

Report on zoom meeting regarding reviews of Neighbourhood Plans

Information from: Richard Squires, Senior Community Planning Officer Vicky West assistant
Community Planning Officer Peter Dawson Neighbourhood Plan Mendelsam

Background

16 parishes and towns in Broadland have adopted neighbourhood plans. South Norfolk have 8. The earliest plan was in 2014

Reasons why consider updating the neighbourhood plan

- If a local plan is produced after the NP it takes precedence.
- If the policies are out of date
- Some policies are not as effective as intended
- New land use/development issues can affect the parish
- Emerging NP policies highlight best practise
- National Planning Framework changes should be reflected in the NP
- The Levelling up and regeneration bill will change the parameters of the NP

Minor modifications that are factual updates, but do not affect policies do not require a referendum
Significant updates require consultation and examination, but do not require a referendum if changes to policies, but do not change the overall feel of the NP.

Significant updates which do change the nature of the NP do require a referendum and if there is a call for development sites in the NP.

Suggested way of reviewing a NP

- Set up a steering group
- Review policies
- Review possible updates
- Agree a programme
- Seek funding
- Update evidence and community engagement
- Draft updates
- Consult
- Submission of NP to Community Planning Officer
- Send to examiner
- Examiner decides nature of changes of nature of policies as to whether there will need to be a referendum

Support

- Government planning guidance practise on gov.uk
- Support from Community Planning Officer
- Can be up to £10000 to help with the process

Review of process Peter Dawson undertook for the update of Mendelsham's NP

They did not trust the local authority's plan for 161 new houses in the village. They embarked on a review of their NP and decided they would accept the 161 new houses, but argued for a different location. In many respects not that useful for Aylsham though he did explain the process they went through and where they spent money on experts and where they used their own knowledge. Emphasised the need to consult with the parish on a regular basis. He also emphasised that it was hard work.

Paul Harker Meeting 14 June Aylsham Town Hall

Present: Trevor Bennett – Chair

Cheryl Bould, Mary Evans, Sue Lake – Town Clerk, Paul Harker

In the meeting Paul emphasised local needs and that all data was constantly reviewed. He indicated that the modelling results showed a decline in the birth rate across the county and that the modelling was based on health data from the NHS, school information and local resident information.

Information was being prepared for submission to DFE – this was based on the 2019 birth rate. The modelling showed a pattern of decline that was set to continue with spare places. He agreed to send the information prepared in July to the Town Clerk in advance of the information being sent to DFE.

The pressure on places seems to have shifted from primary to Year 6 and into secondary - as a result of this he predicted 30-35% surplus places in the locality over next few years. This calculation did not take into account any new housing developments or whether all the spare places were in the town itself or was it based on a wider community.

The situation at secondary level was under control with Aylsham High School having capacity and space to expand. However, the choice of school would have to be limited to local children if there was a demand on places.

If there was no pressure for places at primary level – there would be no new school. He did acknowledge that two new housing developments could significantly change the situation. Trevor asked for school places data regarding Willow Park and Bure Meadow. He agreed to send these to the Clerk.

Sue asked what would happen to that land if the school was not built. There is obviously a risk that the developer could use the land to build more houses and thus putting more pressure on the town's infrastructure.

A new primary school for Aylsham would have 420 places and land on the Burgh Road site has been allocated for this. There is no forward planning that a new school would eventually be needed and it would be cheaper to build now and when land was available.

The format of a prospective new school has not been decided. Although it would have to be an Academy Trust school this could be a replacement for St Michael's School

If the demand for primary school places increased more than expected – there was a possibility that children could be bussed to local schools who had spare capacity. This should be discouraged as it would be financially and environmental costly as well as being detrimental to the well-being of children living in Aylsham

It would take roughly a year to build a new primary school but there would be no guarantee when this would be done. It was suggested that the school would not be built before the housing was started. More information should be available once Hopkins Homes submit their planning application.

There is no indication that the quality of the building and how it meets modern needs is taken into consideration.

