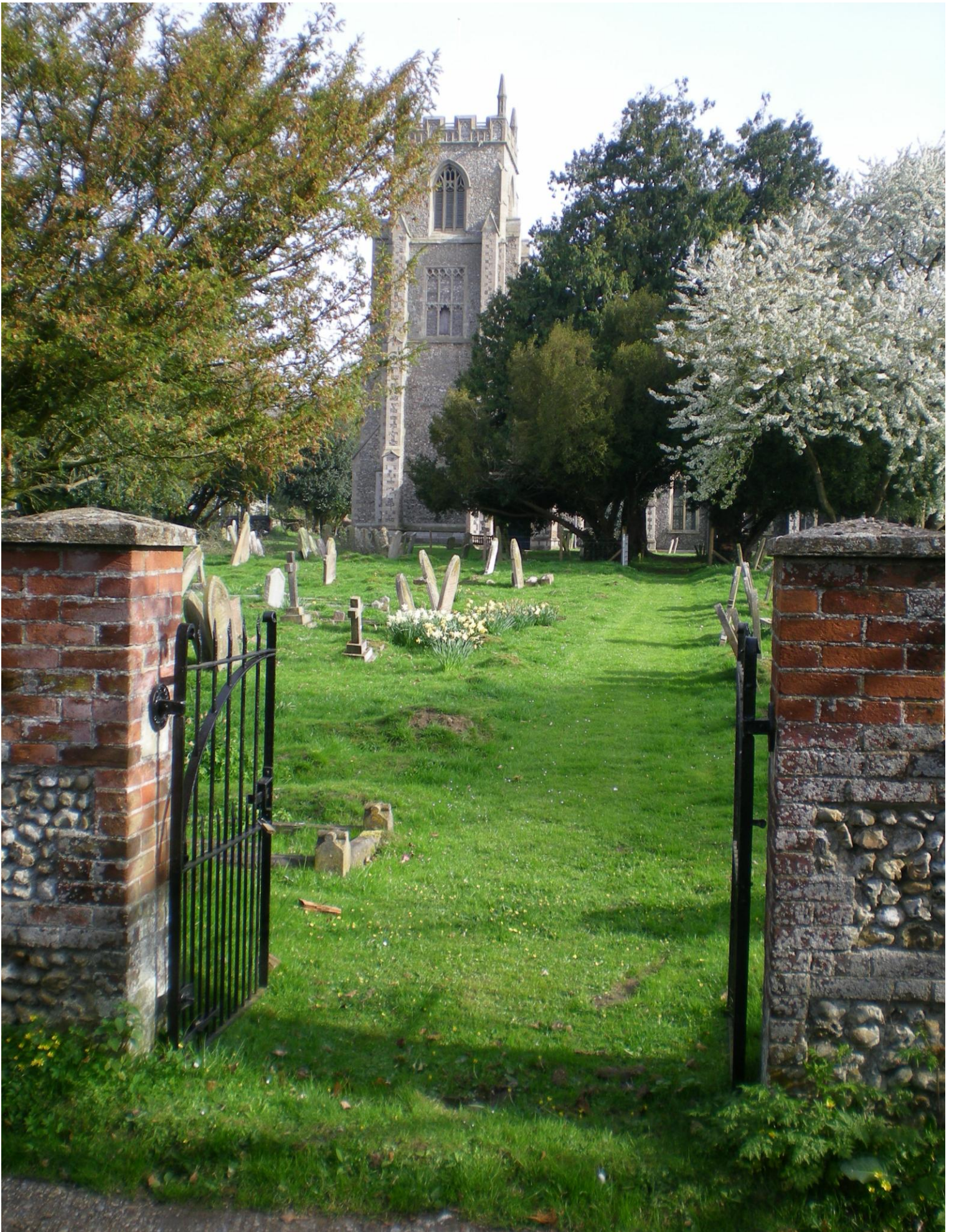


# NORTH ELMHAM COMMUNITY PLAN

April 2011







# Welcome to your Community Plan!

The North Elmham Community Planning Group was founded at a public meeting in November 2008. Statutory guidance called 'Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities' has been issued making it a requirement for local authorities like Breckland to involve communities in the decision making process which shapes amenities and services affecting everyday life. The aim of the Community Planning Group has been to find out what people think about village life and village facilities and to ask what changes they would like to see. At all stages the project was well supported by the Norfolk Rural Community Council with funding provided by them, by ITV Rural Action East, the Norfolk Community Foundation, Breckland Council, BT Community Connections and North Elmham Parish Council.

The organising committee formed at the public meeting met regularly to draft the questionnaire which would provide an objective view of people's feelings about village life. Great emphasis was placed on writing questions which were neutral and did not encourage anyone to answer in a particular way – that was not an easy task. The Parochial Church Council drafted its own questions relevant to the Church as a place of worship. By the spring of 2010 the questionnaire was ready.

In 2008, North Elmham had a population of 1,416 people of all ages, living in 665 households. When the questionnaire was distributed in May and June 2010, a team of over 30 volunteers successfully delivered to 583 households. Generally, one form was left for each household to complete, although more copies were provided on request. There was also a separate youth questionnaire and one for the School. All answers are anonymous.

For the first time in Norfolk, the answers could be submitted on-line. This whole exercise produced a remarkable overall response rate of 91.42% from the 583 households who received either a paper copy or an on-line token, the highest return ever seen from a large Norfolk village.

When reading through the answers what can clearly be seen is the obvious care and thought which people put into their responses. These will provide a valuable record of the hopes and expectations for the future of life in North Elmham.

Once all the questionnaires were collected back from the householders, volunteers began the huge task of inputting the answers onto a computerised database. Over 500 questionnaires, each with almost 100 questions creates 50,000 answers to analyse; several are 'multi-part' and some allow for additional written comment.

The Group has made every effort to ensure that each stage of analysis is as transparent as it possibly can be. We are arranging for all the individual answers to be available in PDF format on the village website [www.northelmhamvillage.org.uk](http://www.northelmhamvillage.org.uk). The initial analysis carried out by the Community Planning Group digests all 50,000 responses into a usable form and excludes no information. Printed copies of this 'Stage 1' Analysis can be made available to those who need them.

