ISSUE 70 – MARCH 2021

UPDATE

THE NORTHAW AND CUFFLEY PARISH COUNCIL MAGAZINE

Welcome from our Chairman -

Councillor Barry Knichel

It's been over a year since our last UPDATE and much has happened and much has changed. Rather than looking back, let's look forward and see what the next 12 months may hold.

There is much to be done on concluding the Local Plan and creating the Neighbourhood Plan, the only way this is going to happen is if we have the resource to do it. I'm really pleased to say that the expertise we now have within the Council, is first rate. There is a culture of transparency, openness, and a focus on residents. Politics and personal agendas have been banned and what we do is genuinely a collective effort.

My invitation to everyone is, if you have a concern or question, then please get in touch. We will always respond. If we don't know there is an issue then we can't really help can we?

Let me finish by thanking everyone who has lent their support and encouragement over the past 12 months, we will do our very best to justify it.

Northaw Playing Fields

Northaw and Cuffley Parish Council is in the process of reviewing amenities and seek your view as to how Northaw Playing Fields (also known as Northaw Park) can be improved.

Photograph courtesy of Mike Clark

The Play Area

The Parish Council will be refurbishing the existing play area in 2021.

In preparation we are considering what changes and improvements could be made

We are seeking your input.

- Are there any improvements that you would like to see?
- Are there any changes to the equipment we should be making?

The Old Tennis Court

Ideas currently being considered

- Remove - Take back to grass and blend in with surrounding area
- Refurbish – Returning the tennis court to a playable standard
- Build a Multi Use Games Area (MUGA)
- Build a Junior Skatepark

Photograph courtesy of Mike Clark

We're open to any other suggestions

Please contact **officemanager@northawcuffleypc.org.uk** by 30th April.

IN THIS ISSUE

P2-3 - Meet your Councillors
P4-5 – Local Plan/Neighbourhood Plan
P6-7 – Local resources/News items
P8 – Who does what/Contact the Councils

What is Northaw and Cuffley Parish Council and what do we do?

As your Parish Council, we serve the local community. Working with you to try to make Northaw and Cuffley a better place to live.

All our Councillors are local residents, volunteering their time to the council.

The Parish Council is a statutory body, funded by residents through the Parish Precept which is collected with your Council Tax.

Elections are held every 4 years, with the next election due in May 2023.

The Council is responsible for the upkeep of a number of community assets:

- King George V Playing Fields
- Northaw Playing Fields
- Northaw Cemetery
- Sopers Road and Maynard Place car parks
- The Millennium Garden and the Station Road planting.
- Home Wood
- Peters Wood

The Parish Council also owns Cuffley Hall, and leases Cuffley Youth and Community Centre, although these are run by independent charities on a day to day basis.

More information on the work of the Council can be found at **www.northawcuffleypc.org.uk**

VACANCY

There is currently a vacant position on the Council, that will be filled by election in May 2021.

If you are interested in standing, please contact the Council or there is further information available on our website **https://northawcuffleypc.org.uk/elections-co-option/**

MEET THE COUNCILLORS

BARRY KNICHEL
Chair

I am a strong supporter for the protection of our green belt and rural environment. I support sustainable development but am opposed to any development in our villages that is to the detriment of its residents. I support the work and principles of organisations like CPRE, LGBC and SCANGB.

BOB STUBBS
Vice Chair

I have lived in Cuffley for over 25 years and been a Parish Councillor since 2015 with a short break from February 2018 to December 2019. I retired in 2013 and had previously been an advisor for thirty years on major property development schemes in the UK and overseas. My main focus with the Parish Council is the Local and Neighbourhood Plans and I became a Councillor initially to use my experience to assist the Council and the Community to resist the plans for major greenbelt development.

NICK ANASTASIOU

Nick joined the Council in June 2020, and is a local businessman working in hospitality and live event support.

