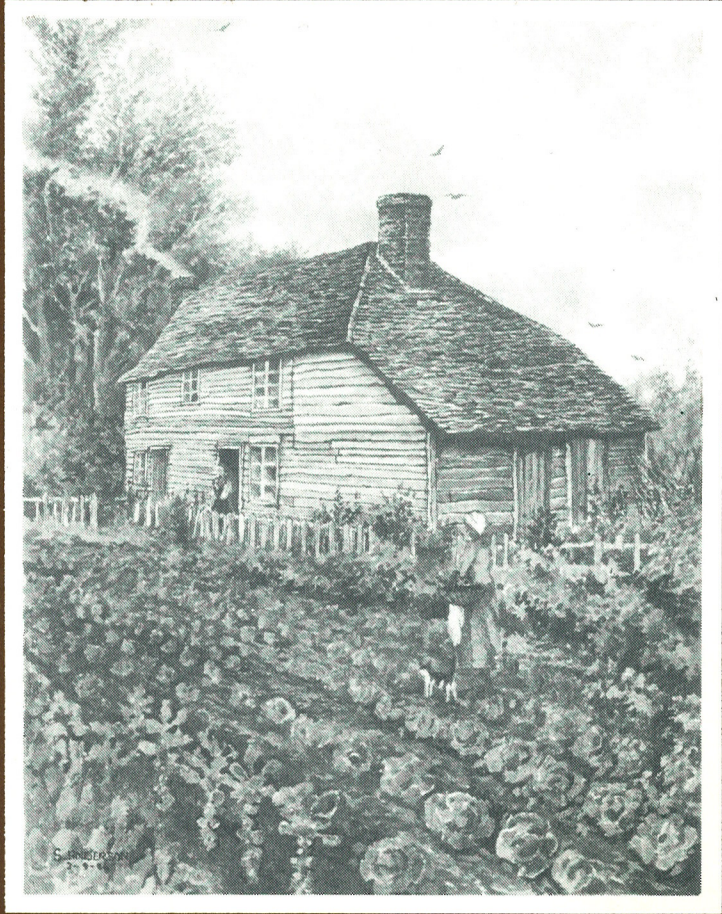


On Her Majesty's Service

WASC 1596

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Epping Forest District Council Annual Report 1985-86



and Commentary for 1886

See entry for
1886 Commentary
on Planning and
Development for
reference to R&PF.

Cover Illustration: Forest Cottage Woodside,
(originally two seventeenth century cottages) as they
may have looked in 1886, from an original
watercolour painting by S.J. Anderson.

Title Page. Engraving of Epping dated 1886.

Epping Forest District Council
Annual Report 1985~86



and Commentary for 1886



1886 Commentary

FOREWORD TO COMMENTARY FOR 1886

The initial idea of producing a comparison between local government in 1886 and 1986 seemed quite a simple one. All that would be needed would be to gather the various facts and figures for 1886 and set them against the headings we use for the current reports, i.e. Housing, Highways, etc. After all it was only 100 years ago and not much could have changed since.

Early optimism soon disappeared when it was discovered that very much had changed. If we had chosen ten years before or fifteen years on it might have been different but in 1886 there was no local government as we understand it now.

Facts do exist although they had to be researched and hunted for. Few figures for the period exist that would have any sense in a comparison. Local government is all to do with the way ordinary people run their lives but the aspects of history best recorded at the time were the momentous event and even the earlier photographer (with a few notable exceptions) went for the special occasion rather than the ordinary.

It is very difficult to write about Planning in 1886 when there was no Planning at all or Housing when there was no Council and therefore no Council Housing. Certain things did emerge, one was the vast difference in living conditions between urban and rural areas. Epping itself was considered to be rural at the time but there was a distinct difference between it and the really rural communities. Sanitation in the form of water supply and sewage disposal were of prime importance and they more than anything else led to the formation of modern local government.

Because the facts are more available for some subject headings than others, because we cannot always make a comparison (as previously shown with Planning and Housing) and because some subjects such as sanitation would have overlapped several of the subject headings we have tried to do something a little different.

We have tried to produce a word picture describing life under each of the subject headings but allowing ourselves a little licence when we have found it hard to make comparisons. Just listing facts can be boring so we have attempted to dress our word pictures with the facts that do exist.

1886 was a period of great change, to list all the Acts of Parliament and other occurrences in detail which led to the formation of modern local government would take more space than this commentary provides. Just the problems of Epping water supply would have been sufficient to fill these pages. Also the changes taking place were very complex, they were not always even taking place at the same pace.

Although 1886 is our commentary year and although we have been lucky at times and found material relating to that year we have also had to use material from years each side of it in order to build up our picture. We doubt if life changed all that much for most people but where possible we have shown these dates.

We will end this foreword by at least trying to show, in simplified form, the development of local government up to and just past our period.

The beginning of local government was the Parish Vestry, lasting from the 17th to the late 19th centuries. The Vestry meeting of ratepayers held twice annually established a rate which in turn helped to support the poor, roads, etc. They would have looked upon the Justices of the Peace much as we look upon County Councillors today. Much of the story of local government is of how the various powers of the Vestry were removed to different bodies and how they were eventually re-assembled to form local government as we now know it.

1834 Poor Law Amendment Act, Formation of the Unions (Board of Guardians) to found and oversee the workhouses (Guardians went on until 1929).

1839 Formation of County Police.

1848-50 Public Health Act, Boards of Health responsible for water, sewage and highways. Problems were not resolved by this act.

1872 Public Health Act, divided the county into rural and urban sanitary authorities.

1888 Founding of Essex County Council, virtually replacing the power of the Justices of the Peace in relation to the Vestry.

1894 Act permitting the setting up of Urban and Rural District Councils, which in turn were really derived from the Rural and Urban Sanitary Authorities.



Dr. Charles Hurford, First Chairman of Epping Urban District Council 1896.

Foreword 1

I do hope that very many of you, the residents of our District, will find the time and make the effort to read this Annual Report.

The contents are of concern to you for the report sets out the numerous services provided by the Officers and Staff of Epping Forest District Council arising from the policy decisions debated and decided by members elected by you.

The report will, I believe, give you a better understanding of the way your Council works.

This year's theme is the contrast in people's lives between 1886 and 1986.

It does us good to consider the great changes that have come about these hundred years: the greater opportunities available to us all, the more comfortable and easy existence we enjoy and the richer material life that is part of our daily routine.

The report will also, I trust, give rise to thoughts which will lead to greater interest and participation by many more of you in our civic and community life in Epping Forest District.

Chairman of the Council

I. E. Abbey, MA (Oxon)



Message from the Leader 2

There are two basic constituents of Local Authority activity: one is the service required by the majority of ratepayers and the other is the ability to provide the money to pay for it. Both are difficult to quantify. The amount of rate is a starting point for judgement as it is the only form and specific element in the equation, the rest is a matter of opinion. 90% of the rate is controlled by the County Council and by the Police, so we are directly responsible for only 10%.

Every effort is made by this Conservative Council to keep the District rate within reasonable bounds and provide a sound service; each item of expenditure is carefully monitored with a view to controlling cost and productivity. Savings made have been used to supplement the county's highways repair budget. Performance review teams were set up in anticipation of competition with the private sector. The more efficient systems of refuse collection and grass cutting are evidence to this.

The improvement of town centres has continued according to programme and this year the phase in Loughton was completed. Opportunities for providing additional car parking facilities have also been taken. Housing for first time buyers was provided at a few locations whilst maintaining the policy of sale of council housing. Sheltered accommodation for the elderly has had its priority and some £3,750,000.00 was spent on housing maintenance and repairs. A new luncheon club for our senior citizens was opened at Traps Hill.

Recreation and Leisure activities have progressed with improvements made at the pools and sport centres.

The "New Horizons" scheme for our retired folk has proved most popular and has been expanded and improved. The facilities at North Weald continue to flourish. The new gymnasium (of international standing) was completed during the year and new hangars for aircraft display have been erected.

Development in general is keenly reviewed. Several local plans were produced. Attention is paid to the relocation of commercial and industrial premises. Employment and Manpower agencies are supported.

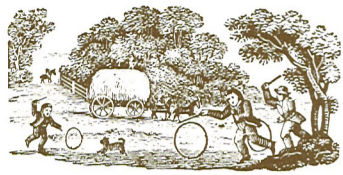
The Council is involved in many changes and proposed changes directed and controlled by other authorities. These include housing defects with the consequential compensation and repairs expenditure for both private and public housing; boundary appeals affecting our north western boundary and that with the London boroughs (Department of the Environment); Housing benefits and rate rebates which caused changes in staff deployment (Department of Health and Social Security); The reorganisation of hospitals within the District gave rise to much debate (Health Authorities) and similarly the drastic restructuring of Secondary Schools, and the management and provision of public transport (County Council); Noise nuisance on the M25, our second motorway is still causing difficulty and discussions continue (Ministry of Transport). There is also the Treasury's influence on financial matters.

Although we operate within so many constrictions and suffer a great deal of criticism, there is much of which members and staff can be proud.

Leader of the Council

A. J. T. Bryant, BEM





1886 Commentary

PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

The period surrounding 1886 was one of great change, not only in local government but in the country generally. It was a period of what we would today call 'technological advance'. The railways were carving their way through the countryside, in Germany the first car was running, we were just three years away from the first motion picture camera and even the telephone had been invented in 1873.