This Final Report is a summary of all those points that appear to be of most significance and potential interest based on the number of times each comment was made; a copy is being delivered free of charge to every household (additional copies can also be purchased from the Coffee Shop). **The views expressed in this Final Report are entirely those of the householders who took the time and trouble to complete the Questionnaire; they do not reflect the views of the Community Planning Group or**

**its individual members.** Inevitably, some answers contain elements of criticism but we are keen to make clear that any such judgement is not intended to be directed at any particular people. Rather it is simply a vital part of an open and healthy democratic process which is so necessary in any community.

We hope that the people of North Elmham will feel that this whole exercise has been worthwhile, and that some real benefit for the community will emerge from it all. No appraisal can be complete without a table of Action Points which are the outcome of all the analysis. For each of the Action Points that are being suggested, a lead organisation has been identified as possibly being the most suitable body to take forward an Action. For many of the Actions, it is the Parish Council which is being proposed as the lead organisation. However, there may be individuals or other bodies better able to initiate that change. This is all part of the stimulating debate which needs to follow the completion of any Community Plan.

North Elmham is a wonderful place with a special spirit, and all members of the Community Planning Group feel privileged to have taken part in this project. With the printing of this final report, the work of the Group is complete, and the Group can be disbanded. We very much hope the end result will be a better Elmham in which the community feels more able to take charge of its own destiny.

The Group would like to thank in particular Peter Smith of the Norfolk Rural Community Council for constant support, Roger Atterwill from Swanton Morley and Tony Bushkes from Marham who both gave advice based on their experiences of organising questionnaires in their own parishes, and Steve Heaton and Ivan Ball who kindly provided the photographs in the report.

**Peter Wade-Martins**  
**North Elmham Community Planning Group Chairman**  
April 2011

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# About your Household

83% of households live within the main village, with 17% living outside, mainly at Broom Green, Great Heath Road and County School. (The latter is included even though it is in the parish of Bintree).

25% of households have lived here for up to 5 years, and 15% for between 6 and 10 years.

However 60% have lived here for over 10 years demonstrating that the majority of people like the appearance and atmosphere of the village and its facilities such as the shops, school, surgery and pubs.

32% feel the village is located on good road routes and 24% say it is convenient for their work.

23% moved here due to marriage or with family, and 12% like the range of housing choices. 8% of householders were born in the village.

## Housing

Few express a need for alternative accommodation for residents of North Elmham. 10% of households have someone who will require alternative accommodation within the next 5 years, and half of those require the alternative accommodation at the present time.

Of those who require alternative accommodation the most requested is Rentable Housing Association homes, followed by Starter Homes. A number of comments suggest there should be provision of more affordable accommodation to give village youngsters the opportunity to remain in the village.

### **ACTION No 2:**

**Parish Council** to look at sites in the village that could be used for Housing Association homes and Starter homes.

# Traffic Management and Road Safety



Almost 60% of households accept the current speed limits around the village. However, almost 40% suggest a reduction in the speed limits in a variety of locations. Those areas attracting the greatest concern are Eastgate Street and the 30mph stretches on the B1110 Holt Road, followed by Orchard Close and the 30mph stretch of the B1145 Station Road.

In terms of introducing new traffic management measures, the most popular is speed reminder signs, followed by traffic calming 'pinch points', pedestrian crossings and a 7.5 tonne weight restriction. The most popular requests are:

- **Speed reminder signs:** Station Road/Billingford Road, village entrances and Holt Road
- **'Pinch points':** Eastgate Street and Holt Road
- **Pedestrian crossings:** School/surgery area and Shop/playing field area
- **7.5 tonne weight restriction:** Everywhere, especially Holt Road.

Other suggestions include more speed traps/cameras and road humps. There is a focus on Eastgate Street with suggestions to make it one-way and implement parking restrictions.



With regard to improving the safety of road users and pedestrians, the most popular suggestion is the introduction of more off-road parking spaces, followed by more double yellow lines and then more pavements. The greatest need is in:

- **Off-road parking spaces:** Eastgate Street and the School/surgery area
- **Double yellow lines:** School/surgery area, Holt Road, entrance to Cathedral Drive and Eastgate Street
- **Pavements:** Eastgate Street and Holt Road, plus restoration of the safe route to school.

Street lighting is generally perceived as acceptable throughout the village.



7% of households have no car, 42% have one car and 37% have two cars. 14% have 3 cars or more. Only 6% of households claim they are unable to park all their cars off the road and 8 suggestions were made to address this including surfacing grass verges, allocated parking for residents and provision of a village car park.

## **ACTION No 3:**

**Parish Council** to explore the many suggestions arising on this topic, in partnership with other bodies especially County Council. Please refer to the table of Action Points at the end of this Plan for the specific details.

# Transport

For going shopping, to medical appointments and on days out over 80% of households use their cars. 54% use the car for getting to work (presumably because the rest work locally or are retired).

There are only a relatively small number of people using the bus, although this is the second most popular way of travelling out of the village – 7 for work, 29 for shopping, 5 for medicals, 10 for visiting and 21 for days out. The suggestions as to how public transport could be improved include (a) providing more buses (b) running them direct to Norwich, and (c) running them in the evening to enable more people to use them for getting to and from work.



79 Households see a need for more bus shelters, with the most popular locations being Cathedral Drive and at the north end of the village. However, 286 households do not feel further bus shelters are required.

Few people are interested in taking part in a car sharing scheme. This may be because there is not enough information available about what such a scheme would entail.

## **ACTION No 4:**

**Parish Council** to continue dialogue with all Bus Operators to make aware of the wish for buses running directly to Norwich and in the evenings so return journeys, including to Norwich, are practical.

# Clubs and Societies

There are 113 suggestions about new clubs in the village. The greatest demand is for Sport and Fitness followed by more Youth Activities, Drama, Music and Dance, Film and Photography. Over 60 people offer to help run a club, which is most encouraging.

Many more respondents (260) are interested in Evening Classes. The most popular is for Computers and Languages. Art and Sculpture, Sport and Fitness also feature highly. Handicrafts and Photography have a following too. The quantity of suggestions for new clubs and evening classes indicates a desire for activities to be organised within the village, rather than people having to travel elsewhere to participate in these interests.

## **ACTION No 5:**

### **Elmham News Magazine and Website**

- To run articles that would confirm the level of interest in attending clubs, societies and evening classes in those activities.
- To publish a regular listing of the contact details for the organisers of all existing clubs and societies to help people know what is already on offer.