BRENT CHEETHAM

I have lived in the area for nearly 60 years and am a member of the National Liberal Party. I support the Greenbelt and am critical of government policies on the matter.

MIKE CLARK

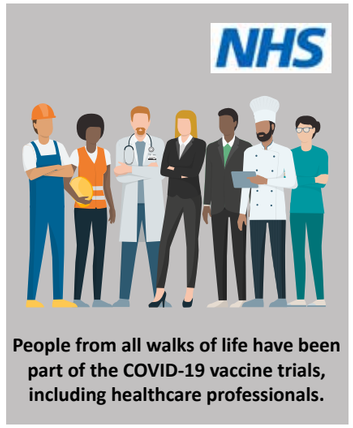
Living in the Parish since 2009, Councillor Clark is an active campaigner for the reduction of Green Belt allocated for future building projects, and an officer of Northaw & Cuffley Residents Association.

SUE HARDEN

I have lived in Cuffley for 38 years and both of my children attended Cuffley School and then Goffs Secondary school. I worked for Barclays Bank for 32 years and then 14 years as a Practice Manager for a Doctors surgery, before eventually retiring. I have been a Red Cross volunteer for 25 years as a tutor and a first aider. Hopefully some of the skills I have obtained during my working life can be used for the good of the Parish.

PAUL SINGLETON

I have enjoyed living in Northaw for 21 years and having recently retired can devote some time to helping to resolve local issues.



People from all walks of life have been part of the COVID-19 vaccine trials, including healthcare professionals.

MEET THE STAFF

LISA CHAPLIN, LGCI, PSLCC, CPFA, CiLCA
Clerk to the Council and Responsible Financial Officer (RFO)

Parish.clerk@northawcuffleypc.org.uk

Lisa joined the Council as Interim Clerk in March 2020 and became Clerk in Feb 2021. She manages the team who run the Parish Council Office and Services. As the Proper Officer of the Council, Lisa also provides professional guidance and support to the Council.

SALLY GRIFFITHS
Office Manager

Officemanager@northawcuffleypc.org.uk

Sally joined the Council in November 2020. Based at our offices at Maynard Place, Cuffley, Sally will usually be your first point of contact for your enquiries to the Council.

LINDA SMART
Parish Warden and Handyperson.

Linda can be contacted through the Parish Council Offices.

Linda has been with the council since May 2015. Come rain or shine, Linda will be found out and about around Northaw and Cuffley, while she carries out her maintenance duties.

JOEL STREATER
Groundsman

Joel can be contacted through the Parish Council Offices.

Having joined the Council in December 2016, Joel deals with the day to day maintenance of our King George V Playing Fields and other Parish Council Grounds.

HOW TO KEEP IN TOUCH

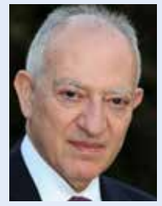
We are always happy to hear from you.

The Council Offices are located at 7 Maynard Place, Cuffley, EN6 4JA, and are open Mon – Fri: 11.00 – 13.00 and 14.00 – 16.00.

If you can't drop in, please call us on **01707 875825** or email us using **officemanager@northawcuffleypc.org.uk** .

Your other local representatives for Northaw and Cuffley

Borough Councillors:
Ward: Northaw and Cuffley

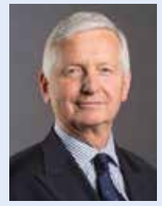


George Michaelides
Tel: **01707 644221**
Email: **George.michaelides@welhat.gov.uk**

Bernard Sarson
Tel: **01707 266836**
Email: **Bernard.Sarson@welhat.gov.uk**

Simon Wrenn
Tel: **07974 398540**
Email: **simon.wrenn@welhat.gov.uk**

County Councillor:
Division: Hatfield Rural
(Essenden, Hatfield, North Mymms, Northaw and Cuffley)



Stephen Boulton
Tel: **01707 655999**
Email: **stephen.boulton@hertfordshire.gov.uk**

MP: Broxbourne
(inc. Northaw and Cuffley)

Charles Walker, MP
Tel: **01992 479972** (local office)
Email: **walkerc@parliment.uk**

Parish Map showing designated green spaces

Local Plan Update

– Councillor Knichel

In 2016 Welwyn & Hatfield Borough Council (WHBC) began drafting their Local Plan document, shaping the future of local development until 2032, with an expectation of implementation in mid-2020.

