

Pre-Meeting Business: None

Public Participation: Mr. Jim Biggie, representing North Elmham Tennis Club, wished to clarify the position with CCTV cameras on the Playing Field, at the Pavilion and near the tennis courts. It was explained that two contractors have visited to discuss proposals to upgrade the present system to also cover the Tennis Club and equipment. To date, one quotation has been received which is expensive. As a result, a further one is being obtained. An alternative is to have separate cameras at the Tennis Club not linked to those at the Pavilion which would require a separate storage facility at the Tennis Club. The Tennis Club is holding its A.G.M. on Tuesday, 14th October and Mr. Biggie will further discuss the matter with the committee.

NORTH ELMHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of the

MEETING OF THE PARISH COUNCIL

held in the Pavilion at 7.30 p.m. on Wednesday 8th October, 2025

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487 Those Councillors Present Were:

Mr. P. Grainger (Chairman), Mr. M. Phillips (Vice Chairman), Miss A. Ferris, Mr. T. Fitzalan Howard, Mr. B. Gee, Mrs. A. Keeble, Mr. M. Rayner and Mr. J. Sowinski.

Also in Attendance: Mr. K. Webb (Clerk) and two parishioners (one left after the Public Participation part of the meeting and the other after item 491)

488 Apologies for absence:

Mr. F. Gillespie, Mr. N. Markwell, Mr. C. Smith and Mr. G. Bambridge (District Councillor)

489 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.

490 Minutes of Meeting held on Wednesday, 3rd September, 2025:

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

491 Update from North Elmham Living Sustainably (NELS) Group

Mr. Ben Earle visited to update members on his biodiversity action plan (BAP). The plan, which was duly circulated, is designed to develop the village through sustainable interventions that will also help to tackle the cost-of-living crisis. In addition, it will support and promote nature connectedness in young people and general physical and mental health across the community.

Proposals were outlined in respect of a possible project in Boars Hill with associated funding needs, together with the availability of grants, including the National Lottery Community Fund.

Mr. Fitzalan Howard queried how difficult it would be to monitor and control any projects of this type. It was agreed that initially Mr. Earle would liaise with Mr. Sowinski with a view to commencing involvement with the current Millennium Wood project and any subsequent items which may follow in due course.

UPDATED INFORMATION AND MATTERS ARISING

492 Land Management Matters (item 466)

(a) Village Green Two picnic tables are ready to be put in place on the Village Green. The much-awaited camel is also to be returned to its original home.

(b) Cathedral Ruins Publicity regarding the site has appeared in Elmham News. There has been no response to our annual invoice, (£5,355 awaited), and the matter will again be chased.

(c) Cathedral Meadows Fencing with new posts is required. One estimate has been received with two more to be obtained.

(d) Broom Green Nothing to report.

(e) Millennium Wood (and Jubilee Wood) A seat has been removed, pressure washed and repainted. The latch on the gate has been changed to reduce the noise level when it is closed.

(f) Bridleway on disused railway line and other railway linked matters Nothing to report.

(g) Prince William Wood Nothing to report.

(h) Church Meadow Nothing to report.

493 Allotments (item 467)

Mr. Phillips advised that the collection of rents will take place in the Pavilion on 9th October. Many have already been received.

494 Street Lights (item 468)

A quotation of £2.5K + VAT had been received to replace the light outside 76 Holt Road. It was agreed that members would visit the site to inspect the spot and also talk to residents.

495 Highway Matters (item 469)

A resident in a property near the school reported that the Boars Hill developers had not kept a promise to put up a hedge at the edge of his property. There is a fence in place at the moment but it is not high enough to prevent people looking into his garden as they pass. It is a rented property and it was felt that he needs to draw this matter to the attention of his landlord.

The Gateways which will assist in improved road safety have been delivered and it is the intention for these to be installed in the near future. The hedge near 39 Station Road has been cut. Mr.

Gillespie is to give a full report on this issue at the next meeting.

It was suggested that the build-out near the surgery would benefit from having a priority sign for the guidance of traffic.

