



2026

Hello from all of us here in 2026!

We hope this letter finds you well and that Essington is as vibrant and welcoming as ever. We're the present volunteers of the Friends of Essington group, writing to you today to share a little snapshot of our current activities and the work we've been up to in our community.

Before we continue with our group's activities though you might find a summary of the conditions in the UK in 2026 interesting:

King Charles III was crowned in May 2023 following the death of his mother Queen Elizabeth II in September 2022. The King has been dealing with some serious family events, i.e. his cancer diagnosis and that of his daughter-in-law, the Princess of Wales, along with the controversy around the former Prince Andrew, now just Andrew Mountbatten-Windsor. All this alongside world events; President Trump in the USA and war in Ukraine due to the Russian invasion. The war is occupying many of the politicians in the UK and Europe. Our current Prime Minister is Sir Keir Starmer who led the Labour party to victory in 2024.

Climate change is a globally wide topic with some effects now starting to be felt in the UK with wetter winters and more frequent, prolonged, dry spells during the summer months. The political will for meaningful measures to address climate change in the west, including the UK, has waned recently. More demanding efforts and investment into climate change mitigation are needed. Hopefully this has happened and you, in the future, are living without severe climate difficulties.

Food price inflation in the UK seems to be stubbornly high at ~4.2%, with general inflation around 3.5%. Growth of the UK's economy has been consistently sluggish for around 20 years, with the poor growth stifling our ability to flourish as a nation. All being well the UK is in much better shape in your time.

Coming back to the Friends of Essington. The last 12 months have been very busy! Please take a look at our recent meeting minutes for a fuller view, but we highlight below some of our current activities.

Our Current Highlights Include:

- **The Construction of the Miners' Monument:** The monument was originally designed and manufactured around 20 years ago, but the project stalled until the Friends of Essington became involved. The monument is now complete and stands as a reminder of an historically significant industry for the village.
- **The 2026 Calendar and New Logo:** The calendar for 2026 is a change from our usual format. A special effort was made this year to widen the number of entries for the photographs. In addition, a new layout was created by the daughter of Angie and Clem (both committee members). This new layout also includes the new Friends of Essington logo. Our new logo commemorates our 20th anniversary and is the outcome of a competition held in collaboration with the students at St John's Primary Academy. All the runners-up entries are printed in the calendar, along with the winning entry now appearing on our documentation etc.
- **Tree Planted Area (behind the allotments off High Hill):** Earlier this year, in collaboration with Forest of Mercia and Essington Rugby Club, we planted an area with saplings. The newly planted wood is to be known as 'The Jones-Nicklin Wood' in memory of two very active members of the community, Gerwyn Jones and Adrian Nicklin. Hopefully this is a thriving wooded area in your time, which is enjoyed by all.
- **Regular Quiz Nights:** We hold regular quiz nights, run by Jon (a committee member) at the Essington Working Men's Club on High Hill. These are well supported by friends, family and community alike. The proceeds from these events are ploughed back into community projects via the Friends of Essington group.

There are many other activities undertaken by the group, all aimed at enhancing the wellbeing and safety of the community of Essington. We hope there is a group of likeminded people in the future who continue to promote the positive qualities of Essington.

We often think about you, the future residents and volunteers. We hope you're enjoying the fruits of our labour, just as we benefit from the work of those who came before us. The spirit of community and the dedication to keeping Essington beautiful is a thread that connects us all through time.

Remember to cherish your green spaces, look out for your neighbours, and keep the volunteer spirit alive. This work is always worthwhile.

With warm regards and best wishes from 2026,

The Friends of Essington