For those of you who have been following this over the years you must be thinking "Will this ever end?" and the simple answer is "Yes" (...we just don't know when...).

Where are we now?

In short, we are in pretty good shape. About 15 months ago we were looking at around 500 new homes on prime greenbelt with another 500 likely to follow in the next Local Plan.

Fierce local objection, to the location and scale of development proposed, resulted in vast numbers of comments and objections submitted. During the public consultation in 2019 WHBC received some 10,000 objections borough wide – Northaw & Cuffley residents accounted for 4,000. We didn't know it at the time, but it was this volume of objections that would eventually help turn the tide.

The result? The number of homes went up from 300 to 480. Maybe payback for being such a nuisance? At that point I did question the value of submitting objections if all it did was to have the opposite effect.

We then had the first of two 'wins'.

1) WHBC voted to remove all 'High Harm' Sites from the greenbelt and lower the overall housing target. This immediately removed 3 proposed sites, lowering our target from 480 to 150. This was due to a political shift within the council. The Conservatives lost their council majority, and the opposition (Labour & Lib Dem) parties championed a shift toward a lower housing targets and protection of the greenbelt. This didn't go down too well with the Planning Inspector (the change in policy, not the change in political power) but sent out the right signal that the Local Plan was about to take a different direction.
2) During the hearing sessions (where the Planning Inspector hears all the arguments for different sites) we fielded a strong team to argue our case. The interim report from the Inspector acknowledged:

a. Traffic is a major issue (something that had been ignored up until then)
b. Cuffley has too much development in comparison to similar villages
c. Cuffley is not in a 'sustainable' location – with no public transport links to Welwyn & Hatfield

The result of this is that he recognises the comments that residents have made and, in many ways, agrees.

So a combination of political changes and residents involvement has resulted in a significant shift on where we were. But we are not out of the woods yet.

What happens next?

We genuinely are entering the final rounds but we are facing 3 challenges

- Hertfordshire County Council believe that junction changes will mitigate local traffic problems, leaving Cuffley to cope with all the developments in the village, plus 1,000 new homes in Goffs Oak and West Cheshunt
- More homes are required to meet the housing target – the inspector may still approve some Cuffley developments if the traffic issue cannot be proven.
- Developers will use whatever means they can to get their sites back in to the Local Plan. They will invest in any legal resource necessary to do this and we need to be prepared.

We will keep you updated through zoom sessions and posts on the website so keep in touch so we can keep you updated. But if you have ANY questions or ANY concerns then just let us know. Why listen to chatter on social media some which is so far off course it's the stuff of fantasy so if anyone wants to know the true facts then just get in touch.

A Neighbourhood Plan for Cuffley and Northaw

– Councillor Stubbs

The Parish Council has restarted the process of preparing a Neighbourhood Plan which will set out the vision for our Parish together with local planning policies. We first started the Plan in 2016 but the process was interrupted due to the uncertainty surrounding the Local Plan. Now that the Local Plan is one way or the other going to be determined it is appropriate that we put in place a Neighbourhood Plan.

The Neighbourhood Plan is part of a National and Local hierarchy of statutory planning documents which taken together control all aspects of the planning system. The Neighbourhood Plan is typically prepared by a Parish Council and sets out detailed local planning policies, major projects, and initiatives which together establish a vision for the area. However, there are constraints on a Neighbourhood Plan; it cannot deal with Greenbelt issues nor override Local or National Planning Policies. But it can establish local planning policies – for example, the composition of the retail offer on Station Road which could limit dining outlets in favour of retail outlets such as greengrocers, fishmongers etc; or limit back garden development.

