

**Minutes of the
ANNUAL PARISH MEETING OF NORTH ELMHAM
held at the Sports Pavilion at 7.30 p.m.
on Wednesday 24th May 2017**

Those Present Were:

Mrs. J. Borgnis (Chairman), Mr. M. Phillips (Vice Chairman), Mr. J. Brown, Mr. T. Fitzalan Howard, Mr. J. Labouchere, Mr. C. Smith, Dr. P. Wade-Martins, Mr. K. Webb (Parish Clerk), Mr. G. Bambridge (District Councillor), Mrs. M. White (Elmham News + Dereham and Fakenham Times) and five parishioners.

As Chairman of the Parish Council, and in accordance with current regulations, Mrs. Jennie Borgnis assumed the Chair for this meeting.

Apologies for Absence:

Mr. P. Grainger, Mrs. A. Keeble, Mr. C. MacEwan and Mrs. Warner.

Public comments/questions

Mr. Peter Howell asked if he could speak. The Chairman said that he could but that he should not make any defamatory comments. She also reported that Mr. Howell had issued threats in a message left on her telephone earlier in the day. Mr. Howell stated that he had “spoken to the Standards Officer at Dereham”. He then attempted, as on a number of occasions at previous meetings, to embark on a tirade of personal abuse against various members of the Parish Council. He was prevented from doing so. He then queried an exchange of land carried out by the Church and Town Lands Charity in the year ended 31st March, 2016. Full details of this were given at the 2016 Annual Parish meeting and in the minutes of that meeting, a copy of which was in Mr. Howell’s possession. He was referred to page 3/16.

Mr. Norman Clarke queried the maintenance charge of almost £600 per annum to Westcotec. He thought that this was unnecessary as the new street lights do not require annual maintenance. The position will be investigated.

Ms Anne Ketteringham said that she was unhappy with the proposal for a telecommunications mast on the playing field. She also stated that she had received no response from Shared Access regarding a letter she had written to them. This will be chased.

Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on Wednesday 25th May 2016:

These were approved by all as a true and accurate record, and were signed as such by the Chairman. (Proposed by Mr. Labouchere and seconded by Mr. Phillips. All in favour)

Matters Arising:

None

Chairman's Report

The year has seen some successes, some sadness and a number of frustrations.

I will start with a mention of Jim Heffernan who died in March 2016. The Parish Council continues to acknowledge the huge contribution he made to village life, not least the effort he put into the completion of the play equipment on the village green. We can only be thankful that he was not here to find out about the appalling arson attack on the tower on 5th April this year, which has deprived local children of one of the pieces of equipment that is most enjoyed. We have obtained a quote for the replacement of the damaged item and are currently in negotiations with our insurers. At the time of writing, the police are still in the process of investigating this act of vandalism.

The good news in respect of the village green is that the storm shelter has been erected and the Council has received very positive feedback.

The Millennium Wood has been thinned and approximately 25% of the trees, including those showing signs of ash die-back, have been felled. The timber has been removed but the brash has been left in place to provide additional wildlife habitats. A number of the boundary fence posts have been strengthened with angle irons. A new display board has been erected at the entrance to the Wood, as well as a metal sign for the Jubilee Oak, and thanks are due to Peter Wade Martins for his work on these.

The high wall in the Chapel Ruins, which the Council felt posed a potential danger to visitors, has finally be repaired by contractors engaged by English Heritage. Thank you, Ann, for your contribution to this.

The garden alongside the flint wall outside the ruins, which had fallen into a rather sorry state, has now been cleared, the ground levelled and scrapings placed on top in order to provide additional space for vehicles. This is a huge improvement and the Council is extremely grateful to Jimmy Brown and his loyal team of volunteers for their hard work on this, and on other areas in the village.

John Labouchere has kindly rehung the gate to Prince William Wood and it is now much easier, and safer, to use.

The Brookside Farm development appears not to have made much progress, although the wording of a S106 Agreement was agreed by the PC and sent to the planners some time ago.

Tom Fitzalan Howard continues to keep the street lights under careful review. The lamp near The King's Head, which was damaged in a road traffic accident has been replaced, and payment is currently awaited from the driver's insurance company. The new lamp in Larch Grove has not yet been installed but we hope it will be dealt with in this calendar year. Thank you, Tom, for your conscientious attention to your duties.

The Broom Green pond was successfully cleared last summer, with generous assistance from Michael Goff and Tom Cook, and this now looks 100% better.

The Council is extremely concerned about speeding in the village. The SAM traffic speed sign is still being moved around the village and thanks are due to Bob Fletcher and his team for continuing to manage this. Paul Grainger is in contact with the Police Commissioner and our County Councillor to try to push forward our wish that further traffic calming measures be installed. Thank you, Paul, Peter and Colin MacEwan for your work on this.