Additional Information

According to the statistics sent by Paul Harker (12 July) he admits that the modelling projections based on the figures for Willow Park and Bure Meadow seem to be an underestimation of the actual demand for places. This implies that the department's modelling is incorrect and should be challenged.

It would be useful to see the data that the department intends to send to DFE.

Aylsham Town Council
Summary of Receipts and Payments
To 31/07/ 2023

Cost Centre	Receipts		Payments	
	Budgeted	Actual	Budgeted	Actual
General Purpose	112,800	66,109	112,800	37,742
Town Hall	58,750	34,463	58,750	24,782
Drill Hall	63,000	24,997	62,985	28,885
23 Market Place	5,500	1,250	-	-
Cemetery Cottage	7,000	1,553	1,500	-
Public Toilets	-	-	11,800	4,094
Other Properties	6,450	3,250	5,700	2,338
Cemetery	23,600	9,005	23,600	13,407
Allotments	24,700	15,292	24,690	10,727
Markets	9,000	1,758	2,650	1,912
Open Spaces	173,370	98,875	166,020	64,827
Events	-	531	-	2,031
Churchyard	-	-	13,700	708
Street Scene	24,450	14,350	24,450	11,648
	508,620	271,433	508,645	203,101
VAT		8,826		11,435
		280,259		214,536

Aylsham Town Council
Reserves Balance
2023-2024

<u>Reserve</u>	<u>Balance</u>	<u>Transfers</u>	<u>Spend</u>	<u>Receipts</u>	<u>Balance</u>
Earmarked					
Bottle Bank	4,300.00		920.31	199.92	3,579.61
Cittaslow	700.00		283.29	84.25	500.96
Community Events	5,200.00				5,200.00
Christmas Decorations	160.00		1,635.08		-1,475.08
Election	2,000.00				2,000.00
Marquees	1,375.00		19.98	41.67	1,396.69
Drill Hall	10,000.00				10,000.00
Town Hall	17,000.00				17,000.00
Properties	19,100.00				19,100.00
Public Toilets					0.00
Cemetery	31,100.00		6,320.00		24,780.00
Open Spaces	70,400.00				70,400.00
Highway Verges	4,385.00		2,734.24	11,675.43	13,326.19
Recreation Ground	34,400.00	15,600.00			50,000.00
Churchyard	46,000.00				46,000.00
Street Furniture	11,500.00				11,500.00
Allotment Deposits	5,875.00		150.00	200.00	5,925.00
Hall Hire Deposit	50.00				50.00
CIL	28,987.00			1,701.17	30,688.17
Cemetery Cottage	2,000.00				2,000.00
Youth	3,000.00				3,000.00
Skate Park	300.00		60.77	914.24	1,153.47
Communications	5,000.00				5,000.00
In House Grass	5,000.00				5,000.00
Traffic Group					0.00
Total Earmarked	307,832.00	15,600.00	12,123.67	14,816.68	326,125.01
TOTAL RESERVE	307,832.00	15,600.00	12,123.67	14,816.68	326,125.01
GENERAL FUND					130,031.79
TOTAL FUNDS					456,156.80

Request for funding from Youngs Park

- Norfolk FA have just offered Aylsham FC and Youngs Park (The Youngs Community Sports Trust) a 2nd hand set of dugouts to support the new 3G once built . They are buying new ones for one of their 3G sites.
- The dugouts are normally £5k plus VAT and they have offered us them at £1k plus VAT (£1200) which seems a good deal. It is unlikely we will be able to fund new dugouts when the 3G facility is open Summer 24 as our focus is on raising £35k required by grant bodies.
- We would then need to buy weights to secure them down on the artificial turf once built or grass until the 3G pitch is built. A Set of heavy weights will cost £250 and we understand we need 4 sets costing £1000.
- The dugouts will be available initially on grass, but once on 3G available for everyone to use for matches (34 teams and groups plus other users in the future), which provides shelter from the rain for players (substitutes) and coaches.
- In essence we are seeking a donation to purchase the dugouts by The Youngs Community Sports Trust (Charitable Trust that owns building, land and assets on the site) for up to £1000 as we should be able to recover VAT (£200) on the balance. We would then try to source weights to secure the dugouts