The Neighbourhood Plan can also act as a long term plan for the area in terms of key projects. For instance, upgrading Cuffley Playing Fields. It is likely that the Parish Council will be gifted a major site plus cash through a planning agreement negotiated by Welwyn Hatfield Council in relation to the residential development site between Greenfields and the playing fields. The current ambition is that an all-weather pitch with floodlights should be built on the gifted site plus a new pavilion. This could be a transformational anchor project leading to several other projects on the playing fields.

Station Road is increasingly become a hostile environment for shoppers and pedestrians. How can it be reclaimed as the high street for the village which is pedestrian friendly and a pleasant place to visit? If we could frame a scheme of deliverable environmental improvements this could change the overall feel of Station Road leading to increased footfall and usage of local outlets. Environmental improvements in Station Road could be part of the future vision.

The Parish Council has recently formed a Steering Group which includes 16 residents which will generate and evaluate a range of policies and projects which will eventually form the core of the Neighbourhood Plan. The Steering

Group is supported by AECOM who are expert planning consultants specialising in Neighbourhood Planning.

Ultimately to become a Statutory Document the Neighbourhood Plan will need to be supported through a Local Referendum. Once adopted it will then have legal force and will impact on future Planning Applications and decisions made by Welwyn Hatfield Council.

Once a Neighbourhood Plan is in place the Parish Council will receive substantial new funding from developers through the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) being brought in by Welwyn Hatfield Council. CIL is a tax on development and will apply to all new build residential developments from one unit upwards; it will replace the current process of developer's contributions through ad hoc negotiated agreements. Access to this new source of funding will underpin the financing of new projects included in the final Neighbourhood Plan.

It is not too late for you to contribute and make your views known. Please forward any comments to **councillor.stubbs@northawcuffleypc.org.uk**

A message from your local Sergeant

I'm Sergeant James Stopford and I lead the Welwyn Hatfield South Safer Neighbourhood Team (SNT) which covers Cuffley and Northaw. The SNT are your traditional 'bobbies on the beat', tasked with tackling local neighbourhood issues that affect you and every three months we set priorities to focus on. At the moment one of our key priorities is stopping shoplifting in Cuffley High Street but you can have a say in what we prioritise next by using 'echo' - our community voice platform. Simply visit **www.bit.ly/police-welhat** and share your views. Please don't hesitate to stop and chat if you see us on patrol – we're here to help you. You can keep in touch with our work by following us on social media:
Facebook **www.facebook.com/welwynhatfieldpolice**
Twitter **www.twitter.com/welhatpolice**

It's also worth signing up to OWL, which is our Neighbourhood Watch scheme: **www.owl.co.uk**

Vacancy for Committee Member at the Kidston Institute

The Kidston Institute is a registered charity located at 7 Northaw Road West. The institute provides facilities for Snooker and Table Tennis and the main hall is used by the Squiggles Nursery.

Charity Commission rules require a Committee of 14 individuals to oversee the management of the premises. Seven of these must be members using the facilities and the other seven have to be Councillors, Church nominees or other local representatives.

There is currently a vacancy for one Northaw Senior Citizen. If you are interested and can spare the time to attend just three relatively short meetings each year, usually two committee meetings and the AGM in September, please contact Michael Green on **01707 873644** for more information.

Photographs courtesy of Sue Harden

Thank you to the mystery knitter

...and finally a huge thank you to Cuffley's mystery knitter who made everyone smile by bringing Christmas Cheer to Station Road in December.

Photography curtesy of Mike Clark

Northaw & Cuffley Residents Association

Welcoming back the Parish Council Update Magazine, the committee would also like to offer our appreciation of the work the Parish Council have been involved with, fighting to lessen the Green Belt development within our two rural villages under the emerging Local Plan.