Yet in the area now covered by Epping Forest District Council people were still drawing drinking water from shallow polluted ponds, people were dying from Cholera and other 'sanitation' related diseases. The roads were in a deplorable state, the workhouse was at its peak, it really was a time of contrasts.

The situation was not helped by the large movements of population, always from rural areas to urban areas, sometimes rural areas became urban and very quickly too. Although village populations may have increased it was mostly because of the increased birthrate, not because of a movement of population to them.

Indeed many people left Essex villages not only for London and the growing towns in south Essex but much further afield to Canada and the United States, such was the poverty of rural England.

As an example, in 1801 the village of Quendon had a population of 123 increasing to 171 by 1891. In 1801 West Ham had a population of just 6,485 yet by 1891 it had grown to 204,893.

The one thing that was needed under such circumstances was efficient planning and this just did not exist. We were still eight years away from the forming of District Councils and the Sanitary Authorities did not cover the same aspects of planning as a modern Council.

The best example we can therefore show is what can go wrong and for this we must refer to Colonel Brackenbury who was coming to the end of his term as Superintendent of the Royal Gunpowder Factory at Waltham Abbey. He was asked by his nominated successor Colonel Noble to give in writing his views on the condition of the official quarters provided. Colonel Brackenbury having evidently voiced some disturbing comments, his reply is well worth quoting.

... I consider this house to be in a very unsatisfactory condition as regards the health of those who are to inhabit it. My family have suffered very distinctly from living here and though for many reasons it would have suited me to remain here my wife entreated me not to make any effort in that direction because she considered the place so unhealthy. We have had three cases of diphtheria in the house, two in my own family, one in a servant. The last occurred after the tracing out and eradication of some old and unknown cesspools: one just outside my study window, the other under the floor of one of the offices. Thus though we unearthed and put to rights what may have caused diphtheria in my daughter the cause of the attack on the servant is still unaccounted for.

The house is thoroughly infested with rats, the cellar is always flooded in winter and needs to be lined with concrete. At present it acts as a stagnant pool exactly under the drawing room.

I consider that the house ought to be put into the hands of the Engineers for a complete overhauling before a new family comes into it, as my wife and daughters have been obliged to go to Switzerland to get the poison out of them, I shall be happy to give up the house about the beginning of next month when the boy's Easter holidays are over ...

Armed with this letter Colonel Noble wrote a few days later to the Accommodations Directorate of the War Office.

... I yesterday, in company with the Superintendent of Works visited the premises and made a careful inspection of them. The house may be shortly described as being in the last stage of dilapidation. It is largely built of wood, every timber of which is rotten. A branch of the river, which is now to some extent an open sewer, runs under the house! Another branch which partly drains the town of Waltham runs close to the house through the garden. Even the Inspector of Works had not a word to say in its favour.

I find that so long ago as 1866 the premises were practically condemned, and a plan dated 25/1/67 which I saw in the Royal Engineers Office was prepared for the erection of a new Official residence.

I called upon the local Medical Officer and he corroborated Colonel Brackenbury's letter in every particular and informed me that he would not venture to advise anyone to occupy such premises.

Under the circumstances I have the honour to request that, if necessary, a Board of Officers be assembled to pronounce an opinion on the house and that I may be provided with a suitable accommodation elsewhere ...

The Director of Accommodation sent the correspondence to the Director of Works and Furnishing, who agreed that 'if this house is as described, which we may presume it to be, it would be very wrong to retain it as an Officer's Quarters in whatever way it may be repaired' - and sought a report on it from an Inspector of Works, who succeeded in producing an even more damning report on the building.

'I have inspected the quarters of the Superintendent and have no hesitation in saying that never before saw so unsatisfactory a quarter for an Officer.

The building is a very old one and is partly of brick, partly of wood. It has settled in every direction and the floors and ceilings are out of level in every direction. In many cases the doors and windows are distorted and squeezed out of shape.

There are two nice rooms in it - the drawing rooms and bedroom over. The rest are low, ill arranged and unfit for occupation. A back water from the river passes under one wing of the house and through the stable yard.

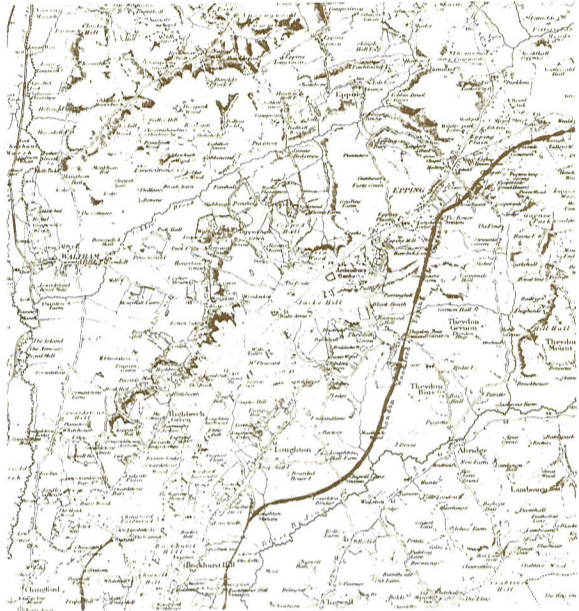
There have been constant complaints of the sanitary condition and such remedial measures as are possible have been carried out, but demolition is the only real one. The situation, surrounded as it is by water and liable to floodings, is not good and I think any new residence had better be provided on a new site ...'

Colonel Noble duly got his 'suitable accommodation elsewhere' in Waltham Abbey, and the old quarters were duly demolished in 1892, being replaced in 1893 by a handsome brick residence on the same site.

These quarters were probably typical of housing in Waltham Abbey, modern planning would not have allowed erection of the building in the first place.



Drawing water from an outside pump.



Part of a contemporary Ordnance survey map showing how rural the area was in 1886.

Planning and Development 3

POSITION STATEMENT

Building Control

Enforcement of the Building Regulations and associated legislation to secure the health, safety, welfare and convenience of persons in or about buildings, conservation of fuel and power and preventing waste, undue consumption, misuse or contamination of water. Deposited applications and notices are checked in pursuance of the Regulations, negotiations are carried out with applicants and advice is given on the Building Regulations to members of the public. Inspections of work in progress take place both for Building Regulations purposes and to inspect repair systems in accordance with PRC licences.

Present position

Building Regulation applications are being dealt with within the prescribed period extended as necessary. The Building Regulations 1985 came into operation in November 1985, the Building (Prescribed Fees) Regulations were revised at the same time. During the last twelve months the first licences under the PRC Schemes for repair of designated dwellings were issued and works were commenced on some houses in accordance with these.

The Improvement Grant section is responsible for the Implementation of the Housing Act 1985 as regards Improvement Grants. This Act consolidated all of the previous Housing Acts which had provisions relating to improvement grants. The section also implements the general improvement area programme.

Looking to the Future

Major advances were made with Local Plans, the blueprints for the 1980s. The Roding Valley Local Plan (Loughton/Buckhurst Hill/Chigwell area) was formally adopted. The two Local Plans for the remainder of the District (except the Ongar and Potter Street areas) were printed and placed on statutory deposit in 1986. Plans for Loughton town centre and Ongar were reviewed. Monitor reports on housing, employment and the environment were produced; special surveys of shopping habits and open space were carried out.

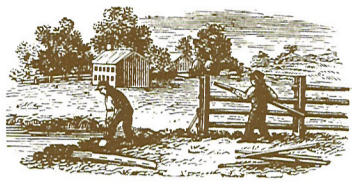
Plan implementation continued to move ahead. Expansion of Harlow, physically (in the form of Brentnall Park) and administratively, was resisted. Key development was promoted, eg. hotel at Waltham Abbey, workshop units at Loughton. Close liaison was maintained with the LVRPA over the review of the Park Plan. On the employment front, the availability of industrial land/premises was advanced, the Council took a lead in the Industry Year 1986 campaign and began a study into tourism promotion.

Encouraging progress was made with the Conservation programme. An enhancement scheme at York Hill, Loughton was implemented and a local nature reserve designated in the Roding Valley. Improvement schemes at Epping and the other major town centres were investigated. Plans to protect and open up the historic sites at Netherhall, Copped Hall and Ongar Castle were further advanced. The Epping Forest Countryside project started in 1986, in conjunction with the Countryside Commission. Tree protection, tree planting and landscaping continued as required.

Representations were made about major proposals in adjoining areas, road proposals (eg. Ongar by-pass/relief road), transfer of GLC land holdings at Hainault Forest and Woodredon/Warlies Park Estates, and secondary school reorganisation. The administrative arrangements for and effects of the deregulation of bus services were closely scrutinised in the interests of local public transport users.

The Statistics

	1983/84	1984/85	1985/86
Net cost of Planning service	£705,797	£725,277	£772,540
Planning net cost per 1,000 population	£6,074	£6,307	£6,718
Planning applications received	1,500	1,892	1,780
Applications determined within			
8 weeks	68%	70%	72%
8-12 weeks	24%	22%	21%
Over 12 weeks	8%	8%	7%
Enforcement Action Authorised	65	59	67
Appeals	140	157	159
Local Plan Cover - Cumulative	population 66% Area 11%	population 69% Area 29%	population 94% Area 95%



1886 Commentary

HIGHWAYS

With the advent of the car just a year away, with steam traction engines being used to pull heavy loads along Essex roads, you would have thought that 1886 would have been a good year for the roads. Quite the opposite in fact, for a number of reasons roads were in a terrible state and it took not the car but probably the bicycle to institute their recovery.