Hope this provides sufficient information – thank for the opportunity



CLERK'S REPORT FOR COUNCIL MEETING 2.8.23

<u>ITEM</u>	<u>DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>COMMENTS</u>
Town Hall		Quotes for boiler in progress
23 Market Place		
Cemetery Cottage	Private Letting	Tenant renewed lease
Cemetery		Topple Testing to take place soon
Allotments		AGENDA ITEM
Churchyard		AGENDA ITEM
Market Place		
Farmers' Markets		New look Farmers Market went very well
Markets		
Jannys Close Community Garden		
Staithe		
"Little Staithe"		
Hopkins Homes areas general	Blossom Trees	National Trust will help with planting and advice. Will contact new Countryside Manager before looking to source trees
Highways		
Paupers Graveyard		Signage is currently being designed and a maintenance schedule put in place
Norfolk Homes Play Areas (equipped)	Wymer Drive	
Norfolk Homes large area off Mileham Drive		
Land at Sapwell Close	Adverse Possession Claim	Have met with two solicitors with a view to getting all unregistered land owned by the council registered
Car Parks		
Street Lighting		Tender documents prepared and submitted to local suppliers
Public Toilets		
COMMA/Archives		
Litter & Dog Waste Bins		
Bus Shelters		
Pump		
Pillboxes		
War Memorial		

Highway Rangers		The Highway Rangers are Norfolk County Council Highway gang who visit the town on a regular basis to undertake minor road repairs e.g. sign cleaning, small potholes etc. Please let the office know of any such areas and we will add it to the schedule we send them
Drill Hall		New doors have been installed
Community Speedwatch	Need to re-establish	Still short of volunteers and someone to organise
Telephone Box	Refurbishment	Telephone box has been refurbished and the charger installed. Waiting for Highways to return to replace slabs
Bure Meadows Footpath	New Footpath across to Dunkirk	This has now been completed
New Council Training		Taking Place September 19th
Summer Inspections	Two afternoons	Suggested dates 9 th and 16 th August from 2pm (weather permitting) Schedules to be distributed at meeting

Items for Town Council to consider/note

- **Training Course**
- **Aylsham Tour**

Request from ACE Committee – Waste Group

Funding for tablet blister pack pilot

We at Waste have been looking at how we can get the above recycled and the only option available to us is to pay for it.

There is demand for this as the parish church had a very successful collection of these and I have had people enquire through the website. Long term we need to be talking to the pharmacies and producers to get them to fund this or look to alternatives BUT..... Until such a time we would like to collect these independently.

We would like to ask ACE for £200 to fund an initial recycling of about 1750 blister packs through Terracycle. You basically buy the box off them and courier then picks it up for free when it's full.

We would then run this through the Quaker Refill stall and ask those bringing them for an optional donation that would hopefully fund this ongoing. We would also speak to the pharmacies to see if they will contribute or offer this in future.

Report on Community Covenant's meeting 14th July 2023

In attendance

Jerome Mayhew – MP for Broadland
Imogen Sinclair - New social covenant
Mike Crowhurst - Public First
Jamie Sutterby and Andy Sexton – Broadland District Council
Trevor Bennett, Sue Lake, Mary Evans – Aylsham Town Council
Philip Macdonald – Aylsham Care Trust
Charlotte Florence and Fiona Hinton – Market Surgery
Philippa Gregory - NHS NORFOLK AND WAVENEY ICB
Jo Tuttle – Aylsham High School
Alison Gurney and Nicholas Clinch - Norfolk County Council
Rev Julie Boyd – Aylsham Parish Church

I was very sceptical about the meeting, however, the meeting was reasonably positive. It was run by Mike Crowhurst from Public First an organisation employed by the government to look into the idea and come up with proposals. Though it is a Conservative initiative the chance of them being able to implement it are small. However, it appears that both Labour and Liberal Democrats are looking at similar ideas of trying to give more responsibility to communities and local government and therefore it is worth investigating.

