2023 sees our 60th Anniversary, The Thaxted Society's work and policy has grown and developed. But what has remained a constant is the Thaxted Society's core belief that *Thaxted is worth caring for and its uniqueness and heritage worth protecting.*

Initially concerned with Thaxted's History and its Conservation these efforts have widened to now include an overview of the work of the Parish and District Council as it affects planning and conservation, as well as liaison with both local and national government concerning both heritage and growth at Thaxted.

This little booklet sets out what The Thaxted Society does, why it does it, and how we go about it. In 2016 the Society published the Building Design Guide, due for republication in 2023 to accord with the Draft Uttlesford Local Plan to which we have contributed.

For further information and records, including all Annual Reports, go to-
thaxtedsociety.com

Thaxted details...

Thaxted was an important commercial and agricultural centre in the later Middle Ages. The legacy of this time survives in the historic core, its rural setting and its distinctive traditions - these include a strong sense of local community and mutual support. Also, a wish to retain rural character and tradition in a modern context – with public religion, rural pastimes (such as the Morris), and a sense of Thaxted's social and architectural continuity.

what we are about...

- ⊗ **Conserving Thaxted's Heritage.**
- ⊗ **Improving the Environment.**
- ⊗ **Planning for the Future.**



what we are about...

⊗ **Conserving Thaxted's Heritage:**

Seeking to protect resolutely Thaxted's significant legacy from its time as an important centre in the later Middle Ages.

- **By stimulating** public interest in, and care for the beauty, history and character of the town and its surroundings.
- **By opposing** all outline planning applications which impinge, abut or in any way affect, the historic core, the conservation area and the town's rural context.
- **By encouraging** the preservation, development, and improvement of features of public amenity and historic importance.
- **By resisting** creeping urbanisation, affecting the historic core and rural setting.
- **By holding meetings**, exhibitions and lectures.
- **By publication** of a series of authoritative books on Thaxted.

Policies

- We seek the conservation of our original gas light lamp stands and strongly discourage the installation of unsympathetic public lighting.
- We expect and support the proper care and maintenance of all listed buildings in Thaxted before any intervention is required from the Conservation Officer.
- We urge the prompt removal of any posters after the event has taken place.
- We would like to see appropriate use, style and form of hanging signs within the conservation area.
- We consider the provision of green amenity space throughout the district, material in all local plan considerations and would want to see green space provision to match if not exceed the national average.



what we are about...

Improving the Environment

Working to strengthen environmental improvement, most importantly decarbonisation but also biodiversity.

Thaxted needs to play its part in tackling the existential threats which challenge the entire world. While decarbonisation is the most pressing, concerns about biodiversity are not far behind. Interpreted more narrowly for our community, a visually appealing environment and good public amenities will benefit mental and physical health.

- **By encouraging** the preservation, development and improvement of public amenities; in particular Thaxted's public green and open spaces.
- **By working with others** who share our environmental aspirations.

Policies

- We wish to discourage parking on pavements, historic pathways, and cobbles.
- We support the development and use of solar panels and allied climate change mitigation, including their appropriate use within the conservation area.
- We encourage public bodies to install electric charging points at Thaxted to meet growing demand for electric cars and enable the change to cleaner power.
- We discourage the use of plastic: plants, trees, flowers, shrubs, and grass outside, thereby reducing the polluting effects of plastic particles upon the soil and in the groundwater.



what we are about...

Planning for the Future

Thaxted has changed over the past decades and will continue to change. It is important that the town continues to thrive, while protecting its heritage, supporting sustainable expansion and promoting community.

Influencing planning policy and decisions affecting Thaxted to preserve the heritage, ensure sympathetic development, support sustainable expansion and promote community all in line with the Thaxted Neighbourhood Plan.

- **By encouraging** high standards of architecture and town planning in Thaxted.
- **By supporting** the preservation, development and improvement of features of general public amenity or historic interest.
- **By robustly scrutinising** planning applications and other long-term developments concerning Thaxted and its environs.

Polices

- We oppose all building outside the current development limits- except where the accepted and recognised harm is outweighed by enforceable and contractual substantive benefit provided by the developer, builder, landowner or other party.
- We resist change of use from commercial / business to residential.
- We discourage the use of concrete kerbstones and asphalt public pavements and pathways – positively we would like the east side of Town Street paved to match.
- We oppose planning applications for the conversion of garages, car ports and car parking that results in the loss of parking within the curtilage of dwellings.
- We expect housing development to meet the district standards for the provision of affordable housing.
- We expect reserved matters and their conditions to respond adequately to both Thaxted's distinctive character and its local vernacular, whilst complying with the views of the public as expressed in the Design Guide and the historical judgments included in English Heritage's Historic Towns of Essex (1998-99).
- We wish to support and assist with an update of the Neighbourhood Plan, considering possible changes to its detail, conditions, and intent.
- We oppose any further development in the Chelmer valley – the town's rural hinterland – to build here is to lose the town's context. The Valley includes fields enclosed in the 15th century whose boundaries remain to this day.



dotting the I's and crossing the t's...

The Thaxted Society is a charity constituted under guidance from the Charity Commissioners. Our constitution is published here: www.thaxtedsociety.com
We are governed by a committee with four officers who are responsible for the day to day running of the society. In order to be effective on behalf of all Thaxted we read and consult on both local and national regulation and legislation.


The Thaxted Society has a long history of publication, for over forty years we published the Thaxted Bulletin. We are now engaged in development of the Thaxted History Project and have now published two volumes in this series, these are available in the Thaxted Library and from Gifted. www.gifted-thaxted@myshopify.com

Our Annual General Meeting takes place in May or June and is open to everyone. New Policy adopted by the Committee is put to the AGM every year and then forms part of our established Policy going forward. Our Policy is reviewed every year to ensure it reflects changes in legislation and guidance, also local, national, and global circumstances.

We work closely with the Parish Council and our representatives at both district and county Councils, as well as our Parliamentary representative, and with Council officers and advisors.

The Membership Secretary will be pleased to assist with all membership enquiries and is always pleased to welcome new members. Angela Clarson 01371 830242 or thethaxtedsociety@gmail.com





Watling Street, Thaxted

**THE THAXTED HISTORY PROJECT
THP**

Current Volumes

***Power Charity & Brotherly Love*
by Lucy Smith
The Cutlers. Thaxted's Golden Age
by Richard Till**

*all available at
The Thaxted Library & Gifted on Town Street*

Watling Street, Thaxted

we have Thaxted at heart and are always happy to hear from you...

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