# Elmham Church Fundraising Events

The Elmham Church Events Committee organises a small number of events each year to raise funds for the upkeep of the Church. Currently these include the Flower Festival and the Village Fete.



Over 80% of households attend these events. There are 69 suggestions for changes to the fundraising activities.

Most popular suggestions are:

- More family/youth/child/community-orientation
- More music events
- More 'village sales'-type events, for example car-boot sales



148 households suggest a wide range of other events for the Committee to consider. There are 55 suggestions for a Village Open Gardens Day and 49 for more Music events such as jazz, folk, classical and dance-orientated music.

A total of 70 households expressed an interest in helping the Events Committee, although only 6 provided their contact details.

## **ACTION No 6:**

**Elmham Church Events Committee** to give serious consideration to incorporating some of these ideas into their events programme.

## Playgroup

Just over 6% of households have children attending the village playgroup. Over 77% of those attending are happy with the activities that the playgroup provides.

There are 15 suggestions for changes which include:

- A bigger better building for the Playgroup with toddlers moved somewhere else.
- Visits within the community such as to gardens and farms.
- More visitors and experts to talk to the children about hobbies or interests
- Longer opening times.
- Breakfast club.
- More days open.
- More for children under 2.

There are 19 offers of help to run the Playgroup.

## **ACTION No 7:**

**Playgroup Leaders** to evaluate these suggestions.

# Facilities and Amenities

## Eastgate Centre



Few people are able to comment on this facility as its main activities centre on Scouts and Guides. 85% of people who use the building think it is excellent, good or acceptable. Nonetheless, there are concerns that heating and insulation of the building should be improved. Some modernisation and a larger car park would also be welcomed.

**ACTION No 8a:**  
**Trustees of the Youth and Community Centre** to consider improvements to the

*heating and modernising the interior, especially the kitchen. The lack of adequate car parking stands out as a problem to be resolved.*

## Memorial Institute

90% of respondents see it as excellent, good or acceptable although there is a minority who think it is poor or very poor. There are clearly concerns about the age of the building and perceived low quality and cleanliness of the facilities, the kitchen, and its overall appearance. Some express a view that it should be modernised, or even demolished and re-built in a more convenient location with better parking.



**ACTION No 8b:**

**Memorial Institute Trustees** may wish to consider concerns raised about the cleanliness, the kitchen, the appearance of the building, and identify measures to address them or decide if the time has come to replace it with a modern facility with better parking.

## Pavilion

93% think it is excellent, good or acceptable, representing general satisfaction by its users. Comments suggest it would benefit from a facelift - redecoration, better heating, new showers and improved disabled access are specifically mentioned.

**ACTION No 8c:**

**Parish Council** may wish to consider the need to redecorate, improve the heating, provide new showers and improvements to disabled access.





### **JOINT ACTION No 8d:**

**Trustees of Youth and Community Centre, Memorial Institute Trustees and Parish Council** to consider the recurring theme of having three separate centres serving different functions and each requiring some refurbishment in different ways is an argument for replacing two or all three of them with one new building on a fresh site to modern standards with good parking to serve the whole community. The three organisations running these facilities may like to establish a steering group to consider the merit of combining their resources to build one new community centre.

## **Village Green**



Just over half of respondents (53%) visit the Green monthly or more often than that, resulting in at least 1,250 visits by households each month, which makes it the most popular open space in the village.

Over 90 responses say the Children's Playground on the Playing Field is in the wrong place and most of them want it moved to the Green. Some people would like more seating

and there is significant concern that much stricter controls are needed over dog fouling on the Green.

Both a hardened path from Spencers Close to Oak Avenue, and parking for those visiting the Green or using the Safe Route to School would be welcomed. Others would appreciate some lighting and an area set aside for wildlife conservation.

### **ACTION No 8e:**

**Parish Council** to continue negotiations for purchase of the Green from the County Council as a matter of high priority. If this is achieved, the various issues and suggestions to be carefully considered.

## **Cathedral Meadows**



30% of respondents visit monthly or more often than that, resulting in at least 500 visits by households each month. The few comments on the Meadows suggest better signposting, more seats, some picnic tables, and an information board with a map. There is also a wish not to disturb this beautiful place too much.

### **ACTION No 8f:**

**Parish Council** to consider providing better signage, new information board, and more seating in positions that will not detract from this attractive area.

## **Millennium Wood**

20% visit monthly or more often resulting in at least 300 visits by households each month. Suggestions include signposting to the Wood and more information about the Wood. An entrance enabling access for buggies and wheelchairs is very important for some people. An interesting question is posed about whether there could be a new footpath from Cathedral Drive to the Wood. Others would like to see picnic tables and a wildlife conservation area.



**ACTION No 8g:**

**Parish Council** to consider the various suggestions that would enrich a visit to the Wood, mainly to make more people aware of its location, but also to upgrade the access arrangements, provide better information, seating and wildlife conservation.

## Prince William Wood



Only 7% of households visit the Wood monthly or more often, with 50% never visiting and 20% not giving any answer at all. This is much less well known than the Millennium Wood, even though it is close to the village and visible from Back Lane (B1145 road). Clearly, signposting is essential and some seats would be appreciated.

**ACTION No 8h:**

**Parish Council** to consider improvements to make Wood better known and install some seats.

## Broom Green and Pond

Only 7% of respondent visit Broom Green monthly or more often, with 53% never visiting and 17% not giving any answer. Its location is well outside the main Village, with the small population living there creating a separate hamlet. Use of the Green will be small compared with open spaces within the main Village.



**ACTION No 8i:**

**Parish Council** to consider providing more information and seating, whilst leaving the Green mainly unchanged.

## Playing Field

36% of respondents visit monthly or more often than that, resulting in at least 560 visits by households each month.

The overwhelming criticism is about the Play Equipment. Over 100 responses ask for a larger Playground with new and more exciting equipment for a wider age range like at Swanton Morley. Over 90 people state that it is currently in the wrong place with most of those people realising that the Village Green presents a far more appropriate environment away from the cricket, playing field and main road.



**ACTION No 8j:**

**Parish Council** to consider the strong case for a new Playground to be built on the Village Green if the Green is successfully purchased from the County Council.



## Allotments

5% of respondents say they have an allotment. However, twice that number (a further 10%) would be interested in having one.