To understand what was happening you have to look back a long time.

From laws passed in Tudor times each parish was responsible until 1848 for the maintenance of its own roads. Part of the rate raised at Vestry meetings was used under the supervision of the appointed Parish Surveyor for the repair of said roads. However such repairs were frequently only reluctantly carried out, often not at all, the post of surveyor

was not a welcomed one and led infrequently to appearances before the Justices of the Peace.

Main roads became so bad that they were literally dangerous to travel on, if you were not set upon by brigands roaming the countryside then you were at serious risk of injuring yourself.

A good example was the road from Harlow Bush



Toll houses on the Epping Road by the Blacksmith's Arms at Thornwood.

Common to Woodford. A 1689 Act of Parliament providing for repair and maintenance of what was an important road was not successful and in 1723 a new Act was passed for the repair of the road. This Act provided for tolls to be charged to road users and for a tollgate to be erected at Thornwood Common.

The situation was improved further in 1768 with an Act which enabled the creation of the Epping Highway Trust. A long list of substantial citizens from adjoining parishes were appointed along with the Justices of the Peace in the Hundreds of Harlow, Ongar and the Half Hundred of Waltham to act as trustees, erect turnpikes, collect tolls and maintain the road in a good state. The income from tolls went on improvements and certainly in this particular case provided good roads for the people of North Weald for the first time in their history. So successful was the 1768 Act that the inhabitants of North Weald in 1786 petitioned the Trustees to extend the road through North Weald Gullet, Tylers Cross to Ongar and Chelmsford.

Funds from the tolls even allowed in 1828 for the hill to the Bull and Horseshoes to be lowered to reduce problems caused by the steep incline. There was opposition to tolls, villagers coming and going on a very regular basis objected to paying as did some people who had regular business which caused them to have to pass through them too often for their liking. They could pay 'compound' i.e. a lump sum for a pass. 1850 parish records for Dunmow show considerable opposition to the tolls by local ratepayers (shopkeepers etc.) as it was felt that people would avoid the town rather than pay tolls.



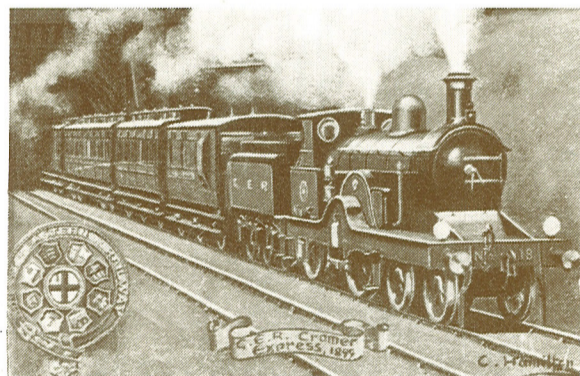
The Road into Chipping Ongar, a steel engraving dated 1832.

1848-50 Boards of Health became responsible for roads, and there is a delightful commentary from an old resident of Waltham Abbey concerning hardcore brought into the town to repair roads much worn by increasing urban traffic, 'The hardcore turned out to be nothing more than the contents of London dustbins, very smelly and totally unsuitable. However this material was used on the job and I myself saw among the muck and debris a number of dead tortoises. Complaints came in from various quarters about the smell which persisted after the road was surfaced'. This was before Tarmac became universal.

Street cleaning was difficult because all urban traffic was horse drawn. It was such a problem that even surviving houses built after 1850 (e.g. Woolard Street, Waltham Abbey) had metal boot scrapers built into the street wall.

The end of the Turnpike Trusts was coming however and the cause was the railways. By the 1850's the traffic using the roads was in decline. Those roads outside the umbrella of the Turnpike Trusts had never been in very good repair as our Waltham Abbey resident would confirm but by this time the Turnpike Trusts were not collecting sufficient revenue to enable them to repair or maintain their roads properly.

The Stratford to Broxbourne railway opened in 1840 and was extended to Harlow in 1841 and Bishops Stortford in 1842. The construction of the



A contemporary locomotive of the Great Eastern Railway.

Stratford-Loughton-Epping-Ongar line in the 1850's and the 1860's was the final blow. In the case of the Epping Highway Trust, it was wound up in 1868 and the Act creating it finally expired in 1870. Thereafter responsibility for maintenance reverted to the Essex Quarter Sessions and by the time we reach 1886 roads were at a very low ebb again used mostly by drovers of livestock, and although responsibility was transferred to Essex County Council, it was not until the popularity of the bicycle

and later the car that they recovered at all.

Highways 4

Within the financial constraints imposed by Essex County Council, the District Engineer and Surveyor's Department continue to provide for the vast array of services to keep residents and visitors safely on the move, whether by foot, vehicle or cycle.

The services include:

- Maintenance and improvement of roads and footways, including Winter gritting
- Transportation planning
- Road Safety
- Street lighting
- Car parking
- Private street works
- Adoption of estate roads
- Public utility reinstatements
- Street cleaning
- Grass cutting of verges
- Maintenance of street furniture
- Maintenance of rural footpaths and bridleways

As you can see, the Council deals with a wide variety of services designed to help the road user, and the total expenditure on these services during 1985/86 was approximately 3,476,610.

During the year, priority was again given to sealing road and footway surfaces and ensuring effective drainage. Owing to budget restrictions, an extensive programme of surface dressing and slurry sealing was undertaken – satisfactory techniques but not those which would be used in ideal circumstances. The District Council made further funds available for the improvement of the street cleansing service and maintenance/reconstruction of many urban footways.

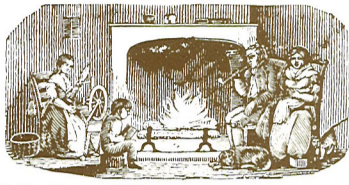
The Council is continuing to press the County Council for increased funds for road and footway maintenance but with overall restrictions on public expenditure it is generally accepted throughout the country that local highways are progressively deteriorating.

Negotiations and detailed discussions are continuing on the introduction of a lorry ban south of the M25 to control the movement of through lorry traffic and to ensure that they use the M25 motorway rather than local roads in the District. Further developments to the motorway network like the South Woodford to Barking relief road and the completion of the M25, together with projects like Stansted Airport expansion, make it all the more important that an H.G.V. ban is introduced.

Improvements to the footway have been undertaken in High Road, Loughton and plans are proceeding on similar improvements. A major car parks survey was carried out during 1984/85 which identified particular problems in Waltham Abbey and Ongar. Sites have now been identified in each of these towns for substantial new car parks and the Council recently acquired the Lambs Garage site in Loughton for public car parking.

The Statistics

	1984/5	1985/6
Total cost of all highway services (operated by District Council as agent for Essex County Council)	£3,471,333	£3,476,610
Net cost per 1,000 population	£30,185	£30,231
Highway length	658 km	658 km
Cost of maintenance per km	£5,275	£5,284
Car parks	1430 spaces in 18 parks	1430 spaces in 18 parks



1886 Commentary

HOUSING

A writer of 1876 described Waltham Abbey thus. 'The town lies low and looks damp, the streets are narrow and crooked; the houses mostly small, commonplace and many very poor'.

The writer could have been describing many small towns of the late 19th century. Great changes though were taking place. Migration from the really rural areas was causing speculative building of very poor terraced housing for rent and the middle classes evolving in London, with the new rail services were moving out of the city slums to new houses in the suburbs at prices rather less than they would have paid for similar accommodation in inner London.

It was the growth of the middle classes which promoted much local commerce, only the wealthy had until then access to funds sufficient to buy property, but the incoming residents led to the establishment of the now familiar building societies. The Waltham Abbey Permanent Building Society was formed in 1847.

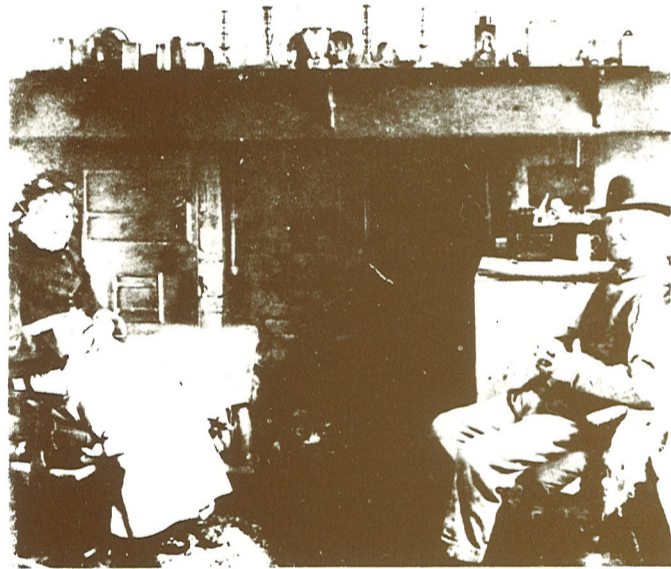
The working class terraced cottage of the 1880's is still a familiar site in towns such as Waltham Abbey and Epping. Frequently built close to the nucleus of the original towns, usually of brick, virtually no decoration. In 1886 lighting would have been by candle or oil lamps. Heating by open fire which in many cases was also used for cooking although kitchen ranges were just becoming fashionable.