Turning to the work completed by the NCRA Committee for the benefit of members in Northaw & Cuffley during a difficult 12 months, our annual leaflet and our web site give details of the types of matters in which we continue to be involved in and the work we do in support of the community. The Committee have taken on individual cases on behalf of members as they have arisen. Depending on the nature of the issue we have been able to assist residents to get a satisfactory conclusion. Also, when asked to do so by members, we do our best to signpost them to the correct contact points to help them resolve their problems. With the intention of being as helpful as possible we continue with updates about events or actions likely to affect residents, either by email or on our website.

We now hold our monthly meetings on-line via Zoom or when possible in person. We welcome you to join us (details on our website).

If you're not currently a member of NCRA, it's just £5 per household per year. The 2021 leaflet will be coming through your door soon. We thank you in advance for your continued membership. Please see our website for details NCRAGB.UK

Interested in joining our committee? Please do get in contact for an informal chat. It doesn't take up a lot of your time but it does reward you with being able to 'give back' to the community and help to protect the reasons we live in either of our two lovely rural villages.

Looking forward - we wish you all a safe and prosperous year ahead - if you need us we are here to help wherever we can.

Contact us by email:
info@ncragb.uk

WWW.NCRAGB.UK

We've been away for a while, so we need your Feedback!

1. What do you think of the new look for Update?
2. We usually publish 4 issues each year, are you happy with this?
3. What would you like to see more of in future editions of Update?
4. Would you be interested in contributing to, or advertising in, future issues?
5. Would you like us to include local business information or just have community news?

We would love to hear from you!

Please send your thoughts and ideas about Update to us on **officemanager@northawcuffleypc.org.uk**

How to get in touch with us

Northaw and Cuffley Parish Council, 7 Maynard Place, Cuffley, EN6 4JA

Although our Council Offices are currently closed, your Councillors and the Council Staff are still available to help you with your concerns.

Councillors can be contacted using the Council Members page on our website: **https://northawcuffleypc.org.uk/council-members/**

Sally, our Office Manager, will be happy to assist with any general enquiries and can be contacted using **01707 875825** or **officemanager@northawcuffleypc.org.uk**
Our Clerk, Lisa Chaplin, can be reached on **07375 962 772** or **parish.clerk@northawcuffleypc.org.uk**

You can also find useful information, both on the Council and on Local Resources, at our website **www.northawcuffleypc.org.uk**

If you would like to keep up to date with regular news from the Parish Council, including general items of local interest, please go to our website and sign up for our newsletter. You can unsubscribe anytime. **www.northawcuffleypc.org.uk/newsletter/**

Contact details for the Borough and County Councils are listed below with details of responsibilities for each council.

Your other local councils and their responsibilities

HERTFORDSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

www.hertfordshire.gov.uk
email: **contact@hertfordshire.gov.uk**
Tel: **0300 123 4040**

Responsibilities:

- Highways and Transport (Street lights, traffic lights, potholes)
- Household Waste Recycling Centres
- Adult and Children's Social Care
- School admissions, school meals and transport
- Children's Centres
- Fostering and adoption
- Disability support services
- Disabled parking (Blue badges)
- Libraries
- Trading standards
- Fire and rescue

WELWYN AND HATFIELD BOROUGH COUNCIL

www.welhat.gov.uk
Email: **contact-whc@welhat.gov.uk**
Tel: **01707 357 000**

Welwyn and Hatfield Borough Council deals with issues relating to:

- Waste and recycling collections
- Fly tipping, litter and graffiti
- Allotments, woodlands and green spaces
- Anti-social behaviour
- Council Tax
- Parking and council car parks
- Council housing
- Homelessness
- Cemetery Services
- Benefits
- Public health and protection (Air and noise pollution, food inspections, H&S at work, licensing)
- Planning and building