The cost of the new footway to the allotments has been agreed with NCC, though work has not yet started on this 'trod'.

Debbie Warner has put considerable time and effort into setting up and managing the defibrillator and she now has six volunteers. She arranged a very useful presentation and demonstration of the equipment at the Memorial Institute in November. Thank you Debbie.

No progress has been made on plans for a new village hall, partly as a result of a change of Trustees of the Memorial Institute. The Council hopes to be able to move this forward over the coming year. We do, however, have a new community website, which Sue and Ivan Ball have designed and set up. We are very grateful to them for their work, and for providing their services free for the first year.

One major development this year has been the proposal from Shared Access for the erection of a telecommunications mast on the playing field near the tennis courts. There has been a letter drop to those households closest to the relevant site and the Council debated the proposal at length at the May meeting, after contributions to the debate from two parishioners who attended the meeting. The Council agreed that, subject to satisfactory responses from Shared Access to a number of questions, the proposal should be supported because of the significant community benefit that would result. This benefit includes a lump sum payment to the Council of £40,000. I understand that a planning application is shortly to be submitted to Breckland by Shared Access and the normal planning process will apply.

The Local Plan consultations rumble on. The latest version is expected to be published by Breckland District Council in either June or July and until this is made available it is not possible to comment further. The Council decided not to embark on a Neighbourhood Plan until the details of the Local Plan were known.

The Council is fortunate in finding itself in a healthy financial situation which does mean that it has some freedom to embark on projects which will be of benefit to the whole community. It welcomes suggestions from parishioners and, of course, everyone is welcome to attend all our meetings and to put forward their views on any matter over which the Council has jurisdiction.

Though it is not strictly speaking PC business, I would like to thank Tom and Jo Fitzalan Howard for their generosity in providing a superb setting for the village fete and for all the hard work they put in each year into managing this event.

Finally, I would like to thank all the members of the Parish Council for their diligence and hard work over the last year and for the support given to me. A special thank you is due to Martin Phillips and Kevin Webb for helping me get to grips with my duties as Chair over the past year and for their expert handling of the Council's finances.

Financial Statements:

Income and Expenditure Account for the year ended 31st March 2017

The Vice Chairman presented the financial statements for the Parish Council for the year ending 31st March 2017. The accounts were in the process of being inspected by the Internal Auditor, Mr. Bev King. Income was £51,182 (£64,942) against expenditure of £38,020 (£50,443) producing a surplus for the year of £13,162 (£19,499).

The full accounts would be available for public inspection following completion of the External Audit.

Acceptance of the financial statements was agreed by all.

It was reiterated that copies of the Management Financial Report are produced on a quarterly basis and copies are available for perusal in the Post Office as well as on the new website.

Thanks were expressed in respect of the highly valued assistance given by the Internal Auditor, Mr. Bev King.

Church and Town Lands (Estate Branch)

A report for this Charity is attached.

For the year ending 31st March 2017, to a brought forward balance of £2,986.83, receipts of £7,890.09 were added from which a total distribution of £10,000 was made (£1,500 to North Elmham PCC, £1,500 to the Church and Town Lands, General Branch and £7,000 being the balance of land purchase). This left a balance carried forward of £876.92.

As previously advised and for the benefit of any interested parties who had not understood this explanation in 2016, the Trustees have sold 56.11 acres of land which is outside the village and purchased 58.86 acres of land within the Parish boundary. Full details of the transaction were published in Elmham News. This was a land swap with a value of £237K placed on the transaction (sale and purchase) and will be of enormous benefit to parishioners, providing enhanced recreational facilities and a greatly increased income. It was stressed that the transaction was carried out for the substantial benefit of the parish.

Church and Town Lands (General Branch)

A report for this Charity is attached.

For the year ending 31st March 2017, to a brought forward balance of £796.43, receipts of £1,500.00 were added from which a total distribution of £1,200 was made. In addition, Bank interest of £0.33 was charged, leaving a balance carried forward of £1,096.10.

From this account, 12 parishioners each received benefit of £100.00.

North Elmham United Charities

A report for this Charity is attached.

For the year ending 31st March 2017, to a brought forward balance of £945.61 was added income of £1,696.81. Expenditure had totalled £1,750.00, resulting in the balance carried forward being £892.42.

From this account, twelve parishioners each received benefit of £100.00 and one parishioner received £50. North Elmham Playgroup and the Eastgate Centre both received sums of £250.

The COIF fund was valued at £4,660.01 in December 2016.