496 Pavilion and Playing Field (item 470)

The question of the provision of a Christmas tree was raised and the general view was in favour of having one. Mr. Sowinski is to talk to Nick Saunders. The previous quotation for a new CCTV facility was in the region of £6.5K but an alternative option has been priced at about £1.5K.

Miss Ferris has prepared a booking form for the Pavilion and this is to be circulated for consideration. The waste paper facility is to be removed shortly by Whites as this service is to be no longer available.

It was agreed by all to switch the trade waste facility from Biffa to Breckland Council. The appropriate notice will be served on Biffa. (Proposed by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Fitzalan Howard). Work has not yet been done on the guttering (quotation of £660 received for guttering and replacement of roof tiles). It was agreed by all to proceed (proposed by Mr. Phillips and seconded by Mr. Sowinski).

497 Eastgate Centre (item 471)

Nothing to report.

498 Brookside Development update (item 472)

Following the successful installation of two new dog waste bins which are being suitably utilised, it has been reported that the bin on the western side of the Village Green is badly damaged with the bottom not holding packages deposited, as required. This bin is slightly larger in size and will need to be replaced by a Fido 50. All in favour of purchasing this item (proposed by Mr. Gee and seconded by Mr. Rayner).

E-on Next continue to struggle with understanding the current position with regard to EV charging points but have finally issued a contract which involves a standing charge of 30p per day and a unit rate of 22.9p per kWh. They have been advised that they will be notified when the points are ready to be made available for use.

The development is subject to a 20 mph Speed Limit Zone Order which came into operation on 15th September, 2025, as advised by Norfolk County Council.

A note had been received from Fiona Wilson of Breckland Council which basically summarised the current position regarding the EV charging points. She is to be asked to provide assistance in finding a contractor to take on the administration of the system.

499 Risk Management – considerations and updates (item 473)

Nothing to report.

500 Overview of Parish Council financial situation (item 474)

The final AGAR report had been circulated, duly discussed and accepted by all members. Please refer to item 506 for full details.

501 Defibrillators (item 475)

Miss Ferris reported that all defibrillators are now fully operational.

502 Local Plan update (item 476)

Nothing to report.

503 New Village Hall (item 478)

A valuation for the Eastgate Centre is awaited. Mr. Phillips will chase.

504 The future of the churchyard (item 479)

Nothing to report.

505 North Elmham Football Club facilities (item 480)

The cricket nets have not yet been moved from the corner of the Playing Field near the Pavilion. The Clerk will chase.

506 Accounts for Payment and Schedule of Income

a) Resolved to approve the following Accounts for payment:-		
22/9/25	Biffa (wheelie bin service from 23/8/25 to 26/9/25) - (d/d)	£101.70
17/9/25	E-on Next (pavilion from 1/8/25 to 31/8/25) – (d/d)	£183.86
16/9/25	Drax (electricity for street lights – 1/8/25 to 31/8/25)	£231.26
8/10/25	D. Tyson (pavilion cleaning for September)	£146.52
8/10/25	Julian Duffield (work in Cathedral Ruins – August & Sept)	£605.00
8/10/25	K. Webb (Clerk's pay for September)	£900.67
8/10/25	HMRC (Tax and N.I. on Clerk's pay)	£331.53
8/10/25	K. Webb (Petty Cash)	£200.00
8/10/25	K. Webb (A. Simnor – new computer + Windows 11)	£1,050.00
8/10/25	P. Grainger (Community Heartbeat – new defibrillator battery)	£360.00
8/10/25	Westcotec (new street light, pillar and bracket – Eastgate St.)	£1,697.52
8/10/25	Glasdon U.K. Ltd (new Fido dog waste bin – Boars Hill)	£218.26
8/10/25	Glasdon U.K. Ltd (gateways and gateway signs)	£3,537.22
8/10/25	PKF Littlejohn LLP (professional services – AGAR)	£378.00
8/10/25	J. Sowinski (chain sharpening)	£25.99
8/10/25	J. Sowinski (wire mesh for Boars Hill gate)	£22.84
8/10/25	J. Sowinski (diesel for chipper)	£27.53
8/10/25	G and G Fencing Ltd (gate & fencing near Primary School)	£4,050.00