After Mike Crowhurst ran through the general points of the idea of the Community Covenant, (information we were sent attached) Andy Sexton went through useful data on the ward of Aylsham in regard to health and social care. He will forward me all the data that formed the basis of his report. It did highlight certain issues, such as mental health, self-harm and loneliness.

The group discussed potential ways in which the community could be involved in attempting to tackle the problems people in Aylsham face. There was a difference between those who felt benefits could come through community action, but with little funding and others, of course notably me who feel there needs to be significant investment. Interestingly Andy Sexton believes that investment is needed if it is to work.

Both Andy and his line manager Jamie Sutterby are keen to investigate the proposal and ideally apply to be one of the three pilot schemes. (The others are Sunderland and Stevanage). After Public First have similar meetings with 2 or 3 other towns they will put together a potential scheme for how the Community Covenant will work and if it is approved by the Government there will be the opportunity for towns to apply to join the pilot scheme. The fact that Aylsham was chosen as one of a few towns to help determine what could be set up, (I think representing a rural area and Jerome Mayhew is pushing it) means that it may have a decent chance of being chosen.

Whether it is worthwhile is still in doubt, but Broadland officers are interested and feel that Aylsham is a suitable place to look into the idea of a community covenant, partly as Aylsham has a thriving community with an amazing amount of groups involved in the community.

I think it is worth continuing to show interest, as this could lead to giving more responsibility to communities to help a range of social problems. It would be a lost opportunity to not seriously consider this new initiative but obviously the ideas have to come from us as Town Councillors and from the whole community. As demonstrated at the meeting it is very difficult to get people involved and generally the people who attend meetings set up in Aylsham are not representative of the community - they are quite often an older, more established and better educated demographic

There will be notes from the meeting taken by one of the Public First people and I will forward the information when I get it and if any of you are interested in the data Andy Sexton has on Aylsham this will be shown at the meeting. That will be needed for any update of the Neighbourhood Plan.

Trevor Bennett

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CITTASLOW AYLSHAM COMMITTEE
HELD AT DRILL HALL, ON WEDNESDAY 19th JULY 2023 AT 11am.**

PRESENT: Mr P Prekopp, Aylsham Slow Food, Chairman
Mr G Margarson, Aylsham Community Partnership
Mrs M Evans Aylsham Town Council
Mrs W Sadler – Aylsham In Bloom
Mrs M Anderson-Dungar ABEF
Mr G Peers – Broadland District Council
Mrs T Newsome – Aylsham U3A
Mr R Willis ABEF
Mr L Mills, Aylsham Town Council
Mrs C Bould, Aylsham Town Council

OFFICER: Mrs S Lake Town Clerk

01 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Rev Canon Julie Boyd, Aylsham Parish Church

02 MEMBERS' DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS

There were no Declarations of Interests or any Requests for Dispensations.

03 MINUTES

The minutes of the Cittaslow Aylsham Meeting held on 21st June 2023, were **confirmed and signed by the chairman.**

04 MATTERS ARISING

Nothing raised.

05 ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING

In the absence of any member of the public, the meeting continued without adjournment.

06 CITTASLOW UK & CITTASLOW INTERNATIONAL

a) To receive an update

Nothing to report on Cittaslow UK – a meeting will be arranged soon.

Mo Anderson-Dungar has been appointed as the International rep for the next three years. She has attended an online meeting which lasted five hours. She advised there were details of many ongoing projects mainly around tourism or education. The next meeting will be in Turkey and a request will go to Cittaslow UK for assistance with air fares.