The greatest worry and concern by far is over the entrance and exit on the Dereham (B1110) road. 60% of comment on this subject relates to the access rather than to the allotments themselves. Suggestions include making the exit wider to improve visibility, erecting a 'concealed entrance' sign, tightening control over traffic speeds, installing a visibility mirror, or even moving the access to the Brisley (B1145) road.



There is a strong feeling that there is a need for a new footpath and cycle track from the King's Head corner to the allotments.

Regarding the allotments themselves, there is a useful suggestion that smaller plots would be very popular for people unable to manage a full-sized one.

### **ACTION No 9:**

*Annie Mary Smith Allotment Trustees to consider as a serious safety issue the concerns about access from the Dereham (B1110) road; widening the visibility splay could be the most effective way forward. It is also essential to explore the possibility of creating a new footpath and cycle track to the allotments. There ought to be a means of accommodating many of the 49 households wishing to take on an allotment, especially as some would appreciate a smaller plot.*

## Village cash point

60% of respondents believe they would use a local cash point if one were available.

# Heritage Amenities

## Cathedral ruins and church as a place to visit



Almost 70% of respondents visited the ruins in the previous twelve months and over 60% visited the church. This supports the claim that the villagers do have an interest in the church although they may not wish to attend services regularly. More information in various forms about both places would be welcomed, even though guidebooks about them both are on sale in the church. There is a wish that disabled access into the church be improved.

### **ACTION No 10:**

**a)Parochial Church Council/Parish Council/English Heritage** to consider installation of illustrated heritage information displays about the village and its history, possibly in the church, which would be appreciated. This would greatly improve public understanding of the church, the ruins and the history of the village over the last 2000 years and would also encourage tourism.

**b)English Heritage** to consider a full review of the presentation and interpretation of the ruins in the light of the on-going confusion over the interpretation of the site.

**c)Parish Council** to consider how people can access heritage information better within the village (the Parish Council has agreed to raise funds to provide an information board located outside the cathedral ruins to identify places of interest in the village. A suitable location for another similar board could be on the village green).

**d)Parochial Church Council** to explore better disabled access into the church.

## County School Station

Half the respondents visited in the previous 12 months although they are unclear when the station and tea shop is open.



### **ACTION No 10:**

**e)Mid Norfolk Railway Preservation Trust** to consider better signage and presentation of County School Station and make opening times clearer.

**Comment:** Looking at all these three amenities together, one in five households visited one of them in the previous 12 months, over a quarter visited two of them, and an impressive one third of households (i.e. one in three) visited all three.



## Existing public footpaths (not pavements)



Almost 60% of respondents use footpaths at least monthly or more often than that resulting in footpaths being used at least 1,300 times per month. 46% of respondents did not feel there is sufficient information available about footpaths.

Strong feelings are expressed about the walking conditions in winter created by the cattle on the old railway line footpath north of the Yarrow Crossing to Broom Green. Comments used to describe the path include “disgusting” and “impassable”. Issues with dog owners failing to clear up after their pets also rank highly.



### **ACTION No 11:**

**a)Parish Council** to ask the County Council’s Footpaths Officer to take the necessary steps to ensure that the path between County School Station and Broom Green is kept in a passable condition at all times, including filling of the rabbit holes between County School and Yarrow Crossing.

**b)Parish Council** to consider installation on the village green of a map showing all existing footpaths available for walking in the parish and surrounding area. The map should include the Cathedral Meadows, Millennium Wood, Prince William Wood and Broom Green.

## New public footpaths

There are 89 suggestions for new footpaths and bridleways. The most popular was for a new long distance footpath and cycle route along the old railway line to Dereham. Some would also like to see it run north towards Fakenham. Several think that there would be more benefit from this than in reopening the line as a railway.

There is a wish for a new riverside walk along the River Wensum, and this could be linked to the railway line path. This is followed closely by a wish to see a public right of way from County School over the bridge and through Bintree Woods to Billingford. There are several safety concerns about the lack of a path beside the main road north of the village to the County School turning and beyond to the Broom Green council houses.

There is also a suggestion to re-open the old road (closed in 1829) from near the Old Hall on Eastgate Street north to the Millennium Wood and the church.

### **ACTION No 11:**

**c)Parish Council** to consider the formation of a Footpaths Group to explore all the many ideas for new paths put forward in the answers received.

**d)Parish Council** to consider feasibility of a dog warden to control fouling of footpaths and public areas.

**e)Parish Council** to provide more dog waste bins at appropriate places.

## Public toilets

There is a significant minority of almost 30% who see a benefit in having public toilets in the village. However, twice that number (almost 60%) see no need for them.

# The Parish Church as a Place of Worship

It is clear from the number and variety of comments and suggestions that a sizeable proportion of the community take an interest in the church and its activities.



There are approaching 1000 comments supporting the use of the church for activities in addition to services, mainly for concerts and exhibitions. There are over 550 responses in favour of changes to the building, with the installation of toilets and a kitchen receiving most support, followed by better facilities for visitors and children with the creation of a small meeting room.

35% of respondents (over 170 households) had attended services in the previous two years. There are several reasons why others had not attended. The two main ones are having no religious faith or having faith but considering it a private matter.

## **ACTION No 12:**

**Parochial Church Council** to consider the following issues:

- *Rethinking the form of some services to appeal to a wide a range of worshippers*
- *Promoting the church for other suitable uses, such as exhibitions, a programme of concerts and as a village meeting space*
- *Installing toilets, small kitchen and a meeting room*
- *Improving the children's area and providing better visitor facilities*



## Parish Council

Whilst a small number are unhappy, just over 40% say they are satisfied with the way the Parish Council spends its money. However approximately the same number again do not express a view. It is unclear whether this results from a lack of interest or limited knowledge on which to make a response. There are a small number of people highlighting the difficulty in finding out the detail of how money is spent. Respondents feel that Highway and Planning issues are by far the most important responsibilities for the Parish Council. This is followed by public open spaces and environmental concerns which feature highly for a significant number of people.

### **ACTION No 13a:**

**Parish Council** to publicise more details about their finances and their vital role so residents can develop a greater interest in the Council and how the budget is used.

## Information about the Parish, District and County Councils

Elmham News is a vital vehicle for keeping people informed. Over 90% of respondents read the monthly magazine to learn about the Parish Council. Not surprisingly, therefore, people are most satisfied with the information provided by the Parish compared with the District and County Councils. Nevertheless, half of respondents read Breckland Voice with almost as many reading the Local press.