Middle class housing would have been rather better built, probably of three storeys of a type frequently seen now converted and used as solicitors and accountants offices. In the better homes lighting would have been by gas from the new and local gas works. In Waltham Abbey the gas works was located by the railway station. Heating would still have been by open fire but cooking would have been done in a large well appointed kitchen with a kitchen range.

Housing in the countryside was a very different matter. The village nucleus would have contained the homes of the artisans and tradesmen, the blacksmith, shopkeeper, solicitor, perhaps the joiner, but the vast majority of the population

lived in rented or more likely tied accommodation in the sort of dire poverty which had caused so many to migrate to the towns and to countries overseas.

The dream cottages we see today have little in common with how they would have been in the last century. No sanitation, no water, leaking thatched roof, cold and damp, the farmhand and his family endured appalling conditions. Work was seldom regular and never well paid. Whole families laboured long days in



Cottage interior circa 1870.

the fields to maintain their meagre existence.

Evictions were commonplace either because the worker was redundant or for joining the National Agricultural Labourer's Union which was founded in 1872.

As late as 1919, 80% to 99% of all housing inhabited by agricultural workers was considered unsatisfactory and the same percentage still had no water supply. Most houses had no oven or sink, all cooking was done by large frying pan, no copper, larder or private closet provided.

In 1893 womens' and boys' wages in Essex ranged from 10d to 1/3d per week, virtually slave labour and this was still needed to support husbands wages and avoid being evicted which would have led to the workhouse.



Working class and middle class town housing.



Farm labourers cottages at Woodside, North Weald, as they might have looked in 1886.

Housing 5

As the local Housing Authority for the district, the Council is the largest provider of rented accommodation in the area with some 9,309 properties under management. In addition the Council is keen to promote Home Ownership initiatives and other forms of tenure to meet the growing needs for specialist accommodation such as the frail elderly, the mentally and physically handicapped, the young single and the homeless. There are some 35,000 private dwellings in the district of which approximately 71% are owner occupied. The Council recognised the need to provide more varied accommodation and is doing so by:-

- Acquiring land to meet future needs for housing accommodation;
- Building low cost dwellings for sale to first time purchasers;
- Providing public and private sector dwellings for the elderly;
- Reducing under occupation in Council owned dwellings;
- Building dwellings for rent;
- Encouraging home ownership through the sale of Council dwellings to sitting tenants.

The Council's housing stock ranges from bedsit dwellings for single persons to four bedroom houses for larger families situated on various estates throughout the district. About 20% of the stock is of non-traditional construction but there are no high rise blocks in the Council's ownership.

450 sold dwellings in the district have been designated as defective dwellings under the provisions of Part XVI of the Housing Act 1985.

During the last year, the Council's Housing Maintenance Section dealt with 29,573 requests for repairs in addition to the programmed repairs under which 1,900 properties were redecorated, 430 properties re-roofed and 170 rewired.

The Council's own Housing Direct Labour Organisation carried out redecoration works on two out of 15 contracts and continued to show a profit in excess of that required by Statute.

Statistics

	1984/85	1985/86
Total Stock of Council Dwellings	9,694	9,309
Dwellings sold	415	297
Dwellings built for sale	12	Nil
Dwellings built for rent	53	23
Total cost of housing services	£11,780,000	£13,214,000
Rebated rents as a proportion of total costs	43%	38%
Rebated Rent Income Council dwellings, shops and garages	£5,108,000	£5,017,000
Rent arrears as a % of annual rent collected	1.64%	1.52%
Management cost per dwelling per week (excluding special management)	£1.24	£1.61
Maintenance cost per dwelling per week (excluding major special repairs)	£5.95	£7.06
Waiting List applicants housed	331	307
Homelessness - applications	268	280
- accommodated	45	30
House improvement grants approved	445	181
Home insulation grants approved	1,108	1,330
Rent allowances (private sector tenants)	1,092	1,091
Rent Rebates (public sector tenants)	5,843	5,534
Number of tenant requested repairs	27,087	29,573
Gypsy Caravan Site - unit cost per pitch per week	£35.19	£35.09



1886 Commentary

Environmental Health and Control 6

ENVIRONMENTAL HEALTH

The arrival of Cholera in England around 1830 to add to smallpox, consumption, typhoid and a variety of other fevers caused the first interest in public health. It was this cholera epidemic that was directly responsible for the setting up of the Boards of Health in 1848-50.

Previous to this date the circumscribed powers of the Parish Vestry prevented its coping with the problems of public hygiene. In Waltham Abbey there was no mains water supply until 1888 and until then people relied on their own private wells, often polluted, or after 1878 on one of the six new artesian wells in the area.

An old resident of the area recalls: 'Especially on a Monday morning there was usually a string of boys and women all around, either with pails or cans, waiting their turn at the pump. Many of the boys carried either a wooden or iron hoop about two feet in diameter, the idea being to put the pail handle outside the hoop and then step inside, this kept the cans or pails from rubbing one's legs. Some men used to carry the water with a yoke across the shoulders'.

Again in Waltham Abbey provision of sewers was a slow process, at first they were so badly arranged that they simply polluted the river Lea. Treatment works were built in 1873 but by 1881 many houses in the town were still not connected. In 1886 the increased volume resulted in much untreated sewage being pumped on to low ground and the works had to be enlarged.



Breaking ice for drinking water, Epping Forest. From the Pictorial World 1870.

There were no public conveniences in Waltham Abbey in 1886. Our old resident again reports: 'some unusual scenes among the ladies which necessitated much use of umbrellas, in the market square (following a pub-crawl by horse brake). All the functions were carried out in an orderly and well conducted fashion', he added.

Waltham Abbey had 9 dairymen in the town together with their cowsheds and hygiene was reported to be at a very low ebb with the cowsheds in a most deplorable condition.

Epping managed little better. A very detailed report by Stan Newsens entitled 'Epping and the problem of Public Health' surveys the complete story of the battle to obtain clean water.

Dr. Joseph Clegg a local doctor who was appointed Medical Officer of Health to the Epping Poor Law Union fought a succession of battles in order to remedy the appalling situation. The workhouse for which he was responsible stood on the site of St. Margarets Hospital. In 1854 there was an outbreak of cholera, he diagnosed 54 cases in addition to 154 of diarrhoea. There were 21 deaths. At that time the well from which the inmates obtained their water was surrounded by 22 cesspools. A new well was sunk and the water filtered and over the next 13 years there was not a single case of diarrhoea.

Elsewhere in Epping however, no such action was taken. Water supplies continued to be polluted and typhoid and waterborne diseases were a regular occurrence. In the forword to this commentary is shown a simplified list of the more important dates including government Acts. It must be pointed out that it could be a lot more complex than that. Responsibility for water in Epping started in 1856 when the Epping Vestry appointed a Nuisance Removal Committee, this proved unsuccessful mostly because of the opposition of property owners who felt they might have to meet the costs on the rates. In 1858 the situation was not helped when the Government allowed the Second Board of Health to expire, its powers being passed to the Local Government Act Office. In 1886 a new Sanitary Act empowered the Local Government Act Office to enquire into examples of specific or general sanitary neglect by local authorities. Throughout this time poor Dr. Clegg tried everything and everybody with the aim of using the powers granted by the 1866 Act.

At a public enquiry in 1867 Dr Clegg quoted 'The whole of the drainage of the town is on the cesspool system. The town is surrounded by field ditches which evaporate noisom stenches, most injurious to the health of the place'. Dr Clegg still found objection, he resorted to a petition which caused the Home Secretary to set up yet another enquiry. The result came down in favour of a special drainage district, but election of a committee was delayed and Dr. Clegg did not secure election to it.

The Home Secretary was again appealed to and a civil engineer Mr. Jabez Church was appointed to provide the town with an adequate water supply and drainage system.

Despite still further opposition ending before the Queens Bench it was decided that ratepayers would have to meet costs.

This resulted in the Epping Tower which with an artesian well initially failed to produce any water! In 1872 the new Rural Sanitary Authority refused to take over the works. In 1874 the Lancet published a special report on Epping suggesting that there had been 500 cases of typhoid in the district and painting a lurid picture of Epping's sanitary shortcomings. Finally after more protracted opposition a solution was hit upon and the water works were sold to the founder of the Herts and Essex Water Company in 1883.

By this time a water supply had been laid from Sawbridgeworth to Epping but by 1884 there were still only 392 consumers. As for sewage disposal, most cesspits remained in use despite the works constructed in 1869.

Dr. Clegg's successor, Dr. Trevor Fowler produced in 1891 a report listing some interesting statistics. Of 545 houses 163 still relied on surface wells for water and 64 were still not connected to a sewer.

In 1891 there were 161 cases of scarlet fever of which 81 were from Chigwell. Diphtheria prevailed in Epping and was actually worse there than in Chigwell. Of the 11 cases of Typhoid most were imported cases but 2 were attributed to drinking impure water. Whooping cough was prevalent causing 25 deaths. Much of Chigwell and to a lesser extent Epping was still forested, uninhabited, what housing there was was overcrowded, heavy clay soil also causing damp and poor sanitary conditions. Nine houses in 'Low Street' were condemned and some at 'Forest Side' reported unfit for human habitation.

In Ongar the most prevalent disease was Diphtheria although because patients became critical so quickly they were not usually removed to hospital. In 1886, 8 people died from Cholera in Epping and one person in Ongar.

