

Pre-Meeting Business: None

Public Participation: Mr. Earle attended for a further discussion regarding the NELS project (please see item 624 for full details).

NORTH ELMHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the

MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

held in the Pavilion at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 4th March, 2026

.....

620 Those Councillors Present Were:

Mr. P. Grainger (Chairman), Mr. M. Phillips (Vice Chairman), Miss A. Ferris, Mr. T. Fitzalan Howard, Mr. F. Gillespie, Mrs. A. Keeble, Mr. N. Markwell, Mr. M. Rayner and Mr. J. Sowinski.

Also in Attendance: Mr. K. Webb (Clerk), Mr. G. Bambridge (District Councillor) and two parishioners.

621 Apologies for absence:

Mr. B. Gee and Mr. C. Smith.

622 To Receive Declarations of Interest:

The Chairman reminded the meeting that, should the occasion arise, interests should be declared by Councillors as soon as this was realised, and the interest should be minuted.

623 Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 4th February, 2026:

Resolved to approve the minutes as a true and accurate record. Agreed by all, (proposed by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Sowinski).

UPDATED INFORMATION AND MATTERS ARISING

624 Update from North Elmham Living Sustainably (NELS) Group (item 597)

Mr. Fitzalan Howard felt that clarification was needed regarding the control of finances relating to the current and any future projects. The estimated sums involve are between £12K and £20K. Mr. Earle advised that the school has committed to the project but the surgery has not yet done so. Mr. Sowinski stated that approximately 680 metres of deer fencing is required in the Millennium Wood at a cost of about £20K. Messrs Sowinski and Earle agreed to arrange another meeting. It is possible that NELS will, at some time in the future, form a C.I.C. (Community Interest Company).

625 Land Management Matters (item 598)

(a) Village Green Nothing to report.

(b) Cathedral Ruins We have been informed that the wall on the right side of the pathway entering the site has been inspected by a structural engineer from Historic England. We are advised by English Heritage that there is some movement in the wall but it is quite a way off becoming unstable and there is very little concern regarding its safety. We will be advised of any updates in this view. The Chairman will check the ownership of the site in an attempt to establish the legal responsibility for the safety of visitors. It has been noted that a number of stones have fallen out from the wall retaining the bank at the rear of the site.

(c) Cathedral Meadows Nothing to report.

(d) Millennium Wood (and Jubilee Wood) Nothing to report.

(e) Bridleway on disused railway line and other railway linked matters Mr. Rayner had received a response from the Mid-Norfolk Railway regarding the two questions previously raised and these will be attended to – the lack of a warning sign at the level crossing as it is approached from Back Lane and the establishment of a route for the proposed permissive path which needs to be agreed before any work starts. Norfolk County Council had previously stated that the path from the County School to the buffers was permissive. It is not. Mr. Rayner has asked NC to confirm this point but, to date, they have not responded.

(f) Prince William Wood Nothing to report.

(g) Church Meadow A further approach has been made by a parishioner who wishes to purchase some parish land but the details remain scarce. Precise written details have been requested together with a map of the exact land involved.

626 Allotments (item 599)

The allotments are fully let.

627 Street Lights (item 600)

The electrical work on the damage caused to a property in Holt Road has been completed. Some additional work to the wall of the house is required and a quotation is to be obtained from Mr. Brown.

628 Highway Matters (item 601)

The drains on Church Hill are blocked and require attention.

629 Pavilion and Playing Field (item 602)

The County Elections are back on and will take place on 7th May. There are many items in the attic and the Football Club are to be asked to remove any belonging to them within one month. CCTV cables have been installed with two new cameras having recently been delivered. These will cover both the Tennis Club and the Bowls Club, with a contract of £20 per month with Tesco Mobile. It was agreed by all, (except Mrs. Keeble who voted against), that a spare camera will be based inside the pavilion, but the monitor will not be visible. The Public Liability and Employers Liability insurance certificates have again been placed on the notice board, having previously been removed by the Football Club.

630 Eastgate Centre (item 603)

Nothing to report.

631 Brookside Development update (item 604)

The electric vehicle charger has been inspected by ElectRoad (Andy Drinkell, Technical Director) who are the appointed contractors of Norfolk County Council. He reports that the system could not be activated as there are a number of serious faults connected with the installation. The Chairman subsequently contacted the installers, A. W. Electrical Services (Norwich), via the developers, Orchard Developments. An installation certificate has been received and it appears that the developers were aware that the wrong equipment was ordered. The responsibility lies with them to rectify this matter.

E-On Next are still attempting to charge for electricity that is not being used by estimating usage which they have been advised is not occurring. They are being provided with the same metre reading each month, as they requested, but from time to time they chose to ignore it. This has resulted in significantly large incorrect direct debit amounts being applied to the Parish Council's Bank account. Credit notes are being obtained to repair this wholly unsatisfactory state of affairs. The "P" sign identifying the car park as a parking area, with a number of conditions, is to be erected.