## Contact with local bodies (Parish, District and County Councils, NHS Norfolk, Elmham Surgery and the Police)

Out of all the contact with these organisations in the previous 12 months, approaching 40% of those were with Elmham Surgery. Despite some people feeling there can be difficulties in getting appointments with the Surgery, almost 70% of respondents are very satisfied rising to 95% of respondents who feel their satisfaction is average or better.

The number of people who had contact with the other organisations is much lower. Almost 90% of people feel their satisfaction is average or better with NHS Norfolk; almost 85% for the Parish Council; 72% for Breckland Council (problems with the planning department being specifically mentioned); with only 65% for the County Council; and 62% for the Police (with criticism about lack of presence and response). Those bodies scoring less well are generally seen as leaving problems unresolved, with a poor standard of communication and response.

### **ACTION No 13b:**

**Community Planning Group** to ensure that all these organisations are made aware of this information, particularly where the satisfaction level could be increased.

## Services (sewage disposal, surface drainage, mains electricity, domestic refuse collection, recycling facilities)

There is general satisfaction with these services. Notably, though, there are approaching 20% of all respondents who are dissatisfied with surface water drainage; and in some cases, there is an associated escape of sewage. Trouble spots they identify are the Station Road level crossing, the eastern end of Eastgate Street, Holt Road near the Post Office, and Wensum Drive.

### **ACTION No 13c:**

**Parish Council** to continue to raise these issues with the relevant authorities as they arise.

## Usage of recycling facilities

93% of respondents recycle glass in the village. The facilities for disposal of paper, cardboard and cans are somewhat duplicated by refuse collections. The relatively low usage for textiles recycling possibly reflects there being only one textile bank which is at the Railway Tavern.



## Litter

Approaching 60% of respondents do not think that the village has a litter problem, although nearly 20% consider there is a problem. Most of the comments complain in general terms of cans, food and snack packaging discarded by the roadside and the recreational areas which suggests that not all litter is left by village residents.

### **ACTION No 13d:**

**Parish Council** to provide more litter bins in appropriate places at Amenity and Heritage sites and along footpaths.

## Renewable energy resources

Approaching 40% of respondents feel that a group should be formed to look into renewable energy sources. The type of generation which is suggested varies, although the two most popular are wind and solar power.

### **ACTION No 13e:**

**Parish Council** to explore the formation of a village group to look at ideas for sustainable energy production in the Parish.



# Communication

77% of households in the village have a computer. Of those with a computer, 93% do use the internet at home. Of those who use the internet at home, 60% use it for personal use only and 40% use it for personal and business use. Of those who use the internet at home, 95% use Broadband with only 5% using 'Dial-up'.

## Broadband speed

Of all those using Broadband:

- 85% answer that Broadband speeds are always or usually adequate for regular use, (20% saying 'always' and 65% saying 'usually').
- 15% feel speeds are rarely or never adequate, (12% saying 'rarely' and only 3% answering 'never').

There does not appear to be any simple geographic breakdown to explain the 15% who feel their Broadband speeds are inadequate.

Those using computers for **business** responded as follows:

- 79% answer that Broadband speeds are always or usually adequate for regular use, (15% saying 'always' and 64% saying 'usually').
- 17% feel speeds are rarely or never adequate, (15% saying 'rarely' and 2% saying 'never').
- 4% did not provide a response.

For business use, these percentages reflect the same emphasis as the overall broadband speed figures.

### **ACTION No 14a:**

*Elmham News to advertise for a Parishioner to take on a monitoring role regarding upgrading of Broadband speed as it becomes available.*

## Television

Almost three-quarters of respondents are able to receive digital terrestrial television and 98% of those find the reception to be acceptable. This is encouraging for the situation shortly when the (old) analogue signal is due to be switched off.

## Mobile phones

90% of respondents use a mobile phone. Clearly people use their mobiles in very different ways. Some still use land lines at home, while others rely (or try to rely) solely on mobiles. The less than complete signal coverage is a source of constant irritation to a substantial number of residents.

60% of people using a mobile phone are with the Vodafone network. Of those using Vodafone 49% answer that coverage is always or usually adequate for regular use (with 6% saying 'always' and 43% saying 'usually').

51% feel coverage is rarely or never adequate (with 39% saying 'rarely' and only 12% answering 'never').

The perceived shortcomings in coverage across the village relate to all the main networks.

**ACTION No 14b:**

**Parish Council** to make network providers aware of the level of dissatisfaction with existing mobile coverage.

## Telephone boxes

Less than 3% of households claim to have used a telephone box in the preceding year. This is hardly surprising in view of the high percentage of mobile phone users in the village.

## Post boxes

Nearly 80% of respondents are content with the current location of post boxes. There are 29 suggestions for relocation with the most popular being to the area of the Pavilion/shop/Kings Head public house.

**ACTION No 14c:**

**Parish Council** to approach Royal Mail regarding installation or relocation of a box in the Pavilion/shop/King's Head Public House area



# Elmham News and village website

## Elmham News

Almost every household reads the monthly free magazine. However, responses elsewhere in the questionnaire suggest that there is sometimes a lack of awareness about local events which could mean that it is not always read very thoroughly.

Over 95% of readers find the information and articles useful. There are 63 helpful suggestions on a wide variety of changes to content, format and overall appearance for further consideration by the Editorial Committee.

## Village website

[www.northelmhamvillage.org.uk](http://www.northelmhamvillage.org.uk)



Over 78% of respondents are aware of the village website, and of those people nearly 40% use it. The majority of suggestions indicate satisfaction and offer praise; a small number of others would like more information and fresh features.

**ACTION No 15:**

**Elmham News** to consider how to change the contents of Elmham News and how to increase usage of the website and contributions to it.



# The Future and Other Issues

In their answers, people gave a lot of thought to how village life might be made even better than it already is. Many took this opportunity to voice how content they are. However, there is a huge range of sensible suggestions which often conflict with each other. Overall, residents want to see North Elmham develop and prosper although they are concerned that we do not lose the nice things we have now. In particular, over 70% of respondents support the decision taken at a public meeting that the built-up area of the village should not be allowed to expand beyond its existing boundaries.

A good number of households clearly would like more privately-run shops and businesses within the parish and for the current ones, including the two pubs, to offer more services with longer opening hours. They say they would actively support these services if they were available. Businesses that people would especially welcome are a butcher, baker, hairdresser, grocer, rural workshop, farm shop, petrol station and restaurant.

Other specific ideas for improving day-to-day village life are covered earlier in this report under the relevant headings. The main topics that people feel strongly about are these:

- **Traffic speed:** This relates mostly to Holt Road, Eastgate Street and Station Road where some drivers regularly exceed the legal limits with little regard for the safety of other road users and pedestrians.
- **Large vehicles:** Residents feel there is an unacceptable increase in heavy goods vehicles coming through Elmham.
- **Parking:** Inconsiderate parking on the roadside (and sometimes on the pavement) for short periods close to the school and surgery and for longer periods along parts of Eastgate Street causes considerable annoyance.
- **Meeting places:** A number of people question the sense of continuing with three different 'village hall' type venues competing for usage and income. There is a wish for the Church as a venue to have a wider role in the Community.
- **Open spaces:** With exceptions, the green spaces are well used. But some people readily admit their ignorance about some of the village's best facilities and footpaths because of a lack of any signposting to them. And better information at the heritage sites would be welcomed. The dog poo issue is a matter of general concern.
- **Children's Playground:** Several people take their children to Swanton Morley to use their play equipment because ours is viewed as unexciting and is in the wrong place when the Village Green is so much more suitable.
- **Allotments:** Twice as many households as have allotments say they would like one, even if just a small one. There is considerable worry about the lack of a footpath to the allotments and the safety of using the entrance and exit.
- **Services:** There is general satisfaction; the surgery scores very well but the police have room for improvement. Mobile 'phone coverage has severe shortcomings on all the main networks, although Vodafone is by far the most popular.
- **Social activity:** We are lucky to have as many societies as we do with a calendar of community events like the Fete and Festival but there is a real appetite for other interests and occasions as well including a large demand for various Evening Classes. The Elmham News does a good job keeping its readers informed.



## WE HAD OUR SAY!!

What people actually say.....

Elmham is the warmest and friendliest village I have ever lived in. The people are wonderful, the village is well served. Let's ensure we keep it that way.

I have lived in Elmham for about 30 years and I feel at home here.

Have lived here for 5 years and find it a very friendly place to live. I feel my family have a lovely village to grow up in.

The village feels itself under stress as it tries to grapple with its success. And it is a successful village as its vibrant community institutions testify.

It is important that the village remembers it is a village and it is not yet a town.

Elmham is a very good place to live with some fantastic facilities - I enjoy living here very much.

We have been resident in the village for 4 years and are extremely happy here.

At our time of life, both in our 80s, we are very satisfied and content with what this village has to offer and we hope to remain here.

The locals are what matter. Having lived here for only 18 months, I am very satisfied with the quality of life in Elmham.

Quite happy the way it is.

Very very happy here - great people, very friendly.

Elmham is a lovely village to live in. It needs to remain so. Care not to turn it into a dormitory village.

Thank you for all your hard work on the village's behalf. Please try to make sure we are looking forward to a larger more sustainable village and not look back to something that has long gone.

Let's welcome and encourage newcomers as they make our school, pubs, shop and church more viable.

Let's make Elmham fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

We could double the size of Elmham without losing its character and its quality green space.

The Millennium Wood is a lovely place to visit but it would be nice to access it with a pram or pushchair.

Better signposting for the Millennium Wood – we only found it after someone told us about it 18 months after we moved in.

The Millennium Wood is a fine addition to our village and I love it more and more. It is maturing well. A great idea and a long term asset. Congratulations to whoever first proposed it. Nice to have seating there.

The Children's Play Area should be modernized and moved to the Green where more children could access it safely. Facilities for older children and teenagers need to be provided to encourage a sense of worth and inclusion among our young people.

Younger people with energy and enthusiasm need to be voted onto the Parish Council. The village cannot stay in a 1950s time warp.

Very pleased to complete this questionnaire. But please keep up the momentum. It is nice to see a proactive approach.

Congratulations on organising this local consultation; perhaps it should be done every 10 years or so.

Thanks to the Community Planning Group for their hard work in compiling this questionnaire for the village.

The Parish Council is to be congratulated on producing this important questionnaire as feedback from residents is important to the Council in making its decisions.



# Youth Survey

22 young people (13 female, 9 male) from the age of 12-17 answered a questionnaire devised specially for them. One works full-time, and the rest are at school or college; 10 go to Northgate High, 8 to Neatherd High, 2 to Dereham Sixth Form and 1 to college.

Their activities involve a number of sports; tennis, rugby, badminton, ju-jitsu, hockey, netball, basketball, swimming, golf, bowling, cricket, kayaking and petanque. Other interests are scouts and guides, horse riding, debating, drama, the environment, cinema, magic and a band.

16 of the young people travel out of the village for these activities, mainly to Dereham. The main means of travel are lifts from parents and friends although some use the bus.

Facilities viewed as average or better:

Memorial Institute -13 respondents

Village Green – 19 respondents

Playing Field – 16 respondents

Eastgate Centre – 10 respondents

'Nowhere to go' and 'poor bus service' are the issues that are more important. 'Lack of street lighting' and 'personal security' are less important.

The opportunity to be involved in making decisions on a Village Youth Council definitely appealed to 6 respondents, and maybe 7 more.

17 enjoy a fast or excellent broadband service. 9 think their mobile reception at home is poor, with the rest seeing it as acceptable, good or excellent. Around the Parish those who think it is poor reduces to 4 respondents.

They find out what is happening in the village mainly by word of mouth, followed by Elmham News. Only 2 look at the village website.

## **ACTION No 16:**

*One issue deserving an Action Point is the formation of a Village Youth Council although we are unable to identify a suitable body to take this forward.*

# Primary School Survey

Responses from 51 North Elmham resident pupils, aged from 5 to 11 inclusive:  
23 boys and 28 girls.

## **North Elmham Primary After-school Clubs.**

30 pupils attend a North Elmham Primary School after-school club(s)

## **North Elmham Clubs.**

16 pupils attend Uniform clubs (i.e. "brownies" and "cubs")

13 pupils attend Tennis clubs

## **New Clubs.**

37 pupils wanted new clubs in North Elmham, the major requests being:

Swimming 9

Dance 5

## **Clubs Outside North Elmham.**

28 pupils go to clubs outside North Elmham.

Of these 28, for 21 the major location is Dereham with parents almost entirely relied upon for transport.

11 attend swimming,

4 play hockey

4 ride ponies.

## **Village Amenities.**

**Scoring the amenities on a scale of 1 = didn't enjoy being there; 5 = enjoyed being there,**

40 pupils have attended events/clubs at the **Memorial Institute** giving it a score of 4

28 pupils have attended events/clubs at the **Eastgate Centre** giving it a score of 4

41 pupils have met friends or played on the **Village Green** giving it a score of 4.5

42 pupils have met friends or played at the **Recreation Ground** giving it a score of 4

## **New Facilities.**

Asked to name **new buildings or places** they would like to see in the village:

8 pupils requested swimming facilities

3 pupils requested a bakery.

## **Summer Holiday Activities.**

29 pupils requested **professional coaching:**

6 requested Golf

5 requested Football

4 requested Swimming

4 requested Athletics

## **Living in North Elmham**

Given up to **3 things to like** about being in North Elmham:

21 pupils expressed "friendliness";

18 pupils expressed "environment";

9 pupils expressed an identification of the range of "clubs/activities"

Given up to **3 things not to like** about being in North Elmham:

12 pupils identified "graffiti and litter";

9 pupils identified "fast cars; noisy, narrow roads".

# COMMUNITY PLAN – ACTION POINTS

	Suggested Action	Suggested Leader	Suggested Partner(s)	Page	Timing
1	<b>Introduction</b> To review all initiatives arising from the Community Plan Action Points	Parish Council			Short
2	<b>Housing</b> To look at sites in the village that could be used for Housing Association Homes and Starter Homes	Parish Council		6	Long
3	<b>Traffic Management and Road Safety</b> To consider forming a Traffic Management and Road-Safety sub group to co-ordinate the several suggestions arising under this subject	Parish Council		7	Short
3a	To explore the provision of <b>speed reminder signs</b> for current speed limits, the most appropriate styles, and the most pertinent positions	Parish Council	County Council, Police	7	Medium
3b	To explore the provision of <b>pinch points</b> and the most appropriate positions on Holt Road and Eastgate Street	Parish Council	County Council	7	Medium
3c	To explore the provision of <b>pedestrian crossings</b> near to the surgery and school, and close to the shop and playing field and the most acceptable type (unless deemed unnecessary if pinch points were installed)	Parish Council	County Council, School	7	Long
3d	To form a public action group to <b>monitor the movements and routes of HGVs</b>	Parish Council	Parishioners, County Council	7	Short
3e	To investigate possible areas in the village for <b>off-road parking</b> primarily in relation to Eastgate Street, and the surgery/school area in connection with the safe route to school	Parish Council	County Council	7	Medium



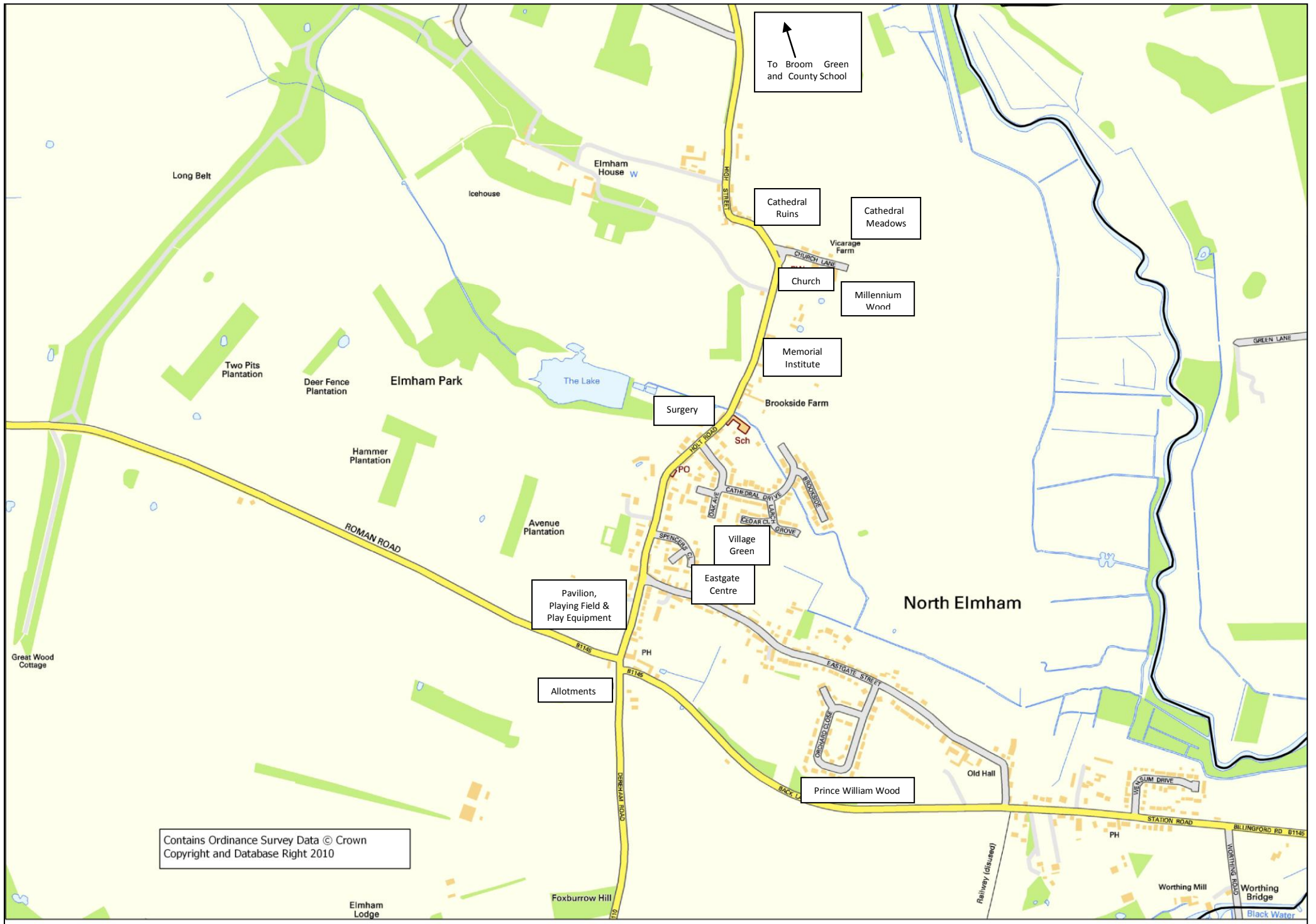
3f	To investigate introducing <b>yellow lines</b> parking restrictions on the stretch of Holt Road in the surgery/school/Cathedral Drive area and in Eastgate Street	Parish Council	County Council, Police	7	Short
3g	To research how to improve the provision of <b>pavements</b> in Holt Road and in Eastgate Street and to continue negotiations with Norfolk County Council to reinstate the <b>safe route to school</b>	Parish Council	County Council, School	7	Short
3h	To monitor <b>vehicle parking</b> around the Parish on a random basis with a view to tackling the most dangerous examples	Parish Council	Parishioners, Police	7	Short
3i	To explore feasibility of <b>a reduction in speed limits</b> in Eastgate Street, Holt Road, Orchard Close and part of Station Road	Parish Council	County Council	7	Short
4	<b>Transport</b> To continue the dialogue about the possibilities of improving <b>local bus services</b> as requested by residents	Parish Council	All Bus Operators	8	Medium
5	<b>Clubs and Societies</b>				
5a	To run articles designed to confirm level of interest in attending specific <b>clubs, societies and evening classes</b> in those activities	Elmham News Magazine & Website	Parishioners	8	Short
5b	To publish a regular listing of the contact details for the organisers of all <b>existing clubs and societies</b> to help people know what is already on offer	Elmham News Magazine & Website	Parishioners	8	Short
6	<b>Elmham Church Events Committee</b> To give serious consideration to incorporating some of the suggested ideas into their events programme	Events Committee		9	Short
7	<b>Playgroup</b> To evaluate the suggestions raised by respondents	Playgroup Leaders	Parents	9	Short

8	<b>Facilities and Amenities</b>				
8a	To consider improving the <b>Eastgate Centre</b> - better heating and modernising the interior	Trustees of the Youth and Community Centre	Users of the Centre	10	Short
8b	To consider improving the <b>Memorial Institute</b> – cleanliness, kitchen, and appearance	Memorial Institute Trustees	Regular users of the Hall	10	Short
8c	To consider improving the <b>Pavilion</b> – redecoration, heating, showers, and access	Parish Council	Users	10	Short
8d	To form a steering group for combining the resources of these venues	All 3 bodies	Users	11	Short
8e	To consider improvements suggested for the <b>Village Green</b> , if it can be purchased from County Council – play area, seating, additional path, parking, lighting, and conservation	Parish Council		11	Medium
8f	To consider improvements to <b>Cathedral Meadows</b> – discreet signage, information and seating	Parish Council		11	Medium
8g	To consider improvements to <b>Millennium Wood</b> – signage, access by buggies and wheelchairs, information, seating and conservation	Parish Council		12	Medium
8h	To consider improvements for <b>Prince William Wood</b> – signage and seating	Parish Council		12	Medium
8i	To consider improvements for <b>Broom Green and Pond</b> – information and seating	Parish Council		12	Medium
8j	To consider replacement and relocation of the <b>Play Equipment</b> , if purchase of the Village Green is completed	Parish Council		12	Medium
9	<b>Allotments</b> To devise how to action the 3 main issues: improving the safety of the entrance and exit; providing a pedestrian/cycle path; allocating plots to new holders	Annie Mary Smith Allotment Trustees	Current and potential holders	13	Short

10	<b>Heritage Amenities</b>				
10a	To progress provision in the church of heritage <b>information about the village</b>	Parochial Church Council	Parish Council, English Heritage	14	Medium
10b	To consider a full review of the presentation and interpretation of the <b>ruins</b>	English Heritage		14	Medium
10c	To consider how people can <b>access heritage information</b> better	Parish Council		14	Medium
10d	To devise better <b>disabled access</b> into the church	Parochial Church Council	Diocesan Advisory Committee	14	Medium
10e	To consider better presentation of <b>County School Station</b> – signage and opening times	MNR Preservation Trust		14	Medium
11	<b>Existing and new public footpaths</b>				
11a	To ensure path from <b>County School to Broom Green</b> is always passable with rabbit holes filled in	Parish Council	County Council Footpaths Officer	15	Medium
11b	To consider installing on the Village Green a <b>map of all footpaths</b> in the area	Parish Council		15	Medium
11c	To encourage the formation of a <b>Footpaths Group</b> to examine ideas for new paths	Parish Council		15	Long
11d	To investigate the feasibility of a <b>Dog Warden</b> to control dog fouling along the paths as well as at the Amenity and Heritage Sites in the Parish	Parish Council	District Council	15	Medium
11e	To provide more <b>Dog Waste bins</b> at appropriate places	Parish Council	District Council	15	Medium
12	<b>Parish Church as a place of worship</b> To rethink some services; to promote the church for other suitable uses; to install toilets, kitchen and meeting room; to improve children’s area and visitor facilities	Parochial Church Council		16	Medium



13	<b>Local Government and Services</b>			17	Short
13a	To publicise more information about their <b>own finances</b>	Parish Council			
13b	Provide local bodies with a copy of this report to ensure they are aware of <b>satisfaction levels</b> particularly where there is room for improvement	Community Planning Group	District and County Councils, NHS, the Surgery, Police	17	Short
13c	To continue to raise issues about <b>surface water</b> and sewage	Parish Council	Relevant Authorities	17	Short
13d	To provide more <b>litter bins</b> in appropriate places at Amenity and Heritage Sites and along footpaths	Parish Council	District Council	18	Medium
13e	To encourage formation of a village group to look at ideas for <b>sustainable energy</b> production	Parish Council	Parishioners	18	Long
14	<b>Communication</b>				
14a	To advertise for a Parishioner to take on a monitoring role regarding upgrading of Broadband speed as it becomes available	Elmham News	Parishioners	19	Short
14b	To advise mobile phone network providers about the level of dissatisfaction with existing <b>mobile coverage</b>	Parish Council	Network Providers	20	Short
14c	To request installation/relocation of <b>Post Box</b>	Parish Council	Royal Mail	20	Short
15	<b>Elmham News and village website</b>				
	To change the contents of the magazine and to encourage usage of and contributions to the website	Elmham News		20	Short
16	<b>Youth</b>				
	To form a Village Youth Council			24	Medium





MILES  
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