

# Tewin Parish Council

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*Clerk: Mrs Caroline McFarlane, 2 Badgers Walk, Tewin Wood, Welwyn, Herts AL6 0HP*

*Tel: 01438 798969 Fax: 01438 798969 E-mail: caroline.mcfarlane@virgin.net*

*Website: [www.tewinvillage.co.uk](http://www.tewinvillage.co.uk)*

Dear Parishioners,

Tewin Parish Council have agreed that communication with the village is of paramount importance and have decided to produce a newsletter to be distributed to every household in the parish.

The Friends of Tewin have kindly agreed to distribute this newsletter and Tewin Parish Council are very grateful for their assistance.

The main body of this first newsletter is the Chairman's speech which was made at the annual Parish meeting on 5<sup>th</sup> April 2004 and it is a synopsis of what the Council has been doing over the last year. The back page is a list of what we believe to be information relevant to the villagers.

Lastly if you have any comments about improving the quality of this newsletter please do not hesitate in contacting the clerk at the above address.

Yours faithfully,

Tewin Parish Council

## The Role of the Parish Council

In existence since 1894, TPC is the most local level of government for the people of the Parish. Its eight elected Councillors are committed to using their budget to maintain and enhance the greens, verges, highways, byways, allotments and sports facilities of the parish.

Through consultation with East Herts District Council they also strive to ensure that changes to the parish's built environment are appropriate.

The council is very aware that it exists to serve the people of Tewin and consequently welcomes any contact of any nature.

## Who is on the Parish Council?

Cllr Kristina Lawson, Chairman

Cllr Keith St Pier, Vice Chairman

Cllr Steve Glew

Cllr Adrian Hill

Cllr Mike Howe

Cllr David Howson

Cllr Chris Pool

Cllr Steve Stott

## Chairman's Report to the Annual Parish Meeting, 5 April 2004

- During the year the Parish Council finally achieved its full complement of eight Councillors. Five former Councillors were elected unopposed in May and Mike Howe was subsequently co-opted to the remaining vacancy in the South Ward. The two remaining vacancies (in the North Ward) have since been filled by the co-option of two new Councillors - Adrian Hill and David Howson, to replace John Burton (who stood down at the election following 20 years' service) and Mike Howe.

Since May 2003, meetings of the Council normally take place on the first Monday of the month rather than the last. This change has allowed more timely reports on the Parish Council's activities to be published in the Parish News. Recognizing that some parishioners neither subscribe to the Parish News nor access the Tewin Village website, the Council is considering other ways in which communication can be improved with Tewin residents.

As part of its normal work during the year, the Council has examined and commented on some forty planning applications, slightly fewer than last year. EHDC enforcement officers attended the meeting in June to explain their role in the planning system and answer specific questions, especially with regard to local farmland that has been sold to speculative purchasers. We have undertaken the usual extensive range of activities involving maintenance of parish paths, grass cutting, tree pruning and repair of seats. Specific maintenance has been carried out on the pavilion and the well cover on Lower Green and a new litter bin has been installed on Upper Green. A Woodland Management Survey (for land in the care of the Parish Council) is also underway, courtesy of the Herts Wildlife Trust. Nevertheless, the increase in the precept for the financial year 2004-2005 will be 3.1%, almost the same as last year, and Councillors have agreed to forgo rights to allowances under the new regulations.

There has been some improvement in our relationship with the local highways authorities. A number of outstanding works remain, particularly around Lower Green and Upper Green Road, but some progress has been made. Most importantly, the works to alleviate the flooding problems in School Lane have recently started and are scheduled to be completed by mid-April. Outstanding problems will be examined during our annual risk-assessment inspections in the next few weeks. We continue to urge all parishioners and visitors to Tewin to appreciate and respect the environment and avoid causing unnecessary costly work on the Village Greens and other grassed areas through careless driving and parking.

Throughout the year, the Parish Council has been asked for its opinion on several local and national Government documents. We reiterated our previous comments on the Structure Plan and East Herts Local Plan. We also maintained our original objections, and made a series of other points, with respect to the Minerals Local Plan Review at the 2<sup>nd</sup> deposit stage at the end of 2003. Under the Countryside and Rights of Way Act 2000 public comment was sought on the draft maps of open country and registered Common Land. The Parish Council compared the draft maps with the definitive map information held by HCC and confirmed that the two sources were consistent. We have recently been asked to comment on the Defra consultation document on the use of vehicles on rights on way.

Members of the Council have continued to be represented on 'outside bodies', specifically the Tewin Memorial Hall Committee and Tewin Website Committee. Former Councillor John Burton has remained a Governor of Tewin School. One of the two Council-nominated trustee posts on Tewin Charities is currently vacant.

The Parish Council has continued to monitor the performance of the 388 bus service and the Clerk reports any problems notified to her to the County Council. Several parishioners have pointed out the inconvenience to passengers of the bus route being extended to Datchworth every day (instead of Thursdays only) when there are rarely passengers on that route. All bus services in Hertfordshire are under review and it is important to use this service or we may find it is under threat. It still represents good value for money particularly for adults travelling on their own, or with small children. For example, the peak time (return) journey from Tewin to Welwyn North Station now costs 20% less than the daily car park ticket.

