



Ongar Town Council

Annual Town Council Assembly

Friday 9th May 2025

6.00pm

Budworth Hall

5 High St, Chipping Ongar, Ongar CM5 9JG

Chairman

Councillor Jason Gunn

Civic Awards 2025

Chosen by the residents of Ongar from the public survey:

Michelle Russell
Kelly Stone
Amanda McGregor
Catherine Honeywell

Chosen by Ongar Town Council from the public survey:

Tracy Fuller
Toni Fry

Stalls from community groups will be present for constituents to visit and talk to representatives in addition to this the Ongar Millenium History Society will also open the museum for you to visit.

Light refreshments will be served at the end of the meeting.

USEFUL COUNCIL CONTACT NUMBERS

ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL 0345 743 05
EPPING FOREST DISTRICT COUNCIL 01992 564000
ONGAR TOWN COUNCIL 01277 365348

Report of the Chairman of The Town Council

As Chairman of the town council, it falls to me to chair the annual Town Council Assembly, which is not a Town council meeting but a meeting of the local electorate. So, I warmly welcome you all here this evening.

Thank you for attending the Annual Town meeting and civic awards, it is lovely to see you all here this evening.

This short report shows some of the activities OTC and its constituent councillors have been involved in this year; here are a few of the highlights:

- Organising and running the 80th D Day remembrance event on Thursday 6th June 2024 at the Ongar Memorial by lighting the beacon with residents in attendance.
- Attending the unveiling of the Medieval Gold Coins found in Ongar at the Epping Forest District Museum on Thursday 13th June 2024. The council had previously awarded a grant to the museum to acquire them.
- Attending the Ongar Pétanque Eastern Region Junior Squad Training and meeting Colin Roper – President of Pétanque England.
- Meeting with the Ongar and Bantham Bowls Club
- Meeting with the community police officer in the ‘Lets Talk’ monthly meetings for Ongar residents.
- Attending the AGM for the Ongar and District Twinning Association.
- Attending and engaging with the Ongar Millennium History Society monthly meeting.
- Attending the AGM for Budworth Hall.
- Organising and delivering the annual Remembrance Sunday Service at the Ongar War Memorial.
- Organising the 2024 ‘Town Councils Christmas Window Competition’ for local businesses. Running a stall on the Christmas lights switch on and festival, meeting residents and engaging with the community.
- Attending the Ongar Academy’s first school production of ‘Bugsy Malone.’
- Attending the Ongar Neighbourhood Plan residents’ meetings with regards to new housing developments in Ongar.
- Attending the Epping Forest District Museums launch of the temporary exhibition ‘Calm and Courageous, The Second World War Home Front’, on Saturday 5th April 2025.
- Attending the Town Festivals steering group.
- Taking part in community litter picks.
- Attending the cheque given by Persimmons Homes to the Ongar Scouts.
- Organising a welcome reception for the Cerizay Twinning group to celebrate the 40th visit to Ongar as part of the Ongar and District Twinning Association, the chairman gave a speech and presented the group with a commissioned piece of artwork from Ongar Town Council celebrating Ongar’s Heritage painted by artist Mr Joe Charman on behalf of the Ongar Arts Society.
- Attending the official opening of Budworth Hall after the renovations this year.
- Attending and being part of the parade for the Ongar Town Summer festival.
- Organising and running the 80th VE Day act of remembrance at the Ongar War Memorial, by lighting the beacon and giving readings to the residents and dignitaries that attended. In addition to this raising the VE day flag.
- Planting a tree to commemorate Felicitie Barnes the founder of the Ongar and District Twinning Association with a plaque in the nature reserve.

- Awarding grants to local groups.
- Regular updates on the Ongar Town Council website and social media.
- Commenting on 59 planning applications as statutory authority and speaking at District Council planning committees (on behalf of residents).
- Meeting with developers, Epping Forest District Council and Ongar Neighbourhood Planning group with regards to the 8 new developments in Ongar.
- Provision and emptying for 10 dog waste bins.
- Provisions of cemetery and providing burial plots.
- Reporting Highways issues to Essex County Council.
- Maintaining open spaces and play areas.
- Maintaining 43 allotment plots at Castle Street and 13 plots at Moreton Road allotment site.

Financially, OTC continues to maintain sufficiency of its financial reserves alongside designated funds that are annually increased. This coming year the precept amount is £313,275.00.

Update on last year's priorities and milestones:

Staffing Structure

We have employed a full-time clerk/RFO and are looking to expand our office staff further to meet the demands of the Town Council work and make progress on both our statutory responsibilities and community engagement.