Conditions took some time to improve even after 1886 but after Epping Urban District Council was founded in 1896 the situation did gradually improve. The conclusion must be reached that had the more important ratepayers of Epping who dominated the various committees concerning water been more public spirited and less concerned at the cost of a proper water and sewage system to ratepayers then Epping would not have gained the sort of national reputation that is represented in the print of 1876 heading this subject showing people breaking ice on ponds in the forest in order to obtain drinking water.



A near contemporary view of Waltham Abbey market place.

The Council's objective is to ensure the environment we live in is clean and healthy. A free pest control service is provided on behalf of the Council on a contractual basis, for domestic homes in the control of rodents and insects of public health significance. Advice and identification of insects continues to be available.

Complaints of over-crowding, noise and rubbish are also part of everyday work.

The Council are responsible for ensuring satisfactory living conditions in the private sector and assistance is readily available on a wide variety of matters including repairs, houses in multiple occupation, drainage, unfit, overcrowding and mobile homes etc.

The production and sale of food is controlled to protect the consumer. Food premises inspections again increased during the year and included a number of pre-planned inspections out of normal office hours. Prosecution of offenders increased during the year. A full meat inspection service continues at two abattoirs in the district.

The Council has already contracted out to a private firm, the cleaning of public conveniences.

The Meals on Wheels Kitchen and Luncheon Club in Loughton, is now fully operational and available to hire for a variety of private functions.

The Council also issue licences of many types such as public entertainment, animal boarding, milk dealers, slaughterhouses, late night refreshments, caravan and camping sites and a firm control over the health and safety aspects of these and other establishments and businesses is also maintained. Considerable amount of time during the year was spent on pollution control in particular at two offensive trade factories in the district. The Council have adopted most of the public health sections of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1982

Sewerage

As an agent for Thames Water, the District Council maintains all the existing public sewers and pumping stations in the area and is responsible for the repair and reconstruction of them.

The Council provides a 24 hour service for clearing blocked drains, and an emptying service for cesspools, septic tanks and pail closets in the more remote rural parts of the district.

Refuse

Most recognisable around the district are our refuse collection vehicles which clear over 33,000 tons of waste a year – and transport it to various disposal points.

The plastic sack boundary method of collection continues to operate but has now been replaced by the introduction of bulk delivery of plastic sacks to households. As well as the domestic service, the Council also provide a weekly trade refuse service, collection of dumped waste and if requested a special free collection service to householders for bulky items such as refrigerators, furniture, etc., but not builders waste. A garden refuse collection scheme now operates in Theydon Bois on an experimental basis and if successful may be extended to other parts of the District.

Bottle Banks in Loughton, Epping, Waltham Abbey and Ongar are now averaging over eight tons per week. Two further bottle bank sites were opened in the year at The Broadway, Loughton and Theydon Bois and these are proving to be well used.

Land Drainage

Some £70,000 has been spent in providing for improvements to watercourses throughout the district to alleviate the possibility of flooding. Further expenditure of the same order is proposed this year. The Byelaws on land drainage giving the Council power to ensure watercourses are maintained came into operation in December 1984.

Statistics

	1984/85	1985/86
Environmental Health:		
Net cost of service	£1,771,317	£1,818,830
Inspections:		
(net cost per 1,000 population)	£1,173	£1,332
Welfare:		
Meals on Wheels	43,922	45,014
Luncheon Club Meals	10,200	12,981
Unit cost per meal	£1.35	£1.63
Welfare transport unit cost per booking	£18.20	£29.76
Grants to charitable and community organisations	£32,070	£33,600
Concessionary fare permits issued	6,082	5,640
Unit costs – London Country and London Transport (except blind)	£33.84	£36.38
Sewerage:		
Total cost of service	£1,064,527	£931,350
(£903,389 reimbursed by Thames Water)		(£732,870 reimbursed by Thames Water)
Sewerage residual work – net cost per 1,000 population:	£1,401	£1,690
Cesspool Emptying	383	361
Public Conveniences – net cost per 1,000 population:	£1,004	£778
Refuse Collection:		
Net cost of service	£929,920	£885,000
Net cost per 1,000 population	£8,086	£7,696
Collections: Domestic	47,647	46,092
Trade	2,500	2,900
Special	5,171	5,709
Abandoned Vehicles – Investigated	339	284



1886 Commentary

RECREATION

It is almost an embarrassment when looking at the lengthy report for recreation in 1986 that in 1886 what little local government there was did not involve itself in recreation at all, indeed compared to the times we live in there was little recreation at all for the mass of the populace.

Most libraries began as private subscription institutions although parliament authorised free public ones in 1850 it was not until the 1890's that many authorities responded and built them. In any case those living in the more rural areas did not have access to a library and they were frequently illiterate or semi-literate. Charitable groups ran literary classes for such people and that could almost be termed as recreation.



THE REFRESHMENT BOOTHS IN THE FOREST

The people of Waltham Abbey were very lucky as the Royal Gunpowder Factory provided the town with a lending library of 10,000 books.

Recreation was still class orientated to a degree with the upper classes indulging in hunting, shooting, the newly imported croquet, horse racing with an overlap with the middle classes when playing tennis, cricket and golf. The working classes also enjoyed cricket but included soccer (the League was founded in 1888), prize fighting and in rural areas such things as cock fighting were still practiced. Drawing room hobbies were popular with the wealthy, the daughter of the house was expected to be proficient in water colour painting, father would be trying out the newly developed photography. For the working classes what little free time they had was frequently spent in the ale house.



Cottis & Sons Cricket team on Epping Plain in the early 1880's.

Mr. Alfred B. Davis who owned a small printers and stationers business in Epping introduced a monthly newsheet which he called the Epping Monthly Record. Some 1,500 copies were distributed free in Epping, Theydon Bois, Theydon Garnon and North Weald. It consisted of about 8 small pages mostly advertisements. The front page of the January 15 issue 1898 consisted of an advertisement for Epping Brewery and one for Edgar Hayden & Co., inviting you to join their coal club!

The rest of the front page was Epping Urban District Council news, so local government was becoming important! So successful was the publication that in 1901 it evolved into the first weekly newspaper in West Essex entitled The Epping Gazette - Loughton and Ongar Record.

One interest more than most gained in popularity - cycling. It first appeared in the 1870's as an expensive sport and by the 1890's commanded a weekly column in the local press. The birth of Bank Holidays gave more free time, cycling clubs became popular. As previously explained in Highways, the cycling lobby had a positive effect on the improvement of roads.



Five mile cycle race, Epping, 1890's.

The extension of railways throughout Essex had brought the seaside within occasional reach of all classes. In 1875 Clacton's pier was 500 feet long but to accommodate the steamers that carried trippers it was extended by a further 500 feet at the end of the season.

Coller wrote in the Peoples History of Essex 1861, Loughton is a large and delightful parish, with a very picturesque village, and ground of a remarkably undulating character. The walks in and near the forest

are of such a character as to invite large parties of Londoners to fill numerous excursion trains to Loughton during the summer.



Bald Faced Stag, Buckhurst Hill, Working Class Recreation.

Recreation Department 7

The Recreation Department, through its imaginative and enthusiastic approach, continues to meet the challenge laid down by local people to provide an ever-increasing range of leisure activities. Perhaps the Council's best known facilities are the sports centres in Epping and Waltham Abbey, the swimming pools in Loughton and Waltham Abbey and the sports centre/pool complex in Ongar, all of which have seen a major expansion of their activity programmes during the year.

Whilst most people know about - and use - these facilities, many are surprised to learn about the equally wide range of work carried out by the Parks Section. In addition to looking after the District's trees, shrubs, flower beds and literally thousands of grass verges, together with allotments (in conjunction with local allotment associations), they also manage the District's major outdoor recreational facility, the Roding Valley in Loughton.

Combining specialist sports facilities for tennis, cricket, football, athletics, windsurfing and angling with hundreds of acres of open space to just stroll about in, the Valley provides some of the best kept informal parkland in this part of the country. Part of the Roding Valley is now being developed as a nature reserve by the Essex Naturalists' Trust who will conserve and protect the ancient water meadows and other areas of special scientific interest.

On the other side of the District in Waltham Abbey, the Epping Forest District Museum also saw major development during the year with the opening, by the Duke of Gloucester, of a new extension offering greater research and exhibition space, attached to the new library, provided well in advance of expectation.

Major development is also continuing at North Weald Airfield which, in addition to providing a base for gliding, parascending, model aircraft flying, pistol shooting and motor sports, is now firmly established as one of the region's major outdoor venues, attracting a series of events ranging from leisure and air shows to rallies and exhibitions.

Early 1986 saw preparation for the official opening of two new major facilities on North Weald Airfield - the Aces High Museum, with its ever-increasing collection of historic aircraft, and North Weald Gymnasium, a specialist training and competition centre for girls' gymnastics, providing the best facilities for the sport in the country as well as a venue for community use. In addition, work commenced on the construction of a new access road and control centre for the Airfield.

As well as managing all these facilities, the Recreation Department also operates a number of special activity schemes around the District, the two best known being the summer holiday Playschemes for children and New Horizons, the special leisure programme for the over 50's which continues to attract retired people in ever-increasing numbers.

Much of the Recreation Department's success in being able to offer such a wide variety of leisure activities has been dependent upon the enthusiastic support and co-operation of other organisations, including Essex County Council (particularly the Library Service and Area Education Office), the district and regional sports and arts councils and numerous local organisations and individuals.