The Charity of Annie Mary Smith

A report for this Charity is attached.

Annie Mary Smith left land to the Parish after her death in 1939 with the stipulation that it should be run by the Parish Council. The land was to continue to be used as allotments and should not be built on. The Charity was formed in 1940 and was formally registered with the Charity Commission on 16th November, 1965.

For the year ended 31st March 2017, income was £3,784.00. Expenditure totalled £219.79 with the balance of £3,564.21 being transferred to Parish Council funds to benefit community projects and maintain open air spaces.

At the 31st December 2016, the Charity had 550.87 units invested in the COIF fund valued at £7,486.71.

North Elmham Diamond Jubilee Green Support Trust

A report of the Charity is attached.

The Charity was registered with the Charities Commission on 22nd July 2014, with the current Management Team being Martin Phillips, Colin Smith and Debbie Warner. The trustee is North Elmham Parish Council

For the year ending 31st March 2017, income was £3,466.00. Expenditure totalled £6,308.40 leaving an excess for the year of £2,842.40 which was deducted from accumulated funds.

School House Charity Account and School Lands Charity Account

Mr. Arthur Smith stated that, in previous years, separate reports had been given for the two charities. These have now been amalgamated and registered with the Charity Commission as **North Elmham School House and Land Charity**.

At the time of the amalgamation, £1,367.23 from the Endowment Land Trust was added to the School House Account giving a total income for 2016 of £5,020.96. Educational grants totalling £1,800.00 were made to five students during the year leaving a closing balance of £3,220.96.

A report for this Charity is attached.

Thanks were expressed to Mr. Bev King who has again acted as the independent examiner of the accounts and Mrs. Payne for her work as Charity Clerk.

The North Elmham Youth and Community Trust Ltd (The Eastgate Centre)

Company number – 3504794. Charity number – 1077830

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT FOR 2016

2016 has been uneventful for the Eastgate Centre. Support by the Scouting & Guiding Groups and other users continued and the Centre remains a great asset to the village.

Governance. There have been a few changes to the Board since last year's report:

Chairman. Tom Fitzalan Howard remained as Chairman and a Parish Council Trustee.

Parish Council Trustees. John Labouchere, Colin MacEwan, and Martin Phillips remained as Trustees.

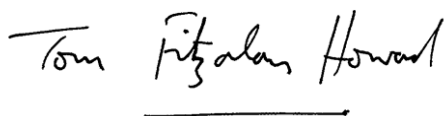
Scouting/Guiding Trustees. Peter Braybrook, Heather Caley (Treasurer) and Marion Morgan (Secretary) have continued in their roles and remain as Trustees.

Throughout the year Chris Featherstone and Debbie Coull played key roles in the running of the Centre. Their work and that of the Secretary with the Scouting and Guiding Groups is essential to its success. I am grateful to them both. Towards the end of the year Debbie resigned from her work with the Cubs to allow her to develop her Before & After School Club; which provided a much needed facility in the village. I am grateful for all that she did with the Cubs and am pleased she is remaining actively involved with the Centre.

Finances The finances of the Centre remain in good shape and at year's end the bank balance was a healthy £2686.80. This compares to £4389.17 for the previous year. The main reason for the reduced figure was that £3200 was spent on the outside Shelter. Details are shown on the accounts.

Capital Expenditure. During 2016 an Outside Shelter was built between the Hall and the container. The work was carried out by MGL Property Services (Mark Latham) and this provided a much needed facility for all Scouting and Guiding groups. It was money well spent.

I am grateful, yet again, to the Parish Council for the financial support they give year on year. I am also grateful to Councillors who agree to be Trustees despite being very busy people. My thanks also goes to Marion as Secretary and Heather as Treasurer who, for yet another year, have kept things going.



Tom Fitzalan Howard
Chairman

1 May 2017

**NORTH ELMHAM YOUTH & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT TRUST LTD
ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ended 31 Dec 16**

INCOME	2016	2015
Hire of hall -Guides	444.00	444.00
Hire of Hall - Cubs & Beavers	720.00	720.00
Hire of Hall - Debbie Coull	1650.00	1725.00
Hire of Hall – Private	172.00	167.00
Easter Fayre	385.79	332.22
N. Elmham Townland Charity	250.00	550.00
 N. Elmham Parish Council	 250.00	 500.00
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	3871.79	4438.22

EXPENSES		
Eon	77.23	100.85
Oil	361.41	332.90
 Anglian Water	 256.87	 119.55
General expenses/maintenance	687.89	1830.01
E.Fire	246.96	296.40
Insurance	743.80	709.59
Outside shelter	3200.00	-----
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	5574.16	3389.30