07 CITTASLOW IN AYLSHAM

a) To receive an update

Nothing to report

- b) To receive an update regarding Discover Aylsham website**
The Town Council agreed to the upgrade of the Discover Aylsham site and work will begin on this shortly. It is hoped to have the site ready for a full launch on the Christmas Lights Switch on night.
 - c) 2025 Anniversary**
In 2020 plans were made to celebrate the 20th anniversary of Aylsham becoming a Cittaslow town. The celebrations were cancelled due to covid. However, it was felt that the organisation started rather late and it might be best to plan further in advance. The next step would be to request a budget from the Town Council in principle and then work on an outline plan to define the level of budget required.
 - d) Aylsham Food Trail**
An article on a Food Trail in Somerset was circulated with the agenda. Pat Prekopp felt this would be a good option for Aylsham. It involved visiting producers, farms and food manufacturers as part of a tour. Various possible outlets were mentioned and Graham Peers volunteered to do some initial investigation.
 - e) Town Meadow, Drabblegate – Edible City**
Pat Prekopp had thought this might be a suitable venue for this type of activity. It was noted that there was currently a sitting tenant and also the plot was incredibly small. Therefore the idea will be dropped.
- 08 FARMERS MARKET AND GENERAL MARKETS**
- a) To receive an update on the Farmers Market**
The new style market has been running for two months and seems to be going well. We will continue to promote as much as possible.
 - b) To receive an update on the general markets on Monday and Friday**
The General Markets also seem to be picking up especially the Friday market.
- 09 CLIMATE EMERGENCY**
- a) To receive an update**
A co-ordinating meeting had been held recently with updates from the various sub-groups. Actions include blister pack recycling, open spaces survey and tree wardens. However, the groups are not feeding the website or social media but despite this the social media presence is growing.
Aylsham Green Day falls on the same day as Cittaslow Sunday this year.
- 10 PROJECTS**
- i) OLD STATION YARD**
Nothing to report.
 - ii) TOWN PEDESTRIAN MAP**
In the process of obtaining quotes.

iii) **MINDFUL AYLSHAM**

The town is now a Mindful Town.

iv) **PRIDE IN PLACE**

A meeting was held on Friday July 14th to explore the possibilities with regard to community covenants. A full report will be taken to the Town Council meeting.

11 AYLSHAM COMMUNITY EVENTS COMMITTEE

The Street Party was very well received and enjoyed by all. There is a meeting tonight when the 2024 events will be discussed.

12 SLOW FOOD AYLSHAM

The group will be attending the Aylsham Show. The Food Festival dinner has been organised. The cookery book is selling well.

A snail race will take place on August 5th – local businesses are engaged with this.

The cookery lessons will start in September.

13 AYLSHAM IN BLOOM

Wendy Sadler attended the Biodiversity Awards but unfortunately The Paupers Graveyard did not win.

A donation of autumn crocuses will be planted soon. The Paupers Graveyard is included in the workshop walks in August.

14 ABEF

Now a decision has been made on the website ABEF have an idea of how to move forward. Still looking at a possible presence at the Aylsham Show.

15 AYLSHAM PARISH CHURCH -No report available.

16 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/NEXT AGENDA

Trees in the Market Place

Graham Peers advised Broadland is looking at information on US air bases in the area to coincide with the release of 'Masters of the Air'

17. DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The date of the next meeting was confirmed as **Wednesday 20th September 2023 at 11.00am at the Drill Hall**

CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

There being no further business the Chairman closed the meeting at 12.35pm

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Subject: Parish Partnership Schemes

Author: Sue Lake

Date: 27th July 2023

Each year the County Council allocates a sum of money (this year £300,000) for small highway schemes to be funded 50/50 with the local Town or Parish Councils. We have used this funding in the past to create the footway on Penfold Street and a built out area at Bure Valley School.

There are two suggestions that have come forward so far for this years funding.

1. From Sue Catchpole District Councillor

Further to a site meeting with the NCC Highways Engineer, he agreed to erect signs at the entrance to Holman Road (by the Fire Station) to warn drivers of pedestrians in the road.

At the site meeting it was considered important to have such a sign in the opposite direction at the narrowing of Holman Road (top of Sandy Lane) too. The Highways Engineer agreed that 20mph roundels could also be painted on the road surface at this point too.

As they haven't happened yet, would these works be eligible for Parish Partnership funding?

2. From Traffic Committee

The final meeting of the traffic committee took place on July 26th and the contents of the strategy to be presented to the Town Council agreed. (The details now need to be amalgamated in an easy to read format and should be presented at the September meeting.)