The excellent working relationship the Department has with outside organisations has resulted in an ever-increasing number of leisure opportunities for local people, underlining the Recreation Department's well-earned reputation for being one of the best in the East of England.

The following projects are just some of the Department's more notable achievements during the year:-

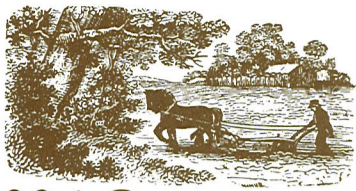
- 1) Opening of the Roding Valley Meadows Local Nature Reserve, to be managed by Essex Naturalists' Trust.
- 2) Opening of the new library and museum extension in Waltham Abbey.
- 3) The new William Cottis exhibition at Epping Forest District Museum.
- 4) Opening of North Weald Gymnasium.
- 5) Establishment of the Aces High Museum of historic aircraft and the commencement of negotiations with owners of other aircraft collections to establish a "living museum".
- 6) Opening of the "Axis Room" - a new weight training and fitness facility at Epping Sports Centre.
- 7) Conversion of redundant football changing rooms at Waltham Abbey Swimming Pool into a new fitness gymnasium.
- 8) Commencement of the new access road and control centre at North Weald Airfield.
- 9) Installation of frog slides at Loughton and Waltham Abbey Swimming Pools, doubling the attendance by junior swimmers.
- 10) Development of the major events programme at North Weald Airfield, attracting over 120,000 visitors during the year.
- 11) Development of a Community Arts Programme.
- 12) Participation in the preparation of a major report "Arts in Essex" (to be published October 1986).
- 13) Development of the New Horizons programme, now attracting 300 attendances a week by the over 50's.
- 14) Commencement of a feasibility study for sport in the south of the District.

Statistics

Net cost of service £1,485,070 (1984/85 £1,384,300)

Net cost per 1,000 population for all recreational services provided by the Council £12,914 (1984/85 £12,037).

	84/85	85/86
Swimming Pools		
Admissions - Loughton	231,333	242,451
Ongar	104,489	95,996
Waltham Abbey	91,814	97,243
Number of people taught to swim:		
Loughton	4,150	4,836
Ongar	1,600	2,505
Waltham Abbey	3,314	5,570
Sports Centres		
Membership - Epping	2,423	2,731
Ongar	2,219	1,986
Waltham Abbey	824	963
North Weald Airfield		
No. of activity days	1,536	1,675
No. of activities	20	20
New Horizons (3 months only)		
No. of weekly activity sessions	13	19
No. of venues	6	8
Total attendances	2,870	12,491
Summer Playschemes		
Permanent sites	9	8
Mobile sites	4	2
Attendances	12,209	11,633
Public Halls		
No. of lettings - Limes Farm	532	495
Roding Valley	716	502
Museum		
No. of visitors - adult	5,195	7,886
children	2,357	3,695
Tree Service		
Planted	910	2,000
Surgery	1,570	1,701
Library		
Membership - adult	45,434	46,000
child	13,168	13,500
family tickets	2,103	2,200



1886 Commentary

SUPPORT SERVICES

A look at the current entry for Support Services shows that its job is to link the functions of the various departments together to allow the Council to complete its tasks.

Trying to find an equivalent in 1886 is an almost impossible task. It would have been easier both before and after that period.

Until 1834 the Parish Vestry virtually was local government, it was simplistic but did work. In North Weald for example meetings were held twice annually at Easter and Michaelmas. This system was old, it had had time to develop since the dissolution of the monasteries and from the Poor Laws passed by Parliament to provide for the levying of rates and the appointment of Parish Officials by ratepayers. The Poor Law Act of 1601 consolidated previous Acts and provided the basis for the system until the 19th century. At North Weald, the Easter meeting appointed one church warden, the other one was the vicar's choice - two overseers of the poor for the village and one each for Thornwood and Hastingwood, three surveyors and two constables. The meetings were always poorly attended, mainly from the more substantial families, who wanted to control the rate that was raised.

The Vestry had other purposes besides the relief of the poor, the Churchwardens were responsible for the care and maintenance of the church, surveyors for the highways and constables for law and order but nevertheless the heaviest burden was relief for the poor. The main task of the overseers was the responsibility of collecting the rate raised at the Easter meeting and then to dispense it for the relief of the needy, usually a weekly allowance but it could be clothing, even firewood. Poor children where possible were apprenticed to avoid long term expense. Charitable bequests from money to cottages supplemented what was provided by the overseers from the rates and reflected a genuine spirit of philanthropy.

As can be seen, a simplistic form of local government which worked whilst populations remained mainly small and rural and which in a dissipated form lingered on into the part of the period of which we are writing. But where would you find the equivalent of a Chief Executive? In later times the parish would have used the services of a local solicitor as Clerk to the Parish. He might be considered the rudimentary equivalent of Legal and Administration.



The earliest known photograph of Epping circa 1865.

After 1834 the many functions of local government were split and there was no equivalent of Support Services to link them together. The Boards of Guardians controlled the Poor Law Unions (workhouses), at different times Boards of Health, and Rural and Urban Sanitary Authorities controlled water, sewage and highways with numerous smaller local committees responsible for specific roads and drainage schemes. Probably the busy local solicitor acting as clerk for many of these boards and committees acted as some sort of link and of course some wealthy and influential citizens sat on more than one board or committee but there was clearly no linking organisation to tie together the various functions of these different bodies and present a united front.

It was not until 1894 with the setting up of the Urban and Rural District Councils that these various functions were brought under the central administration of one authority and then we have the true beginnings of modern local government as we now know it.

Nowadays if something goes wrong generally within our living environment there is the stock phrase 'lets complain to the Council'. Anyone in 1886 would have been hard pressed to know who to turn to!



Church Cottage North Weald, a 17th or 18th century structure as it may have looked in the last century.

Support Services 8

Chief Executive

He is head of the paid service and has overall responsibility for the efficient management and execution of the Council's functions. He is also responsible for emergency planning.

Legal and Administration

The District Secretariat is responsible for committee administration, legal advice, litigation and conveyancing, local land charges, word processing and typing services, printing, civic matters, information, telephones and microfilming. The staff supporting the Chief Executive in public relations and elections are based in this department.

Finance

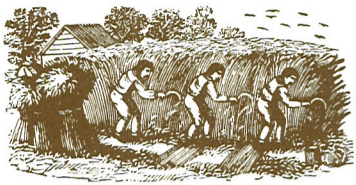
The District Treasurer provides budgeting, accounting, audit income control, data processing, payment of salaries and wages, rate collection and rebates, loans and investments and other services.

Personnel and Management Services

The Personnel Department provides advice to all other departments on personnel management and management services. It is responsible to the Personnel Sub-Committee for the annual review of manpower. It provides training and assists in recruitment procedures. It maintains personnel records and it is responsible for industrial relations.

The Statistics

	84/85	85/86
Elections held: District	21	—
Parish	17	6
County	—	1
Parliamentary	—	—
Council meetings (all types)	202	168
Civic Engagements	184	123
Litigation: Magistrates & County Courts	176	127
High Court	8	10
Completion of property transactions:	1,128	1,082
(includes 412 council house sales)		(297)
Land Charges:	5,710	6,089
(at average turn-around of 5-6 days each)		(at average turn-around of 6 days each)
Printing Jobs:	1,727	1,651
Documents microfilmed	471,809	961,994
Information Centres—Inquiries	45,821	47,555
Chigwell and Loughton Cemeteries:		
No. of burials: Chigwell	57	68
Loughton	30	74
Unit cost per burial: Chigwell	£486	£537
Loughton	£553	£240



1886 Commentary

MANPOWER STATEMENT AND COMMENTARY

An examination of the categories of Council employees in the current report opposite shows how difficult it would be to make a fair comparison with 1886. There was little local government labour of any description and even if we stretched the imagination and included the water companies the totals would not have been very high.

The Parish Vestry which had controlled most aspects of local government until 1834 when the Poor Law Amendment Act had begun to nibble away at its powers still by 1886 had some functions remaining.

North Weald Parish Surveyors Book includes the following entries which are typical:

1875-76 May 8th W. Butcher: Repairing the roads
 $\frac{1}{2}$ day @ 2/- = 1/-

Jan 16th W. Butcher: Repairing the roads

2 days @ 2/2 = 4/4

Nov 12th J. Dorrington: Repairing the roads

3 days @ 2/2 = 6/6

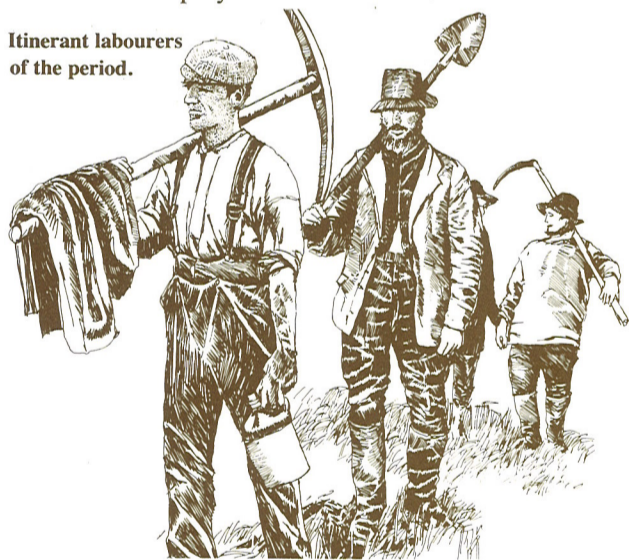
As can be seen it was normal to use unskilled itinerant labour which was employed only as and when required. Many aspects of local government now carried out by paid employees were in 1886 considered voluntary duties. With one or two exceptions what we would now call management was then purely voluntary.

