

Pre-Meeting Business: None

Public Participation: A parishioner stated that an offer had been made to purchase land at Cathedral Meadows. It had previously been firmly stated by the Parish Council that the land was not for sale. There followed a request to rent the land for cattle to occupy at a price above the current rental. It was explained that the stewardship agreement with Natural England required the land to be grazed by sheep. As such, the offer to rent for cattle could not be entertained.

A complaint by the same person was made that a recent planning application to build five custom and self-build dwellings on land to the east of Pump Street had been rejected. It was explained that all planning matters are the responsibility of Breckland Council and that the Parish council has no power in this area of operations. Therefore, the applicant should hold any discussions with the District Council.

Finally, some personal verbal attacks on certain members of the Parish Council were made, following which the parishioner left the meeting.

NORTH ELMHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the

ANNUAL MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

held in the Pavilion at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 6th May, 2026

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001 Those Councillors Present Were:

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

Also in Attendance: Mr. K. Webb (Clerk) and two parishioners, one leaving after the Public Participation section of the meeting.

002 Election of Chairman

One nomination as follows:

Mr. P. Grainger (nominated by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Miss Ferris). All in favour.

003 Election of Vice Chairman

One nomination as follows:

Mr. M. Phillips (nominated by Mr. Rayner and seconded by Mr. Fitzalan Howard). All in favour.

004 Apologies for absence:

Mrs. A. Keeble, Mr. C. Smith and Mr. G. Bambridge (District Councillor).

005 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.

006 Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 1st April, 2026:

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

UPDATED INFORMATION AND MATTERS ARISING

007 Update from Broadland Housing (item 651)

Nothing to report.

008 Update from North Elmham Living Sustainably (NELS) Group (item 652)

Mr. Fitzalan Howard and Mr. Sowinski are to have another meeting with Mr. Earle.

009 Land Management Matters (item 653)

- (a) Village Green Slabs are to be put down for the seats and the camel will need a concrete base.
- (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 and has been monitored since 2018. We are advised by English Heritage that the wall exhibits significant seasonal movements but there is no evidence of progressive deterioration. Removing loose masonry from the gap between the walls would reduce seasonal “ratcheting”. Mr. Sowinski agreed to carefully undertake this task. It has been confirmed that English Heritage has overall responsibility for all health and safety matters at the site with the Parish Council required to notify them of any identified matters causing concern.
- (c) Cathedral Meadows Nothing to report.
- (d) Millennium Wood (and Jubilee Wood) A new seat has been fitted. A deer was caught in the Wood, probably caused by a gate being left open. Mr. Sowinski set it free. A sign is to be put up advising that the large gate is to be kept lock with access available via the entrance from Boars Hill.
- (e) Bridleway on disused railway line and other railway linked matters Norfolk County Council had previously stated that the path from the County School to the buffers was permissive. It is not. Mr. Rayner has received an acknowledgement from NCC stating that all the points previously raised are part of an active case and they will respond in due course.
- (f) Prince William Wood It was confirmed that work in the wood will be commenced in September, i.e. after the nesting season for birds.

(g) Church Meadow Nothing to report.

010 Allotments (item 654)

One allotment is available for letting.

011 Street Lights (item 655)

An invoice for the work carried out on the property in Holt Road has not yet been received. A light at the Eastgate Centre needs to be repaired.

012 Highway Matters (item 656)

The suction lorry is due to visit in the near future to attend to the drains on Church Hill. Potholes between North Elmham and Guist are to be repaired. One of the drains on Church Hill is broken and jammed into position. Highways have undertaken to replace the damaged drain and have confirmed that the suction vehicle will empty all the drains in that area. Highways have also indicated that the road from North Elmham to Broom Green has been identified as being in need of proper repair. A plan to carry out this work is being considered for it to be done in this year's school summer holiday.

013 Pavilion and Playing Field (item 657)

The County Election is to take place tomorrow (7th May) with the pavilion again being a Polling Station. Five CCTV cameras are positioned outside the building. The Chairman will contact the Tennis Club regarding a number of people recently seen trespassing on the courts. Mention has been made that the entrance/exit to the field is sometimes blocked by vehicles. A sign will be installed stating "keep clear, emergency access". The annual fire inspection has been carried out.

014 Eastgate Centre (item 658)

Nothing to report.

015 Boars Hill update (item 659)

The Chairman reported that the discussions between the manufacturers of the electric charging system are continuing with ElectRoad, (Andy Drinkell, Technical Director), who are the appointed contractors of Norfolk County Council.

Concerns expressed by a number of parishioners regarding the Parish Council land at Boars Hill had been received. This involves the wildflower meadow and saplings which had been planted by the developers, Orchard Homes, on the steep bank behind the bungalows. There is a suspicion that weedkiller has been applied as all vegetation has been destroyed with the area turning brown. It is felt that a real danger to wildlife exists from the action that has been taken. The members agreed that an appropriate response needs to follow to rectify the current position. Mr. Fitzalan Howard is to draft a letter which when approved by members will be forwarded to all residents in this area of the estate.