One item that has been agreed from the start is a pedestrian crossing on Burgh Road near the Recreation Ground. This will not only help with the numerous people crossing to access the Rec and the school but should also slow the traffic down on Burgh Road. Steve Riley has also indicated he would be willing to use some of his County Council budget to help with the Town Council cost of this. (Actual cost is not yet known.)

A Proposal for a Change in Verge Management ACE Nature Group

SUMMARY

The Nature Group would like to put a proposal to the Town Council regarding the management of verges in the town.

Background:

Many councils across the country have already changed their cutting regimes to allow more plants to thrive and have seen biodiversity of both plants and animals increase.

- Well-managed roadside verges are especially important for wildflowers and pollinators
- When cutting is decreased to once or twice a year, especially not cutting between APRIL AND LATE JULY, the effect on the increase in biodiversity has been shown to be highly significant.

The Trial:

The Nature Group would like to propose that the council trials twice yearly cutting in one area in town, and monthly 'longer grass' cutting in one area.

- Henry Page Road. **Twice yearly cutting.** Ensuring safety is paramount, so cutting around junctions would need to be carried out with probably a narrow sward of cut grass adjacent to the road as well.
- Norwich Road – on the left as one enters the town. Wildflower areas are proposed with the surrounding grass cut once a month to a height of 4".
- A botanical survey to be carried out prior to the trial.
- A programme of communications with residents.

Detailed Proposal

Introduction:

Many councils in the UK are in the process of changing the way they manage their verges and green spaces, and most have adopted the Plantlife Guidelines when carrying this out. Although safety is still paramount, they are reducing the number and extent of the cutting and carrying these out at different times of year with a view to increasing biodiversity, resilience, and reducing carbon output. The Biodiversity & Nature Group, would like to encourage Aylsham Town Council to trial such a scheme.

Background:

The loss of biodiversity has been accelerating for many years and is now seen as a crisis that will affect all our lives. This decline is mainly due to human activities, such as change in land use, intensive farming practices, pollution and climate change.

Importance of Road Verges:

Road verges cover about 1.2% of land in Great Britain. Changing the number of cuts and the time of year they are carried out can increase biodiversity significantly and provide a vital refuge for pollinators and other wildlife.

- It has been estimated that one mile of wildflower-rich verge can produce 20kg of nectar per year, enough to feed millions of pollinating insects. (Norfolk Wildlife Trust).
- Every third mouthful we eat is held to rely on a pollinator somewhere in the food chain. Pollinating insects have fallen by 75% in the last 50 years and are now reaching critical levels.
- Roadside verges have the potential to connect fragmented areas of habitat to form local refuges for wildlife.
- Plantlife has estimated that if cutting all road verges in Britain was reduced from four times a year to twice a year, it would save over 30,000 tons of CO₂ emissions.

The Importance of Cutting.

Annual management is essential.

Some form of grass management is essential to ensure safety for road users – e.g. at junctions – and to maintain flower-rich habitats. Over time, uncut verges and green spaces turn into scrub and woodland. Plantlife suggests a variety of cutting regimes, but they generally entail:

- Reducing the number of cuts to once or twice a year.
- No cutting between early April and late July to allow the plants to flower and set seed.
- Other options include cutting a strip of the verge near the road and leaving the rest of the verge. or, on narrow verges, leave some sections uncut.
- **Removal of the grass clippings** – this curbs the growth of vigorous plants that smother their neighbours, and it also removes the thatch of dead vegetation.

Plantlife: “*The Good Verge Guide*” and “*Managing Grassland Road Verges*”

Both publications are available to download from the resources page on their website.

<https://roadverges.plantlife.org>

The Pros and Cons of cutting less and at different times:

- **Pros**
 - More and improved habitats for plants and animals
 - Increase in carbon take-up.
 - Reduction of carbon emissions caused by verge cutting.
 - Reduced costs with fewer cuttings
 - Use of cuttings for biofuel or processing by the local digester
 - Health and wellbeing - The wildflowers provide a welcome pop of colour in urban settings, connecting people to nature.
 - Opportunity for local volunteