

Theydon Bois



Village Design Statement



Theydon Bois Village Design Statement

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Introduction

Epping Forest District Council (EFDC) encourages communities to produce their individual Village Design Statements, the key aspect being wide community involvement and consensus. The Theydon Bois Village Design Statement Association (VDSA) is a voluntary organisation constituted in May 2007 to produce this statement. All residents of Theydon Bois are deemed to be members of the Association.

The VDSA continually sought the views and input of the community to identify the character and special features of the parish and record them over the consultation period May 2007 – November 2008. Epping Forest District Council has been consulted and has participated in the production of this publication with a District Councillor and Parish Councillors actively serving on the committee.

All applications for new development and alterations in Theydon Bois are reviewed by the Parish Council's Planning Committee, which has the legal right to register objections with EFDC, the Local Planning Authority (LPA) and this must be taken into consideration when they determine relevant applications.

Members of the public also have the legal right to comment on planning applications and are encouraged to make use of the Theydon Bois Village Design Statement (VDS) in doing so.

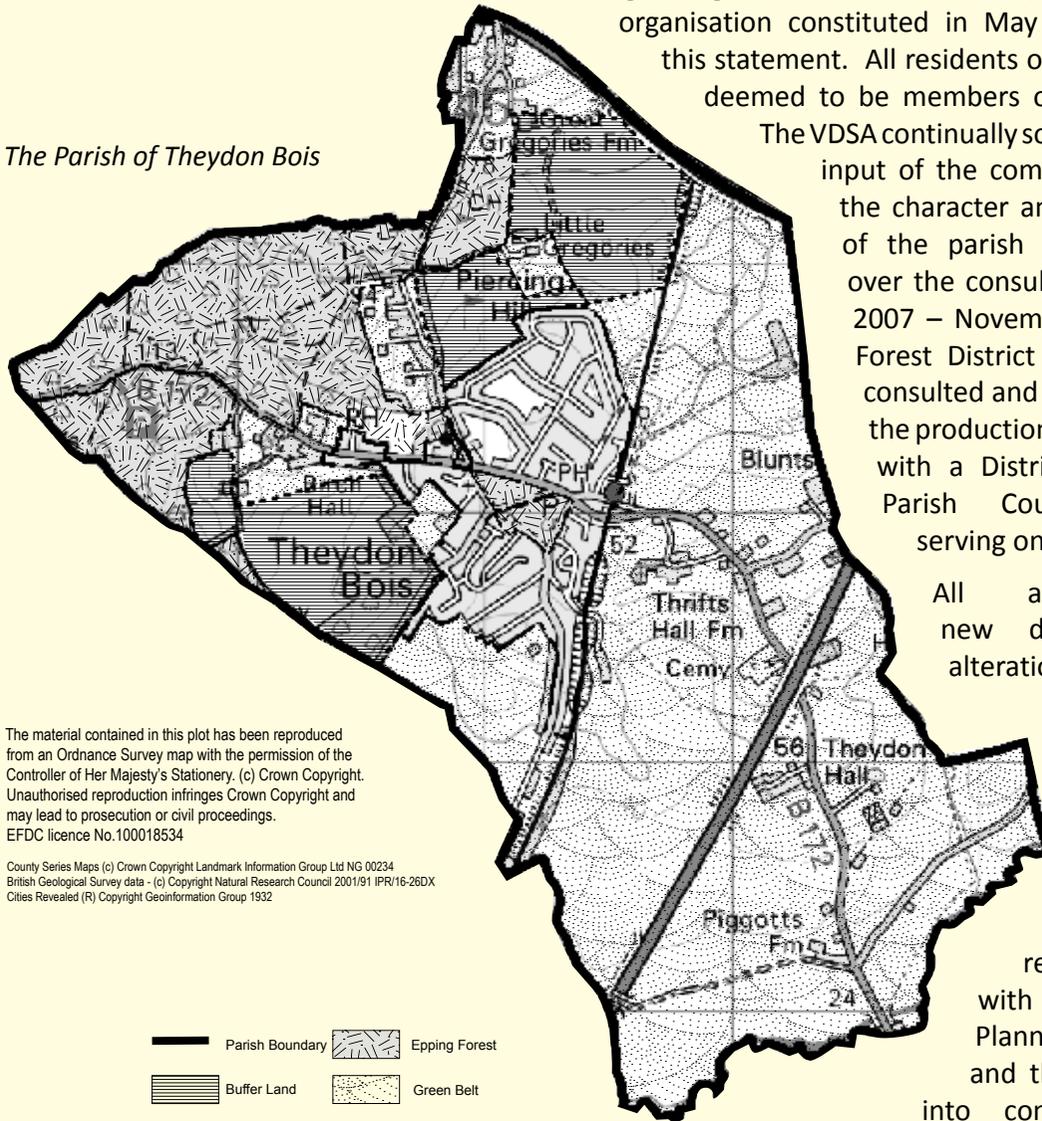
The VDSA is seeking endorsement of the VDS by the LPA, whereafter the Statement would become a Material Consideration when relevant proposals are being examined.

However, as the drafting of this document drew to a close in 2010, there was a change in national government. The new government is proposing a Localism Bill which is likely to alter the procedures pertaining to, amongst other things, planning and this bill may seek to bring planning decisions down to an entirely local level. Should this happen, it will have the effect of giving the Village Design Statement more weight in consideration of planning decisions and we are hopeful that this Village Design Statement will be included in any new Neighbourhood Development Plan.

The scope of the VDS covers the parish of Theydon Bois in the district of Epping Forest, Essex. The purpose of the VDS is to:

- Influence development, but not prevent it.
- Provide guidance for property owners and developers.
- Assist in protecting local heritage buildings and settings.
- Protect and visually improve open spaces and street scenes.
- Promote sympathetic design and use of appropriate materials.
- Ensure conservation and protection of the visible characteristics of the village and its environs.
- Give additional Material Guidance to EFDC in the determination of planning applications and associated environmental issues concerning Theydon Bois.
- Reflect the community of Theydon Bois, giving that community the opportunity to influence future development in the parish thereby supporting the continuance of the unique and highly valued community spirit which exists here.

The Parish of Theydon Bois



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Consultation

Community consultation was a key feature throughout the project. Villagers were invited and encouraged to participate and provide their input. During the summer of 2007 displays explaining the Design Statement and seeking residents' initial observations were held at public events such as the Donkey Derby and Horticultural Society Show. In the autumn of 2007 a questionnaire was distributed to all households in the village and over 400 were completed and returned for analysis in December. In May 2008 many villagers participated in a photographic survey and in July of that year were updated with a display of the first draft Statement. In October 2008 proofs of this booklet were displayed in the Theydon Bois village hall for further comment. The first draft was made available on the village web site for comment by residents.

In the Summer of 2009 the draft Statement was submitted to Epping Forest District Council for any initial comments they may have. The draft was reviewed by a Senior Planning Officer and comments were fed back to the Committee for consideration. Further work was then undertaken on the draft and the final draft Statement was completed in February 2011. In the Spring of 2011 the draft Statement was made available to residents on the Village Website (www.Theydon.org.uk) and in paper form from the Parish Office for any final comments and contributions from residents.

Planning Policy Status

Planning policy affecting Theydon Bois is contained in the Epping Forest District Council Combined Local Plan 2008.

Theydon Bois is a Defined Settlement in the Local Plan. The Local Plan sets out general policies for development and change across the district as well as specific policies for the Defined Settlements and development in the countryside. Theydon Bois is surrounded by Epping Forest and by the Metropolitan Green Belt. Epping Forest is protected by two Acts of Parliament passed in 1878; The Epping Forest Act which made the Corporation of London (now known as City of London) the Conservators of the Forest, and the Open Spaces Act, which enabled the Corporation to acquire and safeguard land within 25 miles of the City for the "recreation and enjoyment" of the public. The Local Plan seeks to protect the Green Belt from inappropriate development. In addition Theydon Bois has 16 Statutorily Listed buildings and 23 Locally Listed Buildings also protected by the Local Plan.

The Government has revised the planning system by means of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004. This Act of Parliament sets out the specific local Development Plan Documents (DPDs) which Local Planning Authorities are required to prepare and how that should be done. DPDs set out the Local Authority's policies and proposals and outline key development goals and use of land in their area. At the time of going to press, EFDC were in the process of preparing their DPDs. Together, these DPDs will form the Local Development Framework (LDF). The act came into force on the 28th September 2004.

The LDF guides and informs day to day decisions as to whether or not planning permission should be granted. In order to ensure that these decisions are

rational and consistent, they must be considered against the LDF once adopted by the authority, after public consultation and having proper regard to other material factors.

Legislation requires that decisions made should be in accordance with the LDF unless material considerations indicate otherwise. Although DPDs do not have to be rigidly adhered to, they provide a firm basis for rational and consistent planning decisions.

The Village Design Statement Association acknowledges that over time change in and around the village of Theydon Bois, whether considered to be preferable, unavoidable or unwelcome, is inevitable. Indeed in the course of producing this booklet many changes did occur and the Association have tried to keep the document up to date and will continue to do so. It is not practicable for economic reasons to produce a new edition of the booklet in hard copy more than once every several years at best and the Association proposes to update this first volume annually or when significant events should require it and to make the latest version permanently available to the public on the village website at www.theydon.org.uk. The Village Design Statement Association welcomes any comments on its work, care of the Parish Office, and hopes that the reader finds this document interesting and useful.

History

Theydon Bois is mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086, at which time there was a population of only ten. The name Theydon is thought to derive from the Anglo Saxon for 'valley where the thatch grows' with Bois coming from the family name of the first Norman lords of the manor, de Bosco.