Until 1834 the Parish Vestry had administered aid to the poor but from that date the formation of the Boards of Guardians and the building of central workhouses removed that responsibility.

The workhouse would have employed a small full time staff but the Guardians who managed it were not paid. A small payment would have been made to the Clerk of the Guardians and in 1886 that Clerk was J.W. Windus who happened to be a local solicitor in Epping. He would have held numerous other small posts, it was probably in his interests to do so. The clerk to the diminished Vestry would probably have been a local solicitor.

The Guardians themselves would have become involved in duties now administered by paid employees. Requests for relief would have been heard by them rather than employees of the workhouse.

Itinerant labourers of the period.



As an example in April 1889 the Epping Board of Guardians heard an application for relief from Jasper Smith, an engine driver from North Weald, and the chairman Mr. J. Chaplin addressed the applicant.

'Well Smith, what is it you want?'

'A little help, Sir, I've worked till I can work no more', said Jasper.

'How old are you Smith?' asked the Chairman.

'I was 81 last January. My eldest boy is 60 and my youngest girl is 30. I began work when I was 7 years

old and kept at it until I was 81'.

'You had better leave the recipe for some of the young ones before you go' (laughter) said the Chairman in granting him his request.

(Reported in Essex Weekly News 3 May 1889).

The Parish Vestry had originally appointed overseers of the poor, redundant after 1834 and constables, redundant after 1839 with the founding of the County Police Force. The Surveyors appointed for road maintenance would still have had a function although it was not a sought after appointment.

Those who formed the Boards of Guardians and such committees as the Epping Special Drainage Committee were volunteers but it was frequently in their interests to belong to such committees, not because of a desire to help the poor or to improve drainage but rather because they were large ratepayers they could manipulate these bodies to avoid spending money thus increasing rates.



Cottages and shop at Theydon Bois.

Manpower Statement and Commentary 9

The total payments to employees including overtime, fees for additional work e.g. elections, council house sales, evening committee meetings etc. amounted to approximately £8.3 million.

Part-timers have been included in the figures as the equivalent of 50% of full-timers. During 1985/86 712 full-time and 88 part-time staff were employed i.e. the equivalent of 757 full-timers.

Last year's statement showed that during the year 84/85 manning levels were nearly 7.7% below budgeted levels which was achieved by a policy of stringent establishment controls. These controls have been continued into 85/86 during which time manning levels were 4.8% below the original budgeted level.

Staff turnover for 1985/86 was 15.2%.

Training amounted to 1.1% of time available.

Time lost through industrial injuries amounted to 0.3% of time available.

Registered disabled employees amounted to 1.44% of total workforce.

The Council acts as a major managing Agent for the Manpower Services Commission under the Youth Training for Skills Scheme, and is heavily involved in the new 2 year Scheme.

The Council pursues the following policies regarding Disablement, Race Relations, and Equal opportunities.

Disablement Policy:

That, having regarded their particular aptitudes and abilities, the Council will give full and fair consideration to:-

- applications for employment made by disabled persons.
- continuing employment of, and arranging for, employees who have become disabled while employed by the Council.
- promoting the career development of disabled employees.

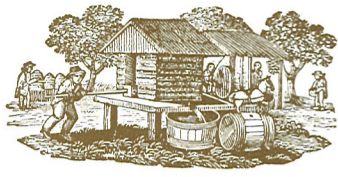
Race Relations and Equal Opportunities Policy:

Epping Forest District Council is (and always has been) an equal opportunity employer. The aim of its policy is to ensure that no job applicant or employee receives less favourable treatment on the grounds of age, disability, sex or marital status, race, colour, nationality or ethnic or racial origins or is disadvantaged by conditions or requirements which cannot be justified. Selection criteria and procedures will be reviewed and developed to ensure that individuals are selected, promoted and treated only on the basis of their relevant merits and abilities. All employees will be given equal opportunity and where appropriate, the necessary training to progress within the organisation. The Council is committed to making this policy effective.

MANPOWER UTILISED *NUMBER OF EMPLOYEES

Department	1983/84	1984/85	1985/86	Total Payments to employees 1985/6 £000's
Chief Executive	3	3	3	56
Secretaries	57	61	60	599
Treasurer's	73	74	71	759
Personnel	18.5	17	18	226
Recreation	49.5	48	53	633
Health & Housing	123	113	113	1144
Engineers and Surveyors	90	87	91	1034
Planning	53	53	49	594
Manual Workers	335	324	299	3250
Totals	*802	*780	*757	8295

*Calculated as an average of Manpower Watch returns.



Acknowledgements

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 The West Essex Gazette.
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BIBLIOGRAPHY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The author has listed those books and publications which served as references or donated illustrations. Also listed are recommendations for anyone who having read the commentary is stimulated by it to take an interest in local history for the first time.

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 Bygone Epping An Album of Views. Epping Forest District Council Museum Service.
 English History from Essex Sources 1750-1900 A.F.J. Brown published by Essex Record Office.
 Victoria County History of Essex Vol. 4.
 Kellys & P.O. Directory of Essex 1886.
 Epping and the problem of Public Health, a paper written by Stan Newens.
 Royal Commission on Labour, The Agricultural Labourer Vol. 1 England Part 5 Reports, Aubrey J. Spencer 1893.
 Peoples History of Essex, Collier 1861.
 Dr. Thresh's Summary of the Reports of the District Medical Officers of Health for Essex 1891.

FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

For those new to but interested in finding out more about local history I have listed a few sources. The sources are not all local but together they help build a picture of life in the period covered by this commentary. I have included some books which could not be used for the commentary because they did not deal specifically with the area, but they do give a good background picture to the period covered. I am sure that by producing this list I have omitted and probably offended someone who felt they should be included. To them my apologies but I am sure that if anyone new to the subject does become interested they will ultimately uncover all sources.

Epping Forest District Museum, Sun Street, Waltham Abbey.
 Interesting in its own right the staff here can direct you to the local historical societies etc.
 Essex Record Office, Chelmsford.
 Invaluable, very complete records for this area.

The Castle Bookshop, Colchester.
 Antiquarian bookseller, specialising in books on Essex, periodically produces catalogue.

Pat Roberts, Prints, Epping Antique Galleries.
 Specialises in maps and prints of Essex and local interest. Attractive engravings from just before the period of this commentary can cost as little as £5.00.

W.H. Smith, Chelmsford.
 Unusually this branch of Smiths keeps a good selection of current books on Essex.

OTHER BOOKS OF INTEREST

Victorian & Edwardian Children from Old Photographs – Batsford
 A Country Camera 1844-1914 – Penguin Books.
 Essex Record Office SEAX teaching portfolio, Essex Elections, Town Life and Improvement in Essex, Agriculture in Essex.
 The Edwardians in Photographs – Batsford.
 Times Gone By 1856-1956 – Marshall Cavendish.
 Grandfathers London – Godfrey Cave.
 The Victorian and Edwardian Seaside – Country Life.
 Old Anglian Recipes – Hendon Publishing Co.

More complete lists on books covering the history of Essex are available from booksellers and the Essex Record Office publishes a very interesting range of books.

Financial Information 10

EXPENDITURE AND INCOME ON COUNCIL HOUSES, SHOPS, FLATS etc.

1984/85	GROSS COSTS	1985/86	1984/85	MET FROM:	1985/86
£000		£000	£000		£000
6,790	Debt Charges	7,269	8,549	Rents	8,539
3,000	Repairs and Maintenance	3,750	3,515	Interest on Proceeds of Sale of Council Dwellings	4,345
	Supervision and Management:			Greater London Council	337
623	General	677	343	Other	1,778
1,047	Special	1,243	131	Mandatory Rate Fund Contributions	135
259	Other	270			
11,719	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	13,209	13,855	TOTAL INCOME	15,134
60	Provision for Bad and Doubtful Debts	-			
40	Transfer to District Rate Fund	1,500			
2,036	Increase in Balance	425			
13,855		15,134			

RATEABLE HEREDITAMENTS

At 1 April 1985		At 1 April 1986		
No.	Rateable Value £	No.	Rateable Value £	
DOMESTIC				
593	166,122	575	162,272	Domestic
62	25,813	64	26,190	£13,091,499
19	868	17	778	(66.4% of total)
44,617	12,734,045	45,215	12,902,259	
COMMERCIAL				
226	170,127	221	167,270	Commercial
828	956,738	831	971,901	£2,719,922
320	359,375	320	364,097	(13.8% of total)
140	189,180	140	191,181	
494	529,517	505	530,360	
318	288,187	335	290,465	
6,831	119,609	6,863	120,116	
48	94,754	47	84,532	
INDUSTRIAL				
162	1,662,013	166	1,663,279	Industrial
7	47,874	6	58,799	£1,722,078
179	178,087	181	181,876	(8.7% of total)
74	505,582	74	493,285	
84	745,563	84	742,974	Other
450	760,554	446	772,168	£2,190,300
55,452	£19,534,003	56,090	£19,723,802	(11.1% of total)

RATES LEVIED

Rates are a tax on both business and residential property. Like any other tax they are payable whether or not an individual ratepayer uses all of the services provided.