Income	3871.79
Balance from 2015	4389.17

	8260.96
Less expenses	5574.16

Bank balance at 31 Dec 16	2686.80

District Councillor's Report

Breckland Councillors Report May 2016 - May 2017
Gordon Bambridge Upper Wensum Ward

This has been a dramatic year for me on the council. On 12th May 2016 I stood down from my year as Chairman of Breckland, a huge honour, and a busy year. Immediately I was asked to rejoin the Cabinet in my old position 'Democratic Services'. This was in itself a great privilege, and by all means does not always happen. In DS the main point of contact with the villages is Licensing, but it also included Public Health and lots of regulatory and licensing roles which are the bread and butter of a council's duties although to most people are out of sight. I have enjoyed working in various roles in this department for many years.

In November another Cabinet member resigned from his role and I was asked to take over the Growth Portfolio, this is effectively Planning and Housing. It is probably the biggest role in the Cabinet, especially as we were in the final throes of the NEW Local Plan. We now expect this to go through the Council Committee process from June and July and then off to the inspectors for the end of the year. This is the culmination of many years of work within the council, mostly by officers but including dozens of meetings with members and also with members of the public including many in our ward. It has certainly added to my personal calendar.

During this year I have also completed an LGA Leadership Academy at Warwick University, which involved a series of three day sessions in Warwick plus home working, which I completed the final section in March. I will be attending a graduation during June at the university. I have always supported training and education for councillors, this mostly takes place in half day or one day segments, but we should all strive to be the best we are at what we do. After 14 years as a councillor I can only say I need it more and more as the job gets more complicated. Both I and Breckland encourage Parish Councillors and Clerks to also update their skills, and as well as other organisations we put on various courses during the year.

One real surprise was to be called in the autumn and told I had been nominated and awarded the first 'Communication Achievement Award' by the Dereham Articulate Speakers Club/Toastmasters International. This will be presented in June and it is an honour to be selected for this from within the community. You never know who is watching what you are doing!

Within the Ward things have been quite busy. With 15 villages it is always hard to fit in all the Parish Meetings Billingford has had a major planning application running for many years, which was approved by Breckland this spring. It has divided the village somewhat, with strong opinions and supporters both ways. Brisley got an award last year for work on the common, which must be one of the largest in the county. Bawdeswell, Elmham and Hockering, the three biggest of our villages, have all been proposed as Local Service Centre Villages under the new Local Plan. Whilst this can be a cause for concern, it can also bring advantages to a community. The designation itself is really a tick-box exercise, you either fit or do not. All of these villages have had challenges during the year, but have also risen to meet them. I have enjoyed meetings in the other villages, this includes attending the induction of two new team vicars and lots of meetings within all the villages, often to do with planning.

I also enjoy attending village events. I will always seek to promote any of your events on social media etc, and will often just turn up if you let me know when they are happening. I do also thank all of you who do keep me informed and send on the parish newsletters.

At Breckland we have continued to seek to find ways to save your council tax £ by seeking to make savings in our service whilst improving the standards we give to you the residents. We are continuing in the investment programmes and our investments still earn as much as we levy in council tax. Our innovative partnership with Land Group in the Breckland Bridge Company has now completed the Thetford Riverside project with a cinema, hotel and restaurant complex, built out stage one of Mileham and will be starting the housing project in Attleborough very soon. The working partnership with South Holland DC still works well for us saving £millions and giving us better paid and better qualified senior officers. We are I believe still the only non-contiguous border partnership, although many others are following in sharing senior management teams.

Breckland council tax is still the lowest in the country for a district council at £78.93 per year for a band D property. Our villages charge varying amounts from £70.24 right down to Zero. County charge £1247.94 and police £217.17, all per annum. As most dwellings in Breckland are A - C many will actually pay less than this. Full details plus how we spend it is on the Breckland Website.

**Verbal briefing on Local Plan and Neighbourhood Plan - responding to chairmans question

We have still made grants into local village projects and as you will have seen in the local papers supported various 'gifted and talented' people across the district with direct grants to enable them to live out the dream. I continue to support bids from local parishes and organisations including £20,000 into the ward last week.

**Verbal briefing on Michael Fanthorpe

Statistics

Attended 63 meetings in villages in the ward during the last council year

Attended 173 meetings and briefings at Breckland or elsewhere on Breckland business

Attended 50 events and meetings as a Breckland Councillor other than at Breckland

The Chairman proposed a vote of thanks, supported by all members, to Mr. Bambridge for all his help and guidance during the year.

The meeting closed at 8.54 p.m.

Chairman

Date