Despite its antiquity there are few buildings in the

parish that are earlier than the 19th century. The Chapman and André map of 1777 shows about a dozen houses around Theydon Green, and dwellings at Theydon Hall, Burch Hall (*sic*), Blunts, Black-acre, Piggots and Parsonage, but few others in the parish. Theydon Hall stands on the site of an ancient manor house dating back to the 13th century, but Birch Hall became the Manor House in the 17th century. The current Birch Hall was built in 1989.

In 1849 it was estimated that there were 1,750 acres of farmland and 345 acres of forest in Theydon Bois. There were some 15 farms in the parish of over 20 acres, the largest of which was Theydon Hall Farm.

Manor Villas were built in 1870-72 on land on Piercing Hill. There are also houses of similar character dating from about 1880 in Theydon Road. Terraced houses were built in Woburn Avenue in 1885. The terraced houses on The Green date back to 1890 as do some properties in Theydon Park Road. Development began apace in the 1930s when Horace Morgan who owned Baldocks Farm went into partnership with William Soper to develop the Soper Homes, for sale freehold from £695.

In 1972 the fight to preserve three Essex weatherboard cottages on Coppice Row was lost. Despite being listed as Grade II in 1969, and pleas from residents for their preservation, Essex County Council declared them “not worth preserving” which made way for their demolition and the development of what is now a convenience store. In the same year permission was, however, refused to demolish the Grade II listed Pakes Farm house and the nearby late 16th century cottage. The farm had been sold to a developer for £46,000 but housing was restricted to what is now Thrifts Mead.

The Great Eastern Railway came to Theydon Bois in

1865 when the branch line from Fenchurch Street to Loughton was extended to Chipping Ongar. The level crossing, which ran from Station Approach to Station Hill, was closed in 1949 when the line was electrified as part of the Central Line.

Topography and Geology

The village of Theydon Bois is located in a hollow at about 50m above sea level, surrounded by low hills covered with forest or farmland with hedges and isolated trees. To the north-west lies the Epping Forest Ridge which rises to 115m and forms a boundary of the parish. To the south-east there is the Thrifts Hall Ridge at about 70m. Further to the south-east the land falls gently away to the River Roding and its floodplain which at 25m is the lowest point in the parish and forms its south-east boundary. Of the four main roads out of the village only Loughton Lane to the south-west avoids the hills although a footpath travelling east towards Theydon Garnon also provides a low level exit from the village. The latter follows the line of a small stream which rises within the forest, where it is known as Genesis Slade, then passes as a culvert through the village and eventually joins the River Roding.

In terms of landscape the parish lies in the character zone of the North Thames Basin, as defined by the Countryside Agency in their Countryside Character Assessment for England. Essex County Council in their Landscape Character Assessment describe the parish as mainly falling within the Roding Valley landscape character area with the higher ground to the north-west being within the Epping Forest and Ridges area. The gently undulating landform is mainly determined by the underlying clay although sand and gravel form the ridge areas of Epping Forest. Local gardeners are well aware of the effects of London Clay, soils being

wet and sticky in winter but dry and hard in summer. For further details see *The Community Tree Strategy for Theydon Bois* published by EFDC in 2003.

Apart from the natural topography the landscape is inevitably affected by the built-up areas of the village as well as by the Central Line rail track and the M11 motorway which carve their way across the parish from north-east to south-west. The M25 motorway forms the north-eastern boundary of the parish, the M25/M11 interchange being just outside the parish.

Guidance Notes:

- *Oppose any development that has adverse effects on the landscape, obscures views and has any detrimental effect on the openness of the Metropolitan Green Belt.*
- *Although mineral extraction for construction is a permitted development in green belt any such development would be resisted and/or a full geological survey would be requested to justify such an application.*

View towards the south west





View north west to the village from the Abridge Road

Rural Theydon Bois

Historically the primary use of the countryside was for food production with a secondary use for leisure activities by a small elite. In modern times leisure activities have become affordable to the general public and the scenic value of the countryside has become important to many of the urban dwelling majority. The cultural and psychological importance of landscape is now recognised from national government downwards. Since 1943 the Theydon Bois & District Rural Preservation Society has been working with the Parish and District Councils to preserve the rural character of the village and its surroundings.

Theydon Bois residents are fortunate to live within a few minutes walk of some very pleasant countryside although it is a long time since the community was a small rural village with close ties to farming. Very few villagers are employed in agricultural work or in other trades related to rural activities. Since the 18th century people have been moving from

the countryside into towns and cities to find more profitable employment. Improved transport and income has allowed some people from urban areas to move in the opposite direction attracted by the idea of living in rural surroundings. As a consequence Theydon Bois has grown into a large residential area with the character of a 'leafy suburb'.

Most of the landscape is man-made, being determined by the management of Epping Forest and past agricultural practices which gave rise to the pattern of fields with their hedges and standard trees. Traditionally the local countryside has seen a mixture of farming, land being used for pasture for dairy cattle and sheep, hay meadows and some arable land: barley, wheat, root crops and relatively recently oilseed rape. But the last few decades have seen a progressive change in land use. More and more of the countryside is being used not for farming but for leisure activities such as golf, fishing and horse-riding. Under the EU 'set-aside' scheme some fields were planted with trees and others left to become rough grassland and scrub. Golf has the greatest impact on

Theydon Bois Golf Club



Guidance Notes:

- *The field patterns with hedges and standard trees should be preserved.*
- *Footpaths, stiles and bridges should be preserved and kept in good condition.*
- *Strongly oppose the methodology of importation of waste material 'landfill' for the construction of leisure facilities.*

the scenery; a large area of farmland to the east of the village has been devastated by landfill activities, ostensibly for golf course development but remains an essential part of the Green Belt. Fortunately most leisure activities such as dog-walking, rambling and horse riding do little harm to the countryside and it is in the interest of the participants to preserve the character of what was once farmland.

Landscape and the Environment

In every direction the village of Theydon Bois is bordered by scenic countryside. The best views of the surrounding landscape are from the roads and footpaths which cross the high ground around the village: Piercing Hill and Harewood Hill to the north, Abridge Road to the south-east, Blackacre and Hill Roads to the south-west. Views from Jacks Hill to the west are partly obscured by the forest itself. The approaches from Epping and Abridge offer particularly fine views of the village nestling in a hollow with the wooded hills beyond. Those living on the periphery of the village are favoured with views of Epping Forest or wooded farmland; houses close to Theydon Green have a particularly attractive outlook.

For many in the village their immediate environment is more suburban with houses, gardens and tree-lined streets. Village tree wardens look after the street



Sheep and goat farm

trees and the District Council, Parish Council and Rural Preservation Society have worked together on a planting programme which has seen the number of street trees rise from 309 in 2003 to 379 in 2008. A particular threat to street trees comes from vehicle cross-over/dropped kerb applications. The street scene can be further impaired by excessive house extensions, on-street and verge parking of cars, and



The Plain

recycling and refuse bins not stored out of sight. Tranquillity is regarded as an important feature of the rural environment but this has been progressively lost with the inevitable increase in car ownership and the intrusive noise and light pollution from motorway traffic and aircraft.

Biodiversity

Maintaining a wide range of wildlife and plant life depends on maintaining a suitable range of habitats.



Example of an excessively paved front garden



Tree Lined Street - Forest Drive

An important contribution to this is the patchwork of fields, hedges and woods found in the surrounding countryside. Much of the nearby forest has a dense canopy and so is not especially species rich although some of the open spaces are of ecological interest. For instance, Theydon Plain shows an interesting

Guidance Notes:

- *Discourage any developments which impede views from the surrounding high ground or impede views from the village of the surrounding landscape.*
- *In the more rural areas of the parish, e.g. adjacent to the forest, encourage the use of native species of hedging and discourage boundary treatments such as fencing or brick built walls.*
- *The retention and protection of street trees is encouraged and their loss discouraged. Where it is necessary to remove a street tree for a cross-over for example, where possible and appropriate a replacement should always be planted. Where possible the planting of trees of the same species is encouraged creating a more cohesive street scene.*
- *Parking on grass verges and green swards should be discouraged as it causes unsightly damage and affects the street scene.*
- *Protect the rural street scene by discouraging excessive and unsympathetic house extensions and the paving over of front gardens.*
- *Encourage residents to improve the street scene by, for instance, parking cars in garages, storing wheeled bins out of sight and keeping front gardens tidy.*
- *Strongly oppose the importation of waste material for the construction of leisure facilities.*



Veteran pollarded tree

transition from damp clayey grassland to the more acidic grassland on the higher sandy slopes. Roadside verges can be important refuges for wild plants and insects provided they are not cut too often and act as corridors linking together larger habitats.

Within the churchyard there is a valuable wild flower meadow. As a conservation measure areas of grass on Theydon Green are annually left uncut but the effect on floral diversity may not necessarily be a positive one. Epping Forest District Council Countrycare has compiled a list of Local Wildlife Sites (LoWS) which,



Local Wildlife Site; St Marys churchyard

although having no legal standing, do indicate habitats in particular need of protection. The seven LoWSs currently listed for Theydon Bois parish are Birch Hall Pastures (6.2 ha), Theydon Bois Deer Park West (9.5 ha), Theydon Bois deer Park East including Redoak & Gaunt's Woods (14.5 ha), St Mary's Churchyard (1.0 ha), Piercing Hill Wood (5.0 ha), Blunts Farm Wood (0.9 ha), Blunts Farm Field (17.2 ha, north of Garnish Hall Brook). With regard to local wildlife the most familiar of the larger mammals are the fallow deer (an unusual dark or 'black-backed' variant) which roam the nearby sanctuary and, of course, the ubiquitous grey squirrels and foxes which are frequent but not always welcome visitors to back gardens. Although there are no Local Nature Reserves (which do have statutory protection) within the parish it should be noted that Epping Forest is designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI).

Gardens are one of the most valuable habitats where more birds can be seen than on a walk in the forest or fields. The last forty years or so have seen changes in the garden bird population with some species, such as song thrush, declining and others, such as collared dove, increasing. Apart from ponds such as that on



Local Wildlife Site; Theydon Bois Deer Park East

Guidance Notes:

- *Important to maintain a patchwork of fields (with pasture, meadow, arable land, hedges and woods).*
- *Landowners and local farmers should be encouraged to maintain meadows and pastures, and wherever possible, extend the network of field boundaries with hedgerow trees, particularly replacing hedgerows that have been removed.*
- *Care should be taken in converting grassland to arable land or woodland as even rough grassland can be a valuable habitat.*
- *New hedges, or infilling of old hedges, should use native species, preferably genetic material sourced locally; the same applies to any planting of new woodland.*
- *Residents should be discouraged from building in or paving over gardens and encouraged to plant a good mix of shrubs and herbaceous perennials to improve biodiversity.*
- *An ecological survey could be carried out to identify the variety of habitats within the parish.*
- *A species list could be prepared for the parish to identify which of the flora and fauna are most under threat.*



Wild flower - cuckoo flower

Theydon Green and those at Thrifts Hall Farm, the parish is not especially well endowed with aquatic habitats although ponds in gardens and elsewhere are an important refuge for frogs and newts.

Dark Skies Policy

Theydon Bois is an intrinsically dark landscape. Although gas reached the village in 1872 and electricity in 1928 the streets of Theydon Bois have never been lit. In 1963 the BBC sent a camera crew to Forest Drive to interview shoppers about the Great Street-Lighting Debate. This was not the first time that this issue had been raised; a similar attempt had been made before the war. Villagers voted in a referendum by a large majority for 'starlight and torches' in 1963 and again in 1976 and calls for another referendum in 1984 were dismissed when Essex County Council confirmed that it was not prepared to contribute to the costs.

The Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act 2005 makes light nuisance subject to the same criminal law as noise and smells. It applies to "*artificial light emitted from premises so as to be prejudicial to health or a nuisance*". (Section 102, Clean Neighbourhoods and Environment Act, which amends section 79 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990).

All forms of exterior lighting can, if badly angled, cause two broad types of problem, namely light pollution and light nuisance. Light pollution can be defined as every form of artificial light which shines outside the areas it is intended to illuminate, including light which is directed above the horizontal into the night sky, creating the skyglow which has erased the view of the stars over both urban and rural areas during the last half-century.

It has been recommended that Local Planning Authorities specify environmental zones for exterior

lighting control within their Development Plans. The light levels in Theydon Bois would suggest classification not less than zone E2, low district brightness area, i.e. rural, small villages or relatively dark urban locations and possibly zone E1, intrinsically dark landscape.

In our survey 70.5% strongly agree/agree that the village should not have street lighting and 78.5% strongly agree/agree that the 'Dark sky policy' contributed to the tranquillity of the village. 18% disagree/strongly disagree that the village should not have street lighting and 11% disagree/strongly disagree that our dark skies contribute to the tranquillity of the village. The suggestion that those parts of the village that do not benefit from domestic lighting should have some street lighting was mixed with 26% strongly agreeing and 21% strongly disagreeing.

Guidance Notes:

- *The policy is to resist external bright lights/high level lighting including their use in commercial establishments and car parks.*
- *Encourage use of low level external lighting for areas where lighting is considered essential.*
- *Encourage lighting that helps the environment by not wasting energy and consider reducing the length of time lights are left on overnight for example the installation of timers to switch lights off at midnight.*
- *Encourage lighting that is correctly adjusted so that they only illuminate the surface intended and do not throw light onto neighbouring property.*
- *For domestic security lights a 150W lamp is adequate. High power (300/500W) lamps create too much glare. For a porch light a 9W lamp is more than adequate in most situations.*
- *Security lights should be correctly adjusted so that they only illuminate the movement of persons in the area intended and not beyond. To reduce the effects of glare main beam angles of all lights should be below 70 degrees.*
- *If up-lighting has to be used then install shields or baffles above the lamp to reduce the amount of wasted upward light.*
- *Discourage equipment which spreads light above the horizontal.*



The 'Green Areas' of Theydon Bois

Great Gregories Hill

The boundary of the built-up area of Theydon Bois although irregular is well defined with all the land outside being Metropolitan Green Belt. Of the 8 or so square kilometres of the parish only about 15% is built-up; 85% is Green Belt, of which 15% is actual forest and 12% forest buffer land. Without the codification of Green Belt policy and its extension to areas other than London with the historic 'Circular 42/55' inviting local planning authorities to consider the establishment of Green Belts, Theydon Bois could have easily seen 'ribbon development' joining the village to London via Theydon Park Road, Loughton Lane, and Abridge Road.

Theydon Bois can rightly be called a 'Forest Village' because the 6.31 hectare Green at its heart is actually part of Epping Forest, the responsibility of the City of London, as are the verges of some of the roads leading from it. Theydon Green was clearly defined on the Chapman and André map of 1777 and its 'avenue' of 52 oak trees and pond are iconic features of the village. The original avenue of 62 oaks was planted in 1832 by Robert Wesley Hall-Dare. A second avenue of oaks was then planted in 1935 to mark the Silver Jubilee of King George V but only three survive. The original double row of mature oaks is probably the feature of Theydon Green that is most distinctive

and memorable to residents and visitors alike. So much so that The City of London, who manage Epping Forest, have planted two parallel lines of oaks to take the place of the present ones when in the course of time they die of old age or disease.

Theydon Green has other scattered clumps of trees and a line of large poplars along its eastern edge. In one corner the pond, fed by a stream, has two islands and was used in times past by the cattle from the several dairy farms that surrounded Theydon Green. For many years the Coppice Row boundary was lined by tall elm trees, which were casualties of Dutch Elm Disease. The last remnant of these, an untidy thicket of unhealthy saplings, persisted until the 1990s when the Parish Council, Rural Preservation Society and Epping Forest Countrycare, prevailed upon the City of London to remove them. They were then replaced with a roundel of groups of native trees around a central oak sapling during National Tree Week 1996.

The Plain, once the site of the famous Retreats, has been used in the recent past for various sporting and social events. Other open spaces in the forest include that used by the local Golf Club.

During the development of the village a number of green spaces have occurred incidentally among the houses but in the estates built between the 1950s and 1970s there are five that were designed as recreation areas for the residents and their children. These are located in Avenue Road, Graylands, and three in Green Glade. A substantial green space also exists behind a row of bungalows which were designed for the elderly in Thrifts Mead.

In the 1950s a new, straight road was built to bypass the original, winding Piercing Hill road and this has left a considerable arc of grass and shrubs between the two that is bounded on the old road side by the

Purlieu Hedge, the ancient eastern boundary of the Forest of Waltham.

An area of grassland surrounding the 1980s built Community Centre, formerly known as the Youth Club building, was part of the original Buxton Trust land and is continually used for community purposes.

Epping Forest is semi-natural woodland, never completely cleared but much influenced by human activity. Beech is the dominant tree of higher ground with oak and hornbeam in the lower parts; birch and holly occur where the tree canopy is more open. However, the most characteristic trees of the nearby forest are the veteran pollarded beeches; these have developed from trees that were cut at head height in the past for fuel and animal fodder and to open up the forest floor as pasture. Currently, grazing by long-horned cattle helps to reduce undergrowth in glades and the City of London conservators plan to extend this practice.

Outside the forest most of the countryside is agricultural. Some of this has been purchased by the City of London and is regarded as Epping Forest 'Buffer Land', for example, Great Gregories and the area south of Birch Hall. Grass in these areas is controlled by cattle grazing or sometimes by cutting for hay.

Apart from the fields and hedges there are clumps of woodland and recent years have seen some re-planting such as Thrifts Wood and at Great Gregories near the M25. There are some old examples of formal planting such as the avenue of limes at Thrifts Hall. Other distinctive trees include the hybrid poplars planted on the south edge of Theydon Green. Epping Forest District Council and Countrycare maintain lists of Landmark Trees and Veteran Trees. There is also a list of trees subject to Tree Preservation Orders; TPOs have the effect of prohibiting the cutting down, uprooting,

topping, lopping, wilful damage and destruction of trees without the consent of the local planning authority; cutting of roots, although not expressly covered, also requires consent.

The favourite tree of Theydon Bois, as compiled in *50 Favourite Trees of Epping Forest District*, appears to be the oak and of the five favourite trees in Theydon Bois four

are pedunculate oaks (of the two species of native oak this is the one found in southern England). The many veteran trees in hedgerows were first surveyed by parish Tree Wardens in the 1990s, the work of recording special trees on a pictorial database which forms Epping Forest and Harlow Veteran Tree Hunt can be found at www.favouritetrees.com. For further details of the trees of the parish see *The Community Tree Strategy for Theydon Bois*.

In 2006 the Woodland Trust purchased 37.62 hectares of land accessed via Abridge Road. The land is gently sloping grade III agricultural land immediately west of the M11 and may once have formed part of Epping Forest. The initial phase, the planting of 4,500 saplings, has been completed. The project was funded as part



Oak on the Green

of the Green Arc initiative which aims to improve the quality of the countryside around London and to increase its accessibility, for more information visit www.woodlandtrust.org.uk.

Guidance Notes:

- Support any protection of land that may be at risk of inappropriate development through the designation, for example, of City of London buffer land or Woodland Trust woodland.
- Support the stringent control of Green Belt Planning Policy.



CHARACTER AREAS

Listed Buildings

Listed Buildings are buildings of special architectural and historic interest which are recorded on statutory lists compiled by the Secretary of State for Culture, Media and Sport, and enjoy special protected status under planning law. The purpose of the listing is to ensure that the character and special interest of the building is preserved. To protect this country's heritage of buildings, demolition is rarely allowed and only then after the most careful and detailed consideration. Further detail can be found at www.lbonline.english-heritage.org.uk.

At the time of going to print, Grade II listed buildings in the parish of Theydon Bois are:



Parsonage Farmhouse

Late 15th/early 16th century, it is thought to be the oldest building in the village. Timber framed and plastered with part of frame exposed on north front elevation.

Queen Victoria Public House
16th century or earlier, timber framed and plastered with gabled peg tile roofs.



The Bull
Public House. 17th and 18th century, timber framed and render and part painted brick.



Barn, 40m North of Piggotts Farmhouse
Late 17th century. Timber framed and black weather boarded with gabled peg tile roof.



The Cottage

Poplar Row. Late 16th/early 17th century. Timber framed and black weather boarded and of two storeys.



Baldocks

Orchard Drive. Early 17th century, timber framed and plastered with 19th century red brick front on south elevation.



**Barn, North East side
10m North of Parsonage Farmhouse**

Late 17th century, timber framed and black weather boarded with gabled peg tile roof.



Trail, (formerly Heathfield Cottage)

Poplar Row. 17th/18th century, timber framed and plastered with 21st century extension.



Theydon Hall, Abridge Road

Late 18th century small mansion of creamy gault bricks with a hipped slate roof behind a parapet.



4 and 6 Theydon Park Road

Number 6 circa 1800 of red brick with random grey headers on sides and front and rendered timber frame on rear. Number 4 circa 1840, of red brick with pantile roof



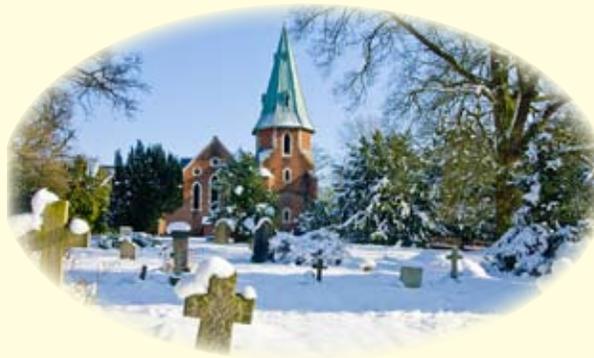
Railings, curving around East and South sides of Piggotts Farmhouse

Early 19th century in cast and wrought iron.



Piggotts Farmhouse

Late 17th/mid 18th century and early 19th century. Timber framed and plastered with pyramid slate roof.



Parish Church of St. Mary the Virgin

1850 by Sydney Smirke, of red bricks with stone dressings and gabled slate roof.



Pakes Farm

Poplar Row. Late 18th century front with timber framed earlier structure behind, clay peg tile hipped roof.

Map of Grade II listed buildings and Character areas within the main village envelope



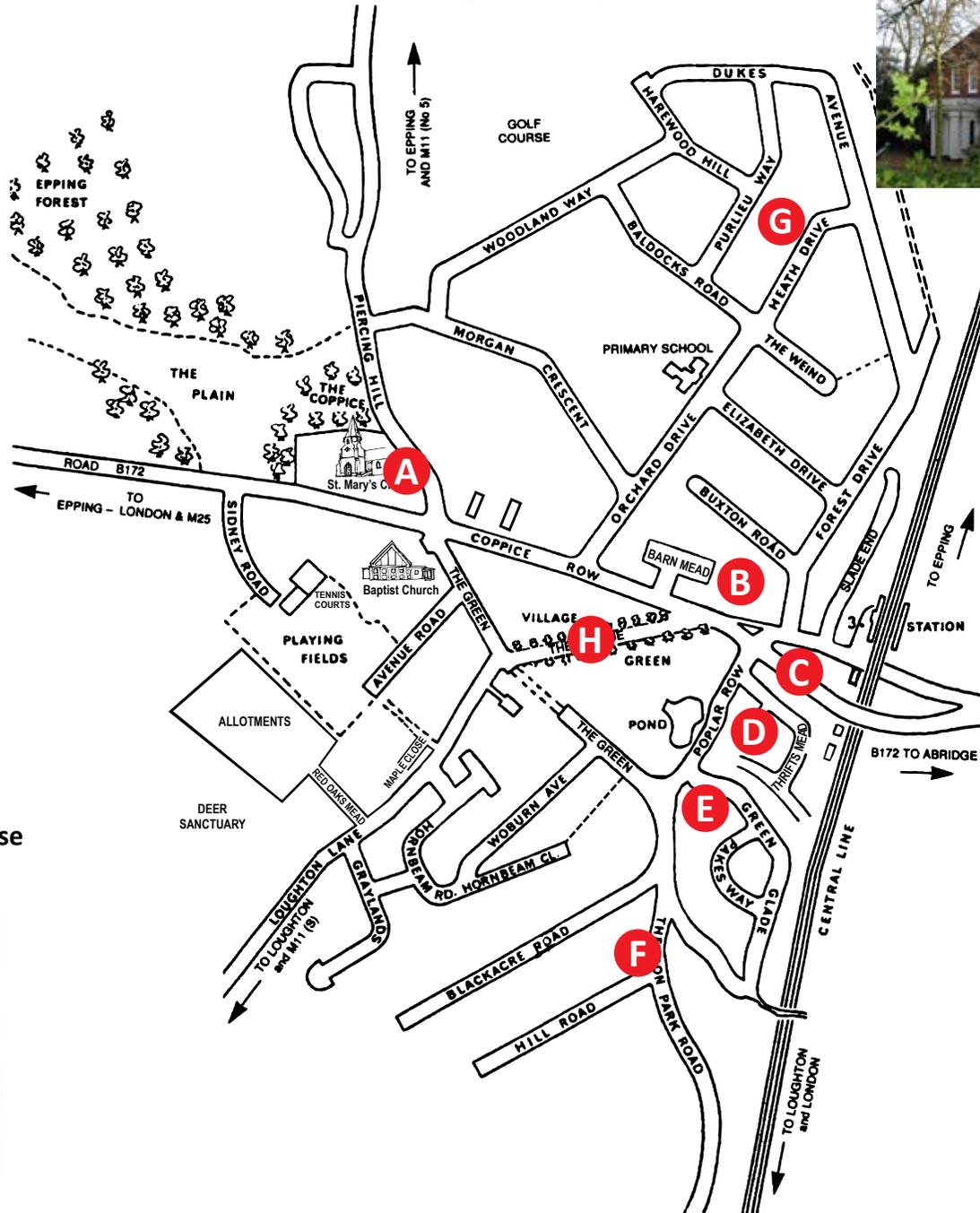
A St Mary's Church



B Queen Victoria Public House



C The Bull Public House



D Pakes Farm and The Cottage



E Trail



F 4 and 6 Theydon Park Road



G Baldocks Farm Estate



H Theydon Green

Buildings of Local Architectural or Historic Interest .

The Local List, which is maintained by the District Council, is a list of buildings and other structures which are considered to be of local architectural or historic importance. Locally listed buildings receive special consideration within the normal planning process and their inclusion on the Local List is generally a presumption against the redevelopment of the site. The Local List for Theydon Bois can be viewed at www.eppingforestdc.gov.uk.

Locally listed buildings in Theydon Bois parish are:

Milestone: Epping Lane, 120m southwest of Hill Farm near Abridge 18th century.

The Old Schoolhouse: Coppice Row. Yellow brick school building, 1840 date stone.

Boundary Stone: 1500m south Theydon Bois station, adjacent to the railway line. 4 metre tall stone obelisk, City of London Coal Duty stone dated 1850.

1 & 2 Chestnut Cottages: The Green. Yellow brick cottages with red brick banding, mid-19th century.

Woodside: 40 Blackacre Road. Detached red brick dwelling, c1860.

Brackley: Forest Side. Detached Victorian dwelling with smooth render & decorative quoins, c1860.

Ridge House: Forest Side. Detached Victorian dwelling with smooth render and decorative quoins, c1860 with late 19th century extension.

Mulberry Cottage: Forest Side. Detached Victorian dwelling with smooth render & decorative quoins, c1860.

Boundary Post: B172. City of London cast iron Coal Duty Post, dated 1861.

Wansfell and pagoda theatre: Piercing Hill. Large yellow brick building, built 1871, "Wansfell" engraved over the door; outdoor pagoda theatre in rear garden

likely to be a late Victorian garden feature.

21 Piercing Hill: Large 19th century yellow brick dwelling with decorative quoins.

23 Piercing Hill: Large 19th century dwelling with smooth render and decorative quoins.

29 Piercing Hill: Large 19th century dwelling with smooth render and decorative quoins.

Beulah House: Coppice Row. Detached yellow brick dwelling with red brick banding, c1880.

Ivy Cottage: Coppice Row. Detached red brick dwelling, 1890s.

Theydon Towers: Theydon Road. Late 19th century yellow brick mansion with stone dressings.

Theydon Lodge: Coppice Row. Late 19th century red brick dwelling. Lodge rendered in 2008.

Little Gregories: Little Gregories Lane. Large red brick dwelling with projecting front bay, late 19th century.

Fairmeads: 39 Piercing Hill. Large late 19th century yellow brick dwelling with red brick banding, featuring two storey red brick turret.

The Old Vicarage: Piercing Hill. Large 19th century yellow brick dwelling.

17/19 Heath Drive: Art Deco style semi-detached dwellings, smooth render with zig-zag banding built in 1928.

Telephone Exchange: The Green. Large red brick building, neo-Georgian style, 1930s.

Bowlands Meadow: Theydon Road. Large red brick dwelling in Queen Anne style, early 20th century.

Guidance Note:

- Theydon Bois Parish Council should consider a rolling review of the Local List, in collaboration with the Rural Preservation Society, to ensure that buildings deserving of being on the Local List are considered for inclusion when EFDC undertake their periodic district-wide reviews.

Residential Areas

The locations of new brick built residential homes in the village were historically given large amounts of surrounding open space or garden, as can be seen from some old maps. As the population grew, so the land in between houses was gradually developed until we arrived at 'streets' of houses. The development of farmland for housing estates then decreased the openness of the village further. But when walking around these new estates, there were still opportunities to appreciate the overall location as being rural. Fields could still be seen between houses, large swathes of sky were visible from street level and the forest beyond ever present. However, in recent decades, the ability for home owners to upgrade their lifestyles by moving has become more and more difficult and as a result, extensions have become the popular choice. Unfortunately, some of these extensions almost 'terrace' their building with their neighbour, and the planning authorities have acknowledged these unfavourable possibilities. Even smaller extensions, if not treated sympathetically, can appear overbearing and unattractive, using as much of the land as is possible and having scant regard to

the overall aesthetic appearance of the final structure. Two-storey side extensions in particular also cause the loss of the 'view' through the houses, thereby causing the link between the street and the surrounding countryside to be irretrievably lost. Streets that become visually cramped in this way may accommodate more individuals, but at what cost? Less parking, more environmental noise and possibly devaluation of the location as a whole. Extensions constructed to the rear of properties have far less impact on the visual environment and might be considered in place of side extensions, the benefits of which might be to retain garden or off-road parking facility accessible from the front, and keeping the overall ambiance of the street scene as one of a desirable rural residential area in a forest village. Some existing building design features are as follows:

Piercing Hill: Manor Villas built between 1870-2 (on enclosed land cleared in 1848) to attract City businessmen, following construction of the railway in 1865. These are large, well constructed Victorian houses with large gardens. Subsequent enlargements have generally been in keeping with the original architecture and many appear on the Local List.

Woburn Avenue: Built late 1800s, containing an interesting mix of properties predominately terraced, which continue to be enlarged with loft and rear extensions. A house of sympathetic design and materials was built in 2000 on the corner of Woburn Avenue and Hornbeam Road.

Baldocks Farm Estate: A major housing development begun in the 1930s which continued after the war and which comprises a mixture of detached & semi-detached family houses and bungalows generally built on generous plots and situated on tree-lined streets. The semi-detached properties on this estate were

originally built in one of several distinctive styles. Of particular note are the following:

Morgan Crescent, Heath Drive, Dukes Avenue and Forest Drive: Properties were predominantly built in 'chalet' style but most of these have been extended and only a few remain unaltered. The design of the original buildings is not easy to extend sympathetically and there are many different examples, some more successful in retaining the original features than others. A group of bungalows in Forest Drive remain largely unaltered and are of note.

Elizabeth Drive: Built in 1953 it features semi-detached houses all of the same design except that over the upstairs bow windows there are two styles of canopy which alternate from one pair of houses to the next. Several houses have single storey side extensions but on the whole these do not impair the general street scene whereas two storey side extensions are having a great visual impact on the street scene. Front gardens of grass lawns and shrubs are open to the pavement although a few have low brick walls.

Theydon Park Road, Blackacre Road and Hill Road: These roads contain an eclectic mix of styles of properties many of which have been significantly extended and altered from the original design and include both Grade II Listed and Locally Listed buildings. Of note, not mentioned elsewhere, a selection of generic later Victorian and Edwardian detached and semi detached houses.

Green Glade, Pakes Way, Red Oaks Mead and Graylands: The 1950s saw the construction of Local Authority housing comprising mostly semi-detached houses and bungalows in a style typical of the period, the majority of which are now privately owned.

Hornbeam Road, Hornbeam Close: A 1960s development of brick built bungalows, semi-detached

and linked-detached houses constructed in a style typical of the period.

Pakes Farm Estate: The 1970s marked the construction, on the land of Pakes farm, of an estate of detached houses arranged in 'mews' fashion, a group of bungalows and warden supervised accommodation for the elderly.

Theydon Green and Village Centre: A number of the oldest houses, Grade II Listed, in the village are located on the eastern edge of Theydon Green but they are surrounded by a number of modern buildings to the north and 1950s buildings to the south. The southern edge of Theydon Green is fringed by a pleasant turn of the century terrace of cottages. To the northern side are situated two historic Grade II Listed pubs and the village shops. A 20th century development of flats above shops at the corner of Forest Drive and Station Approach Coppice Row are of a red brick construction in a mock Tudor style with decorative herringbone panelling and many retain the original Crittall windows.

Coppice Row: Coppice Row is one of the original routes through the village and as such has a number of Grade II Listed, Locally Listed and other architecturally interesting buildings. Of note are The Victorian Roses, a row of six semi-detached houses dating from 1904, Gaunt Cottage dating from the 16th century, the Alms Houses, 1753 and Lee Cottage, of brick and Essex weatherboarding alongside the Sixteen String Jack public house.

Abridge Road: Historically a number of farms were located on this road and the farmhouses mostly remain intact together with two groups of ex-farm workers cottages (much altered), Theydon Hall, Lodge and Farm, Thrifts Hall and Farm and a few later, large individual houses.

Guidance Notes:

KEY PRINCIPLES:

- *Any new development, extension or new dwelling, should be in keeping with, and sympathetic to, the character and scale of the particular street scene and surrounding properties, i.e. the criteria in Woburn Avenue should be different from those on the Baldocks Farm Estate or in Manor Villas.*
- *Extensions to buildings (residential or commercial) that can be viewed from the street or which can largely be seen from any public place should aim to be symmetrical and sympathetic to the design of the adjoining and/or adjacent properties and should not compromise the street scene. Extensions should always aim to be of a proportionate size to the existing structure.*
- *Encourage the incorporation of some complementary design features of neighbouring properties in any development.*
- *The conversion of garages into additional rooms, leading to more parking on front gardens and the street, should be discouraged.*
- *New garages should be of sufficient size for a contemporary vehicle (3 x 7 metres minimum).*
- *In locations where new front facing dormer windows are proposed, pitched roofs are to be encouraged.*
- *Where properties on large plots are cleared for development, the new dwellings should be in keeping and scale with the adjacent street scene.*
- *Discourage the replacement of bungalows with houses so as to retain a variety of housing stock, particularly where they are close to the village shops.*
- *Encourage the retention of bungalows as single storey dwellings and the provision of an appropriate variety of housing stock where appropriate.*
- *Any new development, extension or new dwelling, unless an attached garage, should be at least 1 metre from the boundary, so as to avoid a terrace appearance and/or to provide a pathway to the rear of the property.*
- *The construction of new dwellings in the gardens of existing houses (i.e. infilling or 'garden grabbing') should be discouraged unless there is sufficient plot size for it to be achieved without damage to the appearance and amenity of the character of the surrounding area.*
- *In cases of infilling the newly created boundary should also be at least one metre away from the original dwelling.*
- *Ensure external building furniture, e.g. down pipes and soil pipes, are appropriately placed so as not to become dominant features on the façade.*
- *Encourage retention of existing building lines for both roads on corner plots.*
- *Encourage retrospective restoration of windows sympathetic to the original e.g. restoration of sash windows.*
- *The selection of replacement windows and doors, where not subject to restriction by other regulations, should be of sympathetic design, material and construction.*
- *Front Gardens. Encourage the inclusion of suitable planting schemes within the hard standing to enhance the street scene and encourage biodiversity.*
- *Encourage the use of hedging boundaries, especially on the approach roads into the village and areas that are adjacent to rural landscapes, to preserve its rural aspect. Where railings or other security provision is required, it should be hidden with hedging where possible.*
- *Discourage the installation of high gates, walls and railings that are intrusive and detract from the rural aspect.*
- *Residents that are undertaking building work to their homes should ensure that due consideration is given to neighbours during the period of works. Such consideration to include, for example, hosing down of footpaths, and keeping machinery, materials, debris, etc. under control on the site ensuring that they are not allowed to cause a nuisance to neighbours. Residents should also ensure any damage to verges, footpaths, roads, etc. is made good at the end of the project.*



New dwelling (right) that is sympathetic to the character and style of the surrounding properties



New bungalows replacing single house on large plot, matching nearby properties and retaining the native hedge



New dwelling (right) in keeping and scale with the adjacent street scene, this particular example demonstrates the desire for an appropriate housing mix



This is an example of a front garden that includes suitable planting schemes within the hard standing to enhance the street scene and encourage biodiversity

Infrastructure Schools

The original schoolhouse was built on the edge of the churchyard bordering Coppice Row. It was built in 1840, and enlarged at the beginning of the 20th century. The school continued to use the building throughout the war years and up to 1960, when the current school in Orchard Drive was opened.

The old school building, which was used by the College of Preceptors once the school had vacated it, came under threat in the late 1990s when the College of Preceptors also moved out. Plans were submitted to demolish it and build a small development of four/five houses adjacent to the war memorial. Through community pressure, this proposal was discredited and a local resident bought the building to save it from demolition.

Theydon Bois Primary School continues to serve the children of Theydon Bois and the district and currently has 305 pupils. It has a large playing field that is a great asset to the school.

The village benefits from the operation of a pre-school (registered charity) and a Montessori School.

Guidance Note:

- *Outdoor sports activities are an intrinsic part of a full educational program and any development involving the reduction or loss of the playing fields would be strongly resisted.*

Shops and Post Office

The main shopping area is centred on the junction of Forest Drive, Coppice Row and Station Approach and consists of 23 retail outlets. There are a wide variety

of shops including a post office located in the convenience store with an external 24-hour Automatic Teller Machine, restaurants and take aways, a barber shop, hair and beauty salons, a soft furnishing shop, butcher's and baker's shops, a news-agent, an off-licence, launderette and dry cleaners, an estate agency, a pharmacy, a coffee shop/delicatessen, a florist and a plant/garden shop. There are many post boxes around the village which are all well used by the resident community and passing traffic.

Guidance Notes:

- *Encourage the patronage of local shops thereby ensuring their continued economic viability.*
- *Theydon Bois, having no street lighting currently resists brightly-lit shop signage. Muted and unobtrusive lighting of commercial premises is therefore preferable and encouraged. (See section on Dark Skies Policy).*
- *A variety of smaller independent shops offering a greater variety of services should be encouraged. Any closure of the local Post Office would be resisted.*
- *Discourage the change of use of commercial outlets to residential thereby maintaining the variety and vibrancy of the village centre.*
- *Resist planning applications that may have a negative impact on our village centre.*

Churches

The original Anglican parish church, described in *Ogbourne's History of Essex* (1814) as a small low building with a cupola of wood containing three bells, stood on the Abridge Road next to the present Theydon Hall. The original church is mentioned in the Charter of Henry III in 1253, confirming the gift of the

church by William de Bosco, Lord of the Manor, who lived at or near the present site of Theydon Hall.

In 1842 the incumbent decided that the original church was too small and that a new, larger church should be constructed nearer to the centre of population. A Faculty was obtained from the Bishop of London in 1843 for taking down the parish church and Chancel of Theydon Bois, which concluded the 700 years of that church's history almost without trace. All that remains is a memorial which can be viewed from the Abridge Road, on the outer wall that encloses Theydon Hall. The new church was opened and consecrated by the Bishop of London on 5th June 1844, and dedicated to St Mary the Virgin. The land on which the old school and vicarage are built was donated by the Grafton and Hall-Dare families. There are several tablets with deceased persons' armorial bearings brought from the original church together with the three bells.

The fate of the first church on the new site is recorded by an inscription in the porch of the church. An entry in the Vestry Book dated 14th June 1849 states that a meeting was held to consider the present unsatisfactory condition of the parish church of Theydon Bois. New plans were drawn up by Sydney Smirke of London and in due course, the present church was built and consecrated on 9th February 1851.

Inside the present church can be seen hatchments belonging to the Grafton and Hall-Dare families. The most ancient of the hatchments is the royal coat-of-arms of James I (1618) which exist in only four parish churches in England.

The origins of the Baptist Church are to be found in

open air services which were started on Theydon Green in 1882 by Mr and Mrs Henry Hall, assisted by Mr John Cottee, a Baptist, who it is believed was also the local blacksmith and postmaster. The first building on the site was erected in the mid 1880s and in 1887 was put in trust to Rev. C.H. Spurgeon and others for the Baptist Trust forever. In 1888, it formally became the Theydon Bois Baptist Mission and in January 1894 finally became Theydon Bois Baptist Church. In summer of that year, the new extended building was opened. With the addition of a wooden hall in 1933 and other changes, and a vestry/kitchen and new toilets after the war, the building served the church adequately. With structural problems developing, in 1962, a new worship building was erected on the front of the site with part of the old building serving as halls, until that too was replaced in 1972.

Public Houses

There are three public houses in the village, The Bull in Station Approach and the Queen Victoria and the Sixteen String Jack in Coppice Row. The Queen Victoria and the Bull are Grade II listed, The Bull dating from 1656. The Railway Arms has recently been converted into a bar and restaurant. In our survey all of the public houses were listed in the top ten of buildings that residents found visually and historically important. 87% of respondents to the survey commented that they strongly agreed/agreed that the retention of the public houses is desirable.

Guidance Notes:

- To patronise our public houses, thereby ensuring their continued economic viability.
- To discourage applications for change of use into dwellings.

Community Buildings

Theydon Bois can be defined by its community spirit. This is illustrated by the fact that The Village Association comprises over 50 clubs and societies.

The Village Hall, facing Theydon Green, is the fourth to be constructed in the village. Opened in 2001, it was built on what was formerly the Glebe Field and now provides the focal point to the village. It was funded with the aid of a Public Works Loan and designed and constructed to be sympathetic to our rural location and heritage whilst providing twenty first century facilities.

Immediately adjacent to the Village Hall site is the smaller but also greatly used St Mary's Church Hall. Built in 1946, it is constructed out of two RAF wooden huts and is surrounded by a grass area with car parking to the front. The car park is well hidden from the road by a tall, mature, native hedge. The Baptist church also has an integral community hall.

Theydon Bois Village Hall



At the time of going to print, the village has acquired, again with a Public Works Loan, the freehold of what was formerly a youth centre owned by Essex County Council. This will become a Community Centre hosting youth and other community groups, societies and functions unable to be accommodated by the Village Hall. Whilst the building is of a primarily functional design the exterior has been renovated, finished and planted to best complement its location. The Community Centre is situated off Loughton Lane and this site includes The Scout Hut which will now sit on freehold land owned by Theydon Bois Parish Council.

Allotments

The allotments are situated off Loughton Lane and the freehold land is registered in the name of Theydon Bois Parish Council. The site is just over one hectare in size and has been well used both before and after the Second World War, and continues to satisfy local interest in 'grow your own' fruit and vegetables.

The site is now actively managed and worked by

community spirited gardeners tending over 50 plots of varying sizes. A Heritage Apple Orchard was planted in 2008, paid for by allotment holders and local groups, with equal proportions of eaters to cookers and nearly all the trees originate from old, original Essex Root Stock. Located between The Deer Sanctuary and The Buxton Trust Playing Fields, the allotments provide many horticulturalists with 'green' productive sanctuary.

Guidance Note:

- *This piece of land is an essential area for community use; to tend and cultivate the allotments, and to enjoy the peaceful surroundings whilst gardening. Any detrimental impact would be resisted.*

Public Transport

Theydon Bois is served by a Transport for London railway station on the Central Line, however there are capacity problems at peak times. The penultimate station, trains run eastbound to Epping and westbound into central London and beyond. This regular service is an essential link for resident commuters. The bus service through Theydon Bois, is also essential particularly for elderly residents. It currently runs hourly to Loughton Station via Abridge and Debden Broadway and in the opposite direction to St Margaret's Hospital and Thornwood Common, extending to Harlow bus station during the rush hour. There are two attractive, sympathetically designed bus shelters which are maintained by the Parish Council.

Highways

The B172 road from Abridge (in Lambourne parish) enters the parish of Theydon Bois by a bridge over the river Roding and runs northwest through Theydon Bois as Coppice Row to the 'Wake Arms' roundabout in Epping Forest, where it meets the main road from London, the A104 which continues to Epping and on towards the M11 Motorway (Junction Seven) as the B1393. At Theydon Green in the centre of the parish the Abridge road is joined by those going north to Epping (Piercing Hill/Theydon Road) and south to Loughton (Loughton Lane). These two roads are unclassified, but are still 'main arteries' connecting Theydon Bois to these towns.

Coppice Row/Abridge Road/Coopersale Lane/Epping Lane/Loughton Lane have weight restriction orders of 7.5 tonne limiting heavy vehicle access to the village.

Coopersale Lane is registered as a Protected Lane (PL). Essex County Council in their *Mineral Development Document Contextual Baseline Report, 9.3.4*, describe PLs as having significant historic and landscape value, generally originating from pre-historic track ways which have been in continual use and which are often narrow, and sometimes sunken. Due to their age and use they also have great biological value as well as landscape value. Essex County Council is committed to preserve the traditional character of historic lanes with landscape value. PL designation would potentially influence any future planning applications.

A Protected Lane can also be designated a Quiet Lane. Quiet Lanes (QL) are designated minor rural roads that are quiet in nature, have low traffic flows, a rural appearance and provide links to existing public rights of way. The QL scheme sets out to make these rural lanes more desirable for those who wish to use them.

Theydon Bois Allotments



QL encourage local communities to get involved and take ownership of the scheme in an attempt to change user behaviour and invite individuals to use alternative means of transport for local journeys.

Guidance Notes:

- *There is no current need for any intensification or alteration to the highways within the village.*
- *Encourage extension of, and inclusion to the Quiet Lanes and Protected Lanes programme.*
- *Encourage a north bound interchange at Junction 5 of the M11 to reduce through traffic in Theydon Bois.*

Parking

Due to the location of Theydon Bois and its Central Line station, commuter parking is a threat to the rural, open aspect of the village. Parking restrictions have been introduced to many roads in the village to protect the amenity for residents, the fabric of the village from inconsiderate parking, erosion of greenswards and general nuisance. Transport For London have stated that they do not have any plans to extend their car parking facilities in Theydon Bois.

The station provides 64 parking spaces. The village has resisted suggestions for mass parking on Green Belt land to the east side of the station as protection of the Green Belt is considered to be essential and the village should be protected from excessive commuter traffic.

Guidance Notes:

- *Off street parking should be retained, and be proportional to the particular circumstances.*
- *Any new residential development should where possible use all reasonable means to provide off street parking proportionate to the size of the development.*
- *Commercial applications which include parking for staff and customers would need to be considered on an individual basis but generally would need to show that a reasonable effort had been made to sensitively incorporate an adequate amount of parking facility.*
- *To discourage the loss of garaging and/or the conversions of garaging to habitable space.*
- *Residents have indicated that they would like a residential parking permit scheme. Any such scheme would have to be carefully considered and consulted upon.*
- *To resist any development, including car parks, of Green Belt land east of the station.*

Pedestrians, Cyclists, and Horse Riders

The main public amenity of the village is Epping Forest, a 6,000 acre ancient forest which lies beyond the western edge of the village. The forest is managed by the City of London under two 1878 Acts of Parliament. Epping Forest provides a wealth of trails for cyclists, horse riders under licence and recreational walkers. The trails are well-managed by the City of London and are extremely popular. There are easy access points to the trails via The Plain in the centre of the village

or from the car park at the top of Piercing Hill. There are also a number of public footpaths leading from Theydon Bois in the direction of Epping, Abridge and Theydon Garnon, linking into the Essex Way and the Three Forests Way. Worthy of particular mention is the public footpath leading to the Epping Forest Buffer Land to the north-east of the village. This runs to the rear of Dukes Avenue, providing access to an extensive area of grassland owned by the City of London which was previously part of Great Gregories Farm. There are some good viewing points of the Village from the top of the ridge, site of the original 'Seven Sisters' group of elms.

There is also a public footpath to the south-east of the village which runs across farmland to the village cemetery and which then crosses the Abridge Road to join a number of other footpaths. Access can also be obtained to the new Woodland Trust wood.

There are two public footpaths leading over land at Blunts Farm to the east of the village. In recent years these two paths have been compromised by protracted development.

There are no cycle routes in or through the village. Some roads in the village have restricted parking times which has lessened the number of parked vehicles during the day and increased the road space and visibility available for cyclists; conversely those roads which do not have parking restrictions are crowded with parked cars and cyclists have to share the central lane space with through traffic.

Despite its rural setting adjacent to Epping Forest there is limited provision for horse-riding other than on the trails within the Forest itself. Beyond Coopersale Lane there is a bridleway along the Roman Road leading from Hobbs Cross Farm. Several private equestrian facilities are located in this area. Due to

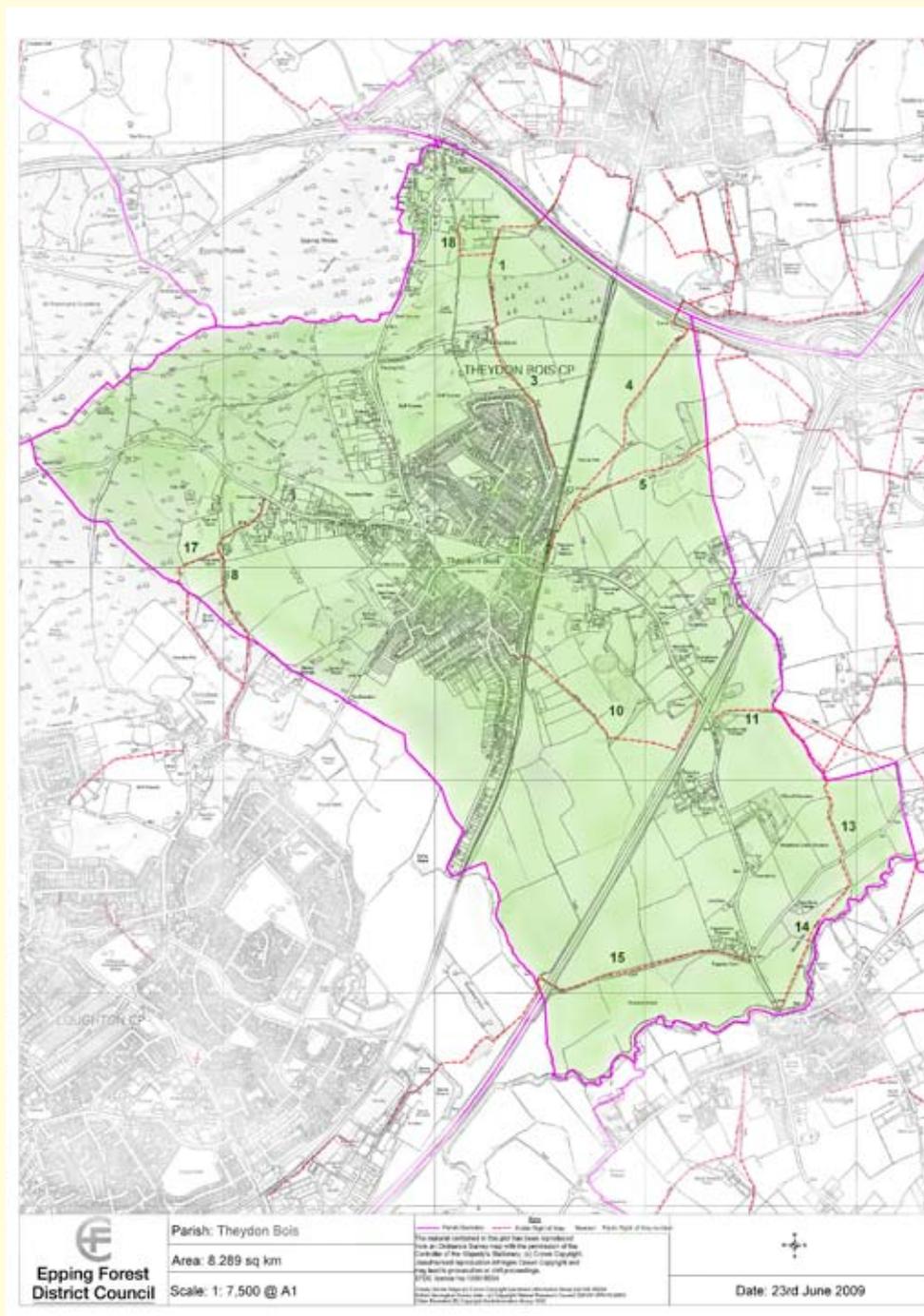
the volumes of traffic using Coopersale Lane it is presently hazardous for horse-riders to use the lane for onward access to Epping Forest. Essex County Council is currently considering designating Coopersale Lane as a Quiet Lane which may improve access for riders. See section on Highways.

Key to map showing statutory Rights of Way; Numbers and Routes

- 1 - Great Gregories to Ivy Chimneys (via footpath 32)
- 1 and 18 - Little Gregories to Great Gregories
- 3 - Forest Drive to Little Gregories
- 4 - Theydon Bois Station to Gardner's Farm via Old Foresters playing field
- 4 and 5 - Theydon Bois Station to Garnish Hall via Blunts Farm
- 8 - Birch Hall Farm to Debden Green via Birch Wood
- 10 - Green Glade to Theydon Cemetery via Theydon Wood
- 11 - Theydon Hall Cottages (via footpaths 13 and 14 to Abridge)
- 15 - Piggott's Farm to Debden (via footpath 24)
- 17 - Birch Hall Farm to Debden Green

Guidance Notes:

- Encourage and support Countrycare in the maintenance of footpaths with clear signage, accessible and well maintained footpaths.
- Support any initiative that improves the accessibility of local footpaths.
- Encourage and support residents and visitors to fully utilise our footpaths ensuring clear signage, accessible and well maintained footpaths that are promoted for all.
- Encourage the wider promotion of local footpaths to residents and visitors.
- Encourage the inclusion of appropriate roads in the 'Quiet Lanes' initiative.
- Encourage the increase of cycling in the village. Ensure cycle racks are available in all public places. A new cycle rack was located at the junction of Coppice Row and Forest Drive in 2009. The location of racks at other public places such as the Village Hall and Community Centre should be encouraged.





View along Footpath 10 (see page 23)

Street Furniture

Street furniture not in keeping with scale, design, materials or character spoils the visual amenity of the street scene. The Parish Council have installed older style finger posts in some locations, and red dog waste bins around Theydon Green. EFDC have provided some litter bins and the City of London others. Road name boards vary, some cream and green others black and white. There is currently little or no thought to the overall design of the space and some areas are cluttered with random ill-placed signage, bins, dog waste bins, seats, and telephone and cable TV junction boxes.

Responses to our questionnaire showed overwhelmingly that the erection of mobile telephone masts within the village should be discouraged. Their

Guidance Notes:

- A more designed, less random approach to street furniture and its location should be considered. With this in mind a study/survey should be commissioned to facilitate a long term strategy for street furniture in the village.
- Design, scale, material and placement of street furniture should be in keeping with the character of the village and not be overbearing or excessive.
- County and District Councils should be encouraged to remove redundant notices.
- Excessive signage should be discouraged (parking restrictions, speed camera warnings etc.)
- "No parking on grass verges" signs should be considered.
- CCTV should only be installed as a last resort in tackling crime or anti-social behaviour.



Damage caused by drivers parking on the verge

presence detracts from the aesthetics of an area and there are unresolved questions as to their negative effect on health.

CCTV has been installed in several places around the village by the Parish Council in an attempt to reduce anti-social behaviour, and is occasionally installed by residents on their homes. Its presence has integrated acceptably with the surroundings and the majority of respondents to our questionnaire confirmed they found CCTV cameras to be unobtrusive. It has proven to be a great asset in preventing and detecting crime.



Finger Post

Cemetery

Prior to the old parish church moving to its present location, burials were carried out at the site of the original parish church on the Abridge Road. From 1844, burials transferred to the present churchyard. Villagers were buried in the parish churchyard up until the early 1960s. With plots in the churchyard becoming short in supply, it was decided by the Parish Council to acquire land adjacent to the Village for the purposes of carrying out burials. The plot the cemetery now occupies on the Abridge Road was identified and bought, part of the land consecrated and the parish cemetery formally established for burials. The first burial at the new parish cemetery was recorded in 1964.

Guidance Note:

- *Theydon Bois Parish Council to monitor the available space at the existing cemetery and make provision accordingly.*

Sports and Leisure Facilities

Theydon Bois enjoys sports and community facilities due to the largesse of an old local family. The Buxtons, who were also the patrons of the parish church, created land in trust for the benefit of the village so long as there is a community demand for it. The land, known colloquially as the Buxton Trust, is divided between a sports field and allotments (see the section on allotments).

The field is extensively used all year round. There is a very active cricket club, a football club and an all seasons Tennis club. The cricket field, used in the summer, has one cricket table, which consists of

nine wickets and there is a football pitch which is used in the winter. The ground is maintained to a very high standard and regularly receives awards/commendations in recognition of this. The club has a brick built pavilion and bar which is well used by villagers. The tennis club has gradually extended the number of courts over the years to six. The hard courts were converted in the year 2000 to grass astro turf courts. The Tennis Club has a wooden chalet style pavilion. All the clubs have thriving youth sections which provide a much needed sporting outlet for the youth of the village.

Theydon Bois Golf Club is located in Epping Forest to the north of the village. Nine holes were laid out on forest land known as 'Thames Valley' in 1898. In the early 1970s more agricultural land was acquired to the south of the course, on City of London Buffer Land, behind Dukes Avenue and Woodland Way, to extend the course to 18 holes. The course is very well used by both club members and visitors. There is also a substantial clubhouse with exceptional views up and down the course. Both parts of the course have beautiful settings whilst the latest nine holes enjoy wonderful views to the south and west.

Guidance Notes:

- *Encourage sports facilities for the local community where appropriate.*
- *Encourage the use of existing facilities, taking appropriate action to revise this use if necessary i.e. evolve with changes in trends amongst users.*
- *Encourage age and gender inclusive facilities.*

The Playground At Theydon

The playground is run by a local registered charity, PAT. It has been designed, created and equipped to provide young children with a safe, fun facility whilst blending into the rural scene. Its location, only metres away from the village pond and green, provides a unique, no cost, healthy, multi activity for both residents and visitors alike.

Medical & Care Facilities

Theydon Bois is fortunate in having extensive medical and care facilities. Residents have the choice of consulting National Health Doctors at the small Theydon Bois Surgery or travelling the short distance to The Limes Surgery at Epping. For dental treatment there is a private practice in Forest Drive. The Theydon Bois Pharmacy fulfils prescriptions and stocks a wide range of non-prescription medicines and provides various consultation services. Theydon Bois has four facilities for less independent individuals: Frank Foster House, Robert Daniels Court, Elm Court and Macris House.



The Doctors' Surgery

Environmental Issues

All new development, including extensions, minor building works and replacements (e.g. windows) should seek to minimise energy use in all its forms.

Guidance Notes:

- *To reduce surface water run-off into the drainage system which can cause flooding when overloaded, minimise paved area of front and rear gardens and maximise the use of permeable surface materials.*
- *Encourage rainwater harvesting.*
- *Encourage use of unobtrusive solar panels.*
- *Encourage use of unused plots for growing fruit and vegetables.*
- *Green belt land around the village must be protected from encroachment and retained for agriculture or forestry, rather than leisure complexes, car parks or similar developments.*
- *Restrict the lighting of public areas to the minimum necessary for safety.*
- *Reduce length of time exterior and interior lighting is illuminated.*
- *Consider use of sustainable materials for construction and fuel.*
- *Consider installation of monitoring equipment for water and energy efficiency.*
- *Recycle, reuse, and repair.*
- *Consider leaving the car at home and using alternative forms of transport.*
- *Encourage EFDC to review and assess the current and likely future air quality in Theydon Bois in order to meet the objectives of the Environment Act 1995 given our proximity to both the M11 and M25.*

Theydon Bois from a Child's Perspective

In the questionnaire circulated to each household, the opinions of children between 5 and 17 were specifically sought and of the responses received approximately half were in the 13-17 age group with the remaining two quarters the 9-12 and 5-8 age groups.

The data showed that the majority of respondents liked living in the village a lot. The majority of children have access to their own private/safe outside space in the form of a garden and the rural surroundings offer plenty of easily accessible, well kept public open spaces like Theydon Green with its duck pond and well equipped playground, and The Plain. These locations, together with the neighbouring forest, offer all ages of children the opportunity to experience the countryside on their doorstep. Theydon has its own primary school and also offers a choice of pre-school nurseries. There are also parent and toddler groups provided by each church and various other privately run groups for pre-schoolers in the church and village halls.

At the same time, good access to

motorways affords parents the convenience of whisking children off to see more of our country and the tube train provides an easy route to the centre of our capital city which has a plethora of up-to-date opportunities for children to be educated, entertained and to enjoy unique experiences. However, just over half of respondents were aware of the number of motor vehicles impacting on their lives in a negative way through pollution and noise, and just under half expressed a wish for an improved bus service.

Vandalism was acknowledged as a problem and it was felt more police presence would discourage this. Opinion was varied on the topic of street lighting, with more children in favour of than against its introduction. On the subject of population levels,
Playground at Theydon



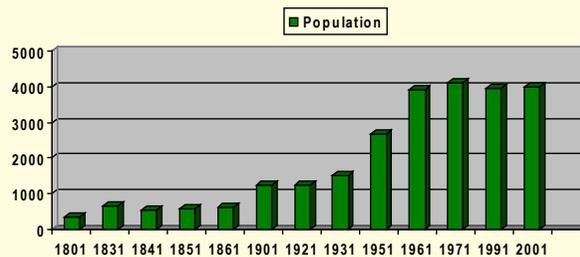
some children expressed an opinion that Theydon Bois should remain as it is while 65% considered that an increase in population would not improve their perception of the village.

All age groups voiced strong support for the playground, the tennis club, the football and cricket organised at the Buxton Trust Ground, and the Scouts and Guides. Activities provided by groups hiring the village community centres were also well patronised by village children. However nearly two-thirds of all age groups felt that there are insufficient facilities for young people with the biggest shortfall being provision for the 13-17 age group. Clearly, our teenagers want more than sports to fill their free time. Around half of the children in all age groups felt that if the youth club were reopened they would be likely to use it regularly. Since processing the responses to our questionnaire in 2009, a youth club has been started again in the village which operates one evening per week and is looking to expand in the near future, using the Community Centre as a base.

The children who responded to our questionnaire suggested a wide range of facilities and activities which they would welcome. In some cases these would involve large, controversial developments. The wish list included a youth club with café and computers, more sports and leisure facilities, film shows or young people's theatre in the village hall, more library facility and art groups. It is clear from responses to our questionnaire that the teenage population of the village are not necessarily satisfied with the entertainments on offer and that more provision should be made to keep them firmly integrated within the community of our village.

Future Prospects

In 1428 Theydon Bois was one of the few parishes in the locality, which were exempt from taxation because the village contained fewer than 10 households. The population increase since 1801 is shown in the bar chart below. The 2001 census confirms the type of dwellings of the 1,637 households as 502 detached houses, 828 semi detached houses, and 138 terraced, 105 flats and 64 other.



It is the increase in the population of the village and the south east of the country generally that poses potentially the greatest threat to the established ambiance of the village.

Theydon Bois is surrounded by Metropolitan Green Belt; these green spaces on our boundaries define the village and help create the rural feel that residents value most highly. The Metropolitan Green Belt is a planning policy for controlling urban growth. The idea is for a ring of countryside where urbanisation will be resisted for the foreseeable future, maintaining an area where agriculture, forestry and outdoor leisure can be expected to prevail. The fundamental aim of Green Belt policy is to prevent urban sprawl by keeping land permanently open. It was first proposed around London by the Greater London Regional Planning Committee in 1935. The Town and Country Planning Act 1947 then allowed local authorities to include Green Belt proposals in their development

plans. The London Metropolitan Green Belt currently totals 5,133 square km.

Epping Forest District Council undertook preliminary work to identify potential sites that may be available for development as part of the new Local Development Framework for the area during the summer of 2008. There are two areas of Green Belt that have now been included in this preliminary list for Theydon Bois. Development of either of these two sites would be strongly opposed.

Theydon Bois is wholly within the Green Belt and appropriate land for development in the village is very scarce. The biggest threat to the village is any relaxation in Green Belt legislation that would see any inappropriate and unsustainable development that would harm the openness and rural character of our village.

Any compromise to the rural tranquillity of Theydon Bois village would be strongly resisted. However, there currently exists a considerable pressure to provide additional housing and resultant infrastructure in the region. Since there is a severe shortage of non Green Belt land in Theydon Bois any sympathetic development of available land within the village providing an appropriate housing mix, including affordable housing, would be welcomed.

As long as Green Belt legislation exists in its current form and is respected and adhered to by planners, Theydon Bois is protected. Any development to the East of the Central Line railway line should be resisted as this offers a natural boundary for development and could set an unwelcome precedent for Green Belt erosion. Any proposal for development of the allotments or the Buxton Trust Playing Fields would be strongly resisted. The village currently enjoys

a variety of shops and pubs, and the Central Line is seen as essential to the community. Therefore, any threats to these essential services would be strongly resisted.

Theydon Green and Epping Forest are areas of amenity for leisure and sports, providing an important local resource and a valuable 'breathing space' for residents and visitors alike. The forest is embraced by the whole community who enjoy the benefits of having such an important and historic local resource at its heart.

Any development opportunities that would include a greater level of protection of the natural environment would be welcomed. This may include an extension to the Protected Lane programme and inclusion into the Quiet Lanes programme. Any increase of City of London buffer land and any extension to the Green Arc and the Woodland Trust would also be encouraged. Any legislation that results in a tightening of the control of the methodology of the use of landfill for sporting development would also be supported. Air quality should be closely monitored and appropriate action taken to combat any causes which threaten a permanent reduction in air quality. Measures to combat climate change should be given paramount consideration.

The village is anxious to protect its open green spaces and in the future may consider registering these areas as village greens.

Theydon Bois is seen as a very special place by its residents and can be defined by its location as a forest village entirely surrounded by green space. The village and its landscape are highly valued and greatly admired and it is essential that all future development be handled very sensitively.

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