CCTV

We have awarded Epping Forest District Council with the contract for the CCTV cameras in Ongar; this will mean that they will become part of the existing infrastructure of cameras in our town.

Planning and Environment

We have continued to work with the developers and Epping Forest District Council on the 8 new planned developments in Ongar, listening to the views of our residents and working with external partners for example, The Ongar Neighbourhood Planning Group.

Play areas

From last year's annual statutory inspections, we have been working to update and repair play equipment and will continue to do so to improve these facilities for the children and families in our community.

Cemetery

Our ground staff have worked hard to improve the cemetery and surrounding area to this.

Ongar Nature Reserve

We successfully managed to get a bid from the Rural England Prosperity fund (EFDC) and were awarded £3,832 to improve our nature reserve, which has meant that we have been able to purchase two benches in commemoration of the coronation of HM King Charles III, litter bin, additional signage, clearance of areas to create a

wildflower meadow area, all of which will enhance this area. We are currently looking at longer term funding so that this natural environment area can be maintained for all to enjoy. Our outdoor staff have been working hard to improve this natural asset for our residents to enjoy.

Looking to the future the priorities and ambitions of the Council include:

- Working with the Ongar Neighbourhood Planning Group to ensure that both planning and additional resources are used to enhance and benefit the town and community.
- Enhancing and improving our open spaces, nature reserve and play areas.
- Working with our wider community partners, including our clubs, societies, and schools to enhance the town we live in.
- Initiating our first annual residents survey to set key priorities in the Town Councils new strategic plan

OTC are responsible for four play parks, a recreation field, street lighting, allotments, the nature reserve, and the cemetery.

Ongar Town Council continues to be committed to serving and improving the lives for all its residents.

Ongar Town Council 2024/2025 A Year in Photographs



Local Councils - Who does what?

Within the borders of Essex there are County, District and Town and Parish councils. All have clearly defined roles, although there maybe duplication and overlap of some of these responsibilities.

**(ECC) = Essex
County**

**(EFDC) = Epping
Forest District**

**(OTC) =
Ongar Town**

CHILDRENS SERVICES

Schools: Nursery, primary, secondary, and special pre-school education
Youth, adult, family, and community education,
student support (ECC)

Children's and families 'service including Welfare, fostering, adoption and child protection. (ECC)

Youth centres, youth justice secure accommodation and youth offending teams (ECC)

HIGHWAYS

Street Lighting (ECC)

Traffic management and road safety (ECC)

Highway Maintenance (ECC)

Streetlights marked with a label beginning with '6' followed by 3 digits. (OTC)

Bus Shelters, street furniture (some) (OTC)

PASSENGER TRANSPORT

Public transport,discounted travel schemes and local (ECC)

Transport coordination (ECC)

SOCIAL CARE

Adult Services (ECC)

Services for older people including nursing home,residential
and day care needs (ECC)

Services for people with a p[hysical and or learning disability
or mental health need (ECC)

Asylum Seekers (ECC)

Employment Support Services (ECC)

HOUSING

Social Housing (EFDC)

Housing Benefit and welfare services (EFDC)

Homelessness (EFDC)

Housing strategy (EFDC)

CULTURAL SERVICES

Culture and heritage including archives and museums (ECC)

Parish Archive (OTC)

Libraries and information services (ECC)

LEISURE AND RECREATION

Recreation and sport (EFDC) (also County Council)

Open spaces, common land, footpaths (OTC)

Playgrounds (OTC)

Allotments (OTC)

Nature reserve (OTC)

BURIAL GROUNDS (SOME) (OTC)

WASTE AND RECYCLING

Collection (EFDC)

Disposal (ECC)

Dog Bins that are owned by OTC (OTC)

Litter bins owned by OTC (OTC)

PLANNING

Building and development control (EFDC)

Consultation, public enquiry representation (OTC)

Planning policy including conservation and listed buildings (ECC)

Environmental initiatives (ECC)

Economic development (ECC)

WIDER STATUTORY FUNCTIONS

Collection of council tax and non domestic rates (business rates) (EFDC)

Setting the local town and parish council rate (Precept) (OTC)

Registrations of births, deaths and marriages (EFDC)

Elections: Local, national including registration of electors (EFDC)

Emergency Planning (EFDC)

Local Land Charges EFDC)

CRIME AND DISORDER

Community safety and CCTV (EFDC)

Environmental enforcement (EFDC)

Anti-social behaviour (EFDC)

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