016 Risk Management – considerations and updates (item 660)

All Parish Council policies will be reviewed and, where necessary, amended on the website.

017 Overview of Parish Council financial situation (item 661)

Nothing to report.

018 Defibrillators (item 662)

The Community Heartbeat Trust has offered a sum of £288.00, including VAT, in respect of the two batteries returned, and this amount is still awaited.

019 Local Plan update (item 663)

Nothing to report.

020 New Village Hall (item 664)

Further consideration is to be given to the best way forward. Discussions will need to include the Football Club and the junior teams. The Chairman is to meet with Messrs Phillips, Gillespie and Sowinski.

021 Digital and Data Compliance – AGAR Assertion 10 (item 667)

It was agreed by all that a free gov.uk address and domain would be obtained from Parish Online and detailed instructions have now been received. This will enable a new a-mail address to be provided for the Clerk and action to enable this to happen will be taken.

022 Report from District and County Councillors

A report had been received from Mr. Bambridge and this had been circulated to all members. It can be read by visiting the website.

023 Accounts for Payment and Schedule of Income

a) Resolved to approve the following Accounts for payment:-

7/4/26	Drax (electricity for street lights – 1/3/26 to 22/3/26) – (d/d)	£226.35
16/4/26	Drax (electricity for street lights – 23/3/26 to 31/3/26) - (d/d)	£89.38
17/4/26	E-on Next (pavilion from 1/3/26 to 31/3/26) – (d/d)	£281.66
16/4/26	E-on Next (electricity for Boars Hill–1/2/26 to 31/3/26)–(d/d)	£18.58
6/5/26	D. Tyson (pavilion cleaning for April)	£152.52
6/5/26	K. Webb (Clerk’s pay for April)	£900.87
6/5/26	HMRC (Tax and N.I. on Clerk’s pay)	£331.33
6/5/26	Anglian Water (pavilion from 20/1/26 to 19/4/26)	£68.35
6/5/26	Anglian Water (playing field – from 20/1/26 to 19/4/26)	£220.88
6/5/26	Ace Fire Ltd (annual fire inspection)	£60.42
6/5/26	Brown and Co. (environmental consultancy re stewardship)	£204.00
6/5/26	Rooted Hosting Ltd (router in pavilion)	£125.00
6/5/26	P. Grainger (cameras and leads in pavilion)	£205.64
6/5/26	Environment Agency (general drainage charges)	£110.75
20/4/26	K. Webb (quarterly computer allowance)	£20.00
6/5/26	GDM Plumbing & Heating (checking water running-pavilion)	£45.60
6/5/26	Joe Sowinski (slabs for seats)	£50.69

Expenditure approved by all members.

b) Schedule of Income:-		
2/4/26	North Elmham F.C. (monthly facilities)	£75.00
7/4/26	D. Fish (Church Lane Tenancy Rent – 12 months)	£250.00
10/4/26	Breckland Council (Precept – 6 months)	£21,527.00
30/4/26	Foxburrow Farm (A.M. Smith – half yearly rent)	£2,344.50

Balances (at 5/5/26):- Current a/c - £84,030.42, Business Premium a/c - £50,813.83
(Cambridge Building Society - £84,092.62)

024 To Consider Planning Applications and Determinations:-

a) Applications

- i) Demolition of rear conservatory and erection of a single storey extension to the sides and rear, and erection of a front porch – 23 Holt Road - PL/2026/0513/OHOU (no comments)

b) Determinations

The erection of 5 custom and self-build dwellings – land to the east of Pump Street – PL/2026/0214/OMIN – refused (contrary to a number of Breckland Local Plan policies)

025 Correspondence

- 1) E-mail from a resident regarding the car parking arrangements at Boars Hill. (Please refer to item 015)
- 2) E-mail from a resident regarding dog mess and the wildflower meadow at Boars Hill. (Please refer to item 015)
- 3) E-mail from a resident notifying that a young deer was trapped in Millennium Wood. (Please refer to item 015)
- 4) E-mail from a resident expressing concern that weedkiller had apparently been used to kill vegetation at Boars Hill. (Please refer to item 015)
- 5) Note from Catherine Newey in respect of the annual grant to the church. (To be made at the next meeting on 3rd June)
- 6) E-mail from solicitors regarding the sale of the Parish Pit in 2015. (Legal guidance being obtained).
- 7) E-mail from Norfolk Community Law Services who are looking into funding options to support their work.
- 8) Priscilla Bacon Hospice Charity providing an update on the support available for local residents.
- 9) Clerk and Councils Direct magazine for May, 2025.
- 10) 100 Years – Campaign to Protect Rural England magazine.

026 Any Other Matters (for information only)

- i) A wooden box has appeared in Jubilee Wood. Mr. Fitzalan Howard is to investigate.
- ii) The Village Fete is to be held on 17th May.

027 Agenda items for next meeting:

Village Hall update.

028 Next Meetings

Wednesday, 27th May 2026 at 7.30 p.m. – Annual Parish Meeting.

Wednesday, 3rd June 2026 – Parish Council Meeting.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.30 p.m.

Chairman

Date