During 2003 Hertfordshire Constabulary set up a mobile police station, which visits villages at specific times on a regular basis. It has been coming to Tewin (Lower Green lay-by) between 12.30-1.30pm on the first Wednesday of every month. The most persistent police-related issue has been motorbikes being driven illegally on footpaths and bridlepaths and causing a general nuisance. A meeting was held between the Parish Council and the police on this topic and the contact number is 01992-533000 and quote Operation Arable. Unfortunately, acts of vandalism and fly tipping have continued to occur in the Parish and surrounding area.

East Herts District Council has reported that it has met its current recycling targets through the kerbside collection of recyclable waste, firstly in towns and more recently in an increasing number of villages. The Parish Council has repeatedly asked for the kerbside collection to be extended to Tewin. Until now, EHDC had no plans to do so but preferred for Tewin to find a location for a small scale "bring site". Recent indications suggest that EHDC is now planning to bid for additional funds (from Defra) to extend kerbside collection to more villages in the District. In common with one or two other East Herts Villages, including Much Hadham, Tewin remains a "bag collection" area for refuse, with wheelie bins available on request.

We have been involved in further discussions with members of the local sports clubs about ways to make improvements to the pavilion on Upper Green. Plans are also underway to improve the drainage of the Green in front of the pavilion with the introduction of a soakaway. Recognizing that there are limited recreational facilities for children in Tewin, the Council has renewed the search for a suitable site for a playground for small children. The Parish Council is regularly notified of sources of funding (both local and national) which are available for local sports facilities, village halls, local transport initiatives and rural businesses. Parishioners who are interested in pursuing any of these opportunities are advised to contact us.

Local Councils are being encouraged to apply for 'Quality' status. Tewin Parish Council is not currently eligible to be a Quality Parish Council because that requires 80% of the full Council to be elected members. At present 3 out of 8 councillors are co-opted members. Other requirements for Quality status would involve the Clerk undergoing further in-depth training.

Councillors and the Clerk have been involved in several local meetings during the year, on topics such as 'Parish Plans' and Community Planning and attended the East Herts Interparish

Conference (for Parish Councillors) in Waterford in February at which implications of the new licensing laws were discussed. The Parish Council has agreed to host the next Conference in 2005 (in the Memorial Hall).

At the end of this busy year, I would once again like to thank the Clerk and all the Councillors for their hard work and dedication.

Kristina Lawson  
April 2004

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#### Other Relevant Information

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#### **Planning Applications**

Copies of all planning applications, which have been received by EHDC are sent to the Parish Council for a response within a 16 day time limit. Decisions on whether to object or not depend on various factors, but mostly relate to whether the property will still be in keeping with its neighbouring properties. Parishioners are welcome to attend the beginning of the monthly meeting (usually on the first Monday of the month) to present their own applications, raise concerns about other applications and to stay to listen to the discussion of applications during the meeting. A copy of the Parish Council's response letter is sent to all applicants.

Parishioners may be interested to know that draft planning applications can also be discussed with the Parish Council before they are formally submitted to EHDC.

#### **Agenda**

Please notify the Clerk one week before the meeting if you wish to suggest items for discussion at the meeting. The agenda is published on the Notice Board outside Tewin Stores 3 working days before the meeting.

#### NEXT COUNCIL MEETINGS:

10<sup>th</sup> May 2004 at 7.45pm in the Tewin Memorial Hall

7<sup>th</sup> June 2004

5<sup>th</sup> July 2004

6<sup>th</sup> September 2004

4<sup>th</sup> October 2004

All parishioners are welcome to attend and are invited to make comments at the start of the meeting.

Minutes of Council meetings are published on the Tewin website which can be accessed at [www.tewinvillage.co.uk](http://www.tewinvillage.co.uk). (They do not appear on the website until approved and signed at the subsequent meeting).

Minutes and details of Councillors are also displayed on the notice board by Tewin Stores.

If you have any queries or comments concerning the above, please contact:

Chairman, Kristina Lawson                      Tel: 01438-717256

Clerk, Caroline McFarlane                      Tel: 01438-798969

E-mail - [caroline.mcfarlane@virgin.net](mailto:caroline.mcfarlane@virgin.net)

#### Your East Herts District Councillors are:

North Ward: Cllr Michael McMullen Tel: 01920-463430

South Ward: Cllr Tim Robertson      Tel: 0207-405-1234

#### Your Herts County Councillor is:

Cllr Bryan Hammond                      Tel: 01438-798298

#### Useful Numbers/Websites

#### **Highways Fault Line: 01438-737321**

For reporting potholes and any other damage to the roads

East Herts District Council: 01279-655261 or [www.eastherts.gov.uk](http://www.eastherts.gov.uk)

Flytipping

Abandoned Vehicles

Environmental Health

Animal Welfare

Pest Control

Waste Services

Planning

Tree Preservation Orders