632 Risk Management – considerations and updates (item 605)

Nothing to report.

633 Overview of Parish Council financial situation (item 606)

Nothing to report.

634 Defibrillators (item 607)

Both defibrillators are now working. Miss Ferris has again placed details in Elmham News of actions required to be taken in the event of an emergency. Two batteries have been returned as they are covered by a warranty of four years. The Chairman will attempt to recover some monies in respect of these.

635 Local Plan update (item 608)

A meeting has been held with the landowner and preferred developer, Broadland Housing, who will be attending the next Parish Council meeting on 1st April. It is the intention to hold a public engagement meeting on the afternoon of 1st July, 2026, the day of the Parish Council's July meeting.

636 New Village Hall (item 609)

It is acknowledged that, with a significant number of new residents due to move to the village in the coming years, additional facilities are essential. Broadland Housing could possibly provide input with plans for the new village hall. Mr. Sowinski is to arrange a meeting with Lyng Parish Council.

637 New waste service agreement with Breckland Council (commencing 17/3/26) (item 611)

It was confirmed that the contract with Breckland Council would run from 17/3/26 until 16/3/2027, with the first collection being on 25/3/26. The arrangement and general efficiency of the contract will be monitored.

638 New street light electricity agreement with Drax commencing 23/3/36. (item 612)

Nothing to report.

639 Digital and Data Compliance – AGAR Assertion 10 (item 614)

It was agreed by all that a free gov.uk address and domain would be obtained from Parish Online. This would provide a new a-mail address for the Clerk. At this stage, no action is to be taken regarding new e-mail addresses for members.

640 Report from District and County Councillors

Mr. Bambridge said that the County Elections would be taking place on 7th May. The Norfolk view on the number of new unitary authorities required is split between one, two and three. The County Council is in favour of just one but Breckland Council, for example, prefers the option of three. The Norfolk and Suffolk Mayor Election should take place in 2028. Breckland Council Tax is increasing by 4.99% which represents £123 per year for a Band D property.

Mr. Borrett has forwarded reports and these can be viewed on the website.

641 Accounts for Payment and Schedule of Income

a) Resolved to approve the following Accounts for payment:-		
17/2/26	Drax (electricity for street lights – 1/1/26 to 31/1/26) – (d/d)	£455.91
23/2/26	Biffa (wheelie bin service from 24/1/26 to 20/2/26) - (d/d)	£81.36
17/2/26	E-on Next (pavilion from 1/1/26 to 31/1/26) – (d/d)	£210.84
24/2/26	E-on Next (electricity for Boars Hill–6/1/26 to 31/1/26)–(d/d)	£163.01**
4/3/26	D. Tyson (pavilion cleaning for February)	£146.52
4/3/26	K. Webb (Clerk’s pay for February)	£900.67
4/3/26	HMRC (Tax and N.I. on Clerk’s pay)	£331.53
4/3/26	K. Webb (Clerk’s travel expenses from 1/4/25 to date)	£143.10
4/3/26	P. Grainger (Chairman’s half yearly expenses)	£50.00
4/3/26	M. Phillips (Vice Chairman’s half yearly expenses)	£50.00
4/3/26	Mrs. S. L. Hines (key keeping – Dec, Jan and Feb)	£93.75
4/3/26	Work in Cathedral Ruins (Nov, Dec, Jan and Feb)	£830.00

** Supplier error – this should be £8.19. (Credit note received for £163.01)

(Expenditure approved by all members)

b) Schedule of Income:-		
27/2/26	HSBC (coif inc div)	£30.66
27/2/26	HSBC (coif inc div)	£49.66

Balances (at 27/2/26):- Current a/c - £60,000.84 Business Premium a/c - £49,938.02
(Cambridge Building Society - £82,483.96)

642 To Consider Planning Applications and Determinations:-

a) Applications

- i) Conversion of existing building into five holiday accommodation units – Railway Arms, 40 Station Road - PL/2025/0646/FMIN. (Members supported this application).

b) Determinations

None

643 Correspondence

- 1) Environment Agency work on the River Tat and River Wensum in Spring, 2026.
- 2) Environment Agency work on the Wendling Beck (Upper and Lower) in Spring, 2026.
- 3) Village history weekend in North Elmham on 11th and 12th April.
- 4) Request from the Project Manager of Amber CIC for grant funding towards a local community project. (It was decided by all that this project could not be supported as the limited funds available should be directed specifically towards the parish).
- 5) Report from Gordon Bambridge on potential flood controls on Norfolk rivers.

644 Any Other Matters (for information only)

None

645 Agenda items for next meeting:

Update from Broadland Housing (at start of the meeting and not to exceed 30 minutes).

646 Next Meeting

Wednesday, 1st April 2026 at 7.30 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.36 p.m.

Chairman

Date