(Expenditure approved by all members)

b)	Schedule of Income:-	
1/9/25	North Elmham F.C. (monthly hire of facilities)	£75.00
1/9/25	North Elmham F.C. (monthly payment for referee's room)	£75.00
8/9/25	Barclays Bank (interest from 2/6/25 to 7/9/25)	£159.07
26/9/25	Breckland Council (Precept – second half)	£21,103.50
29/8/25	HSBC (coif inc div)	£29.59
29/8/25	HSBC (coif inc div)	£47.86
30/9/25	Allotment rents	£75.00
3/10/25	North Elmham F.C. (monthly hire of facilities)	£75.00
3/10/25	North Elmham F.C. (monthly payment for referee's room)	£75.00

Balances (at 3/10/25):- Current a/c - £86,040.23, Business Premium a/c - £48,795.51
(Cambridge Building Society - £82,483.96)

The final response to the audit (AGAR) had been received from the external auditors. Two matters had been raised which had previously been circulated to members with information duly given as follows:-

- 1) Section 1, Assertion 9 has been incorrectly completed. Mr. Phillips' explanation is below and relates to the historic, dormant Village Green Trust Charity which has had a Nil balance for some six years. The auditors spent much time discussing and eventually deciding that the "Yes" box shouldn't have been ticked as we hadn't met our responsibilities as sole managing trustee by not filing a report. They then spent just as long on deciding whether the "No" box or the "N/A" box should have been ticked and eventually plumped for "No".

With regards to No1, I can comment that the Charity has filed a NIL return of income and expenditure since 2018/19. From 2024 & 2025 year we could not file the returns as the new system with the Charity Commission did not allow us to do so as the Trustee (NEPC) is a corporate body.

When I spoke to the CC I asked if we could delete the charity as there was no land, cash or any other assets. I did make the CC aware that the PC would honour their obligations to the Village Green and the play equipment, for the foreseeable future. I also asked if there was any documentation required to be signed and filed. Their answer was that as it had been dormant for so long, closure could be confirmed by an online form which was completed and receipted by the CC on 12th December 2024. The Charity was then marked as "Removed".

- 2) The smaller authority did not comply with regulation 15.

The auditors provided the standard form as usual regarding the Notice of Public Rights with dates from 3rd June, 2025 to 14th July, 2025, which were duly used and advertised on the website. Unfortunately, we held our meeting on 4th June, 2025 which means that the dates should have been amended to 5th June, 2025 to 16th July, 2025 as the form should not be exhibited until the Parish Council meeting authorising AGAR has been held.

507 To Consider Planning Applications and Determinations:-

a) Applications

- i) Extension to house and garage including replacement of roofs and external refurbishments plus other alterations subsequently advised – High Trees, Great Heath Road – PL/2025/1292/HOU – no comments.
- ii) Removal and treatment of a number of trees at Pump Street – sent for information only - PL/2025/1415/TCA.
- iii) Proposed dwelling with car port and demolition of existing building – 55 Eastgate Street - PL/2025/1285/FMIN – application broadly supported, in principle.

b) Determinations

None

Mr. Rayner mentioned that the Government's New Towns Taskforce has recently recommended twelve locations for the next generation of new towns. None are in Norfolk.

508 Correspondence

- 1) Clerks and Councils Direct magazine for September, 2025.
- 2) Norfolk Police Operation Radium – request for support with trigger plan.
- 3) Norfolk County Council Highway Ranger Service.
- 4) Breckland Council holding engagement sessions in Shropham and Narborough.
- 5) CPRE Countryside Voices magazine for Autumn and Winter, 2025.
- 6) Query from a parishioner in respect of a pathway near Elm Close (the Chairman is to enquire with Highways, NCC).

509 Any Other Matters (for information only)

Miss Ferris mentioned that an advice note regarding use of the defibrillator appears in Elmham News every month.

510 Agenda items for next meeting:

Location of skate ramp and associated repairs.

511 Next Meeting:

Wednesday, 5th November, 2025 at 7.30 p.m.

There being no further business, the meeting closed at 9.54 p.m.

Chairman

Date