In 1985/86 the general rate in Epping Forest was 170.13p, an increase of 8.1% on 1984/85 when it was 157.4p. This amount is charged on each £ of the rateable value fixed for each property by the Government Valuer. In the case of domestic properties (houses, flats, etc) the rate in the £ is reduced by 18.5p. Thus, on a domestic property with a rateable value of £280 (a fairly typical semi detached house), the rates payable would be 280 times 151.63 equals £424.56 which is £8.16 per week. A small amount would also be payable for parish services.

The rate is collected by Epping Forest District Council which is the rating authority, but most of the proceeds go to other bodies who precept on the District Council instead of directly charging the ratepayer. Your rates bill will, therefore, pay for all the services provided by these other bodies.

The proceeds of the general rate – £33,175,500 in 1985/86 (£30,693,000 in 1984/85) was distributed as follows:

	1984/85		For Comparison	
	£	%	£	%
Essex County Council	27,579,000	83.1	25,740,000	83.9
Metropolitan Police and Essex Police	2,281,500	6.9	2,086,500	6.8
Epping Forest District Council	3,315,000	10.0	2,866,500	9.3
<i>The money came from:</i>				
Commercial Ratepayers	4,644,500	14.0	4,297,000	14.0
Industrial Ratepayers	2,919,400	8.8	2,701,000	8.8
Other Non-Domestic Ratepayers	3,881,500	11.7	3,591,000	11.7
Domestic Ratepayers	19,175,600	57.8	17,741,000	57.8
Government Grant – Domestic Relief	2,554,500	7.7	2,363,000	7.7

NOTE

The Council's Annual Abstract of Accounts, including balance sheets, is produced and made available to interested members of the public for a small fee after certification by the District Auditor later in the year. Financial figures used in this Annual Report are based on the latest information available at the time the Report is compiled.

The figures used in the table of comparative statistics are taken from the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy statistical booklet of Estimates for 1985/86.

Whilst it is difficult for statistics to be directly comparable, it is possible if carefully used to identify areas for further investigation. One item which is immediately noticeable is 'unallocated admin'. In the case of Epping Forest District Council this expenditure (i.e. that relating to Central Services such as Treasurer's or Secretary's, etc.) is allocated over the other service headings, whereas the comparative groups show the costs as a separate service.

The groups used for comparison are:

- 1 Epping Forest District Council
- 2 All non-metropolitan district councils — i.e. the Shire districts (333 in total)
- 3 The following districts, which are of similar size and population:

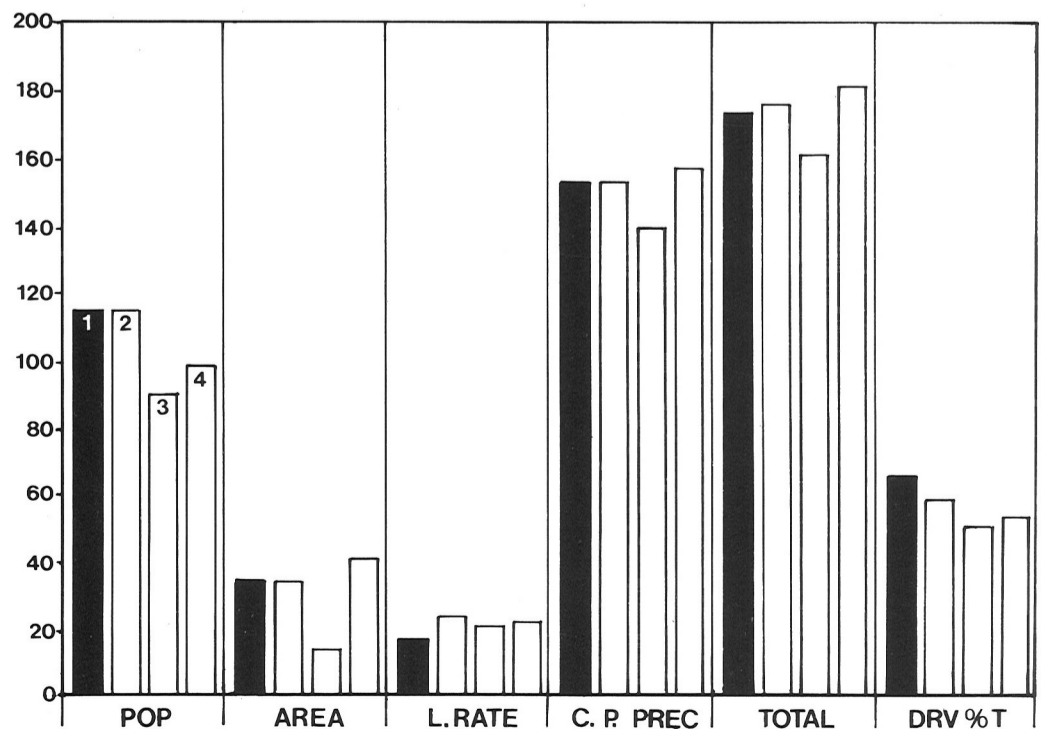
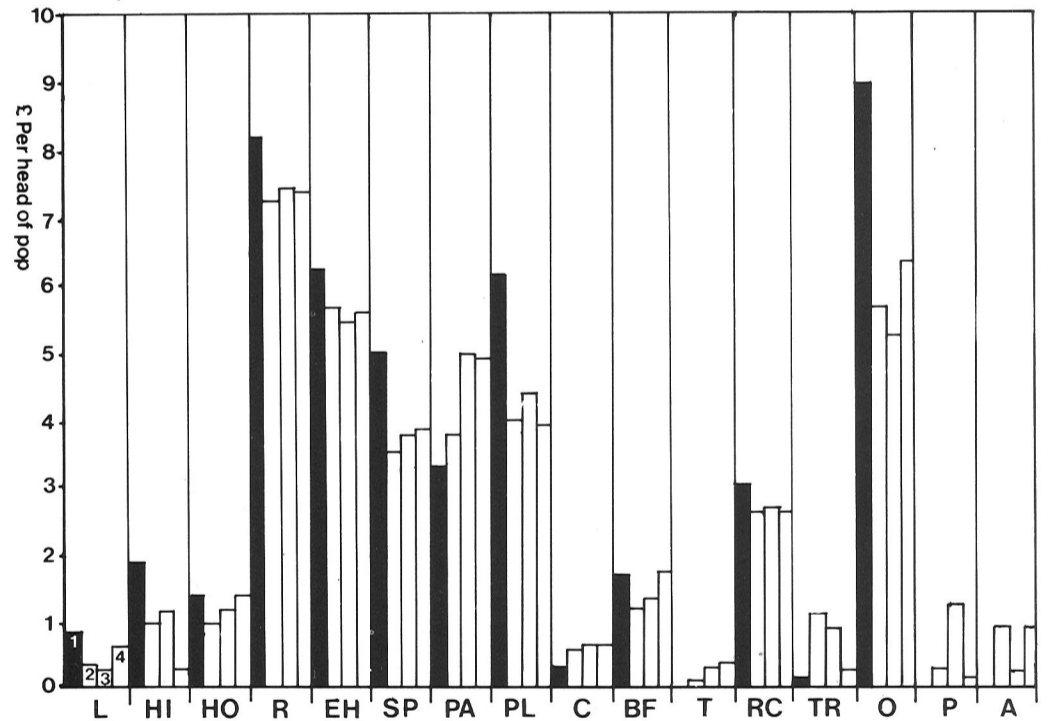
Vale Royal — Cheshire	Tendring — Essex
North Herts — Herts	Canterbury — Kent
Sevenoaks — Kent	Swale — Kent
West Lancs — Lancs	Waverley — Surrey
Mid Sussex — West Sussex	
- 4 Districts situated approximately the same distance from London as Epping Forest District Council:

Slough — Berks	Windsor — Berks
Chiltern — Bucks	South Bucks — Bucks
Basildon — Essex	Brentwood — Essex
Thurrock — Essex	Broxbourne — Herts
Dacorum — Herts	East Herts — Herts
Hertsmere — Herts	St. Albans — Herts
Three Rivers — Herts	Watford — Herts
Welwyn Hatfield — Herts	Dartford — Kent
Gravesham — Kent	Sevenoaks — Kent
Elmbridge — Surrey	Epsom — Surrey
Mole Valley — Surrey	Reigate — Surrey
Runnymede — Surrey	Spelthorne — Surrey
Tandridge — Surrey	

Reference:	
L	Libraries & Museums
HI	Highways
HO	Housing
R	Refuse collection
EH	Environmental Health
SP	Pools and sports centres
PA	Parks and open spaces
PL	Planning
C	Cemeteries
BF	Concessionary bus fares
T	Costs to public transport
RC	Cost of rate collection
TR	Cost to trading services
O	Other services
P	Personal Social Services
A	Unallocated admin

Reference:	
Pop	Population in '000s
Area	Area in hectares
L.Rate	Local rate — p.
C.P.Prec	County and Police precept — p.
Total	Total rate — p.
DRV%T	Domestic rateable value as % of total rateable value

Comparison with other district council groups 1985/86



Concept and design, Steve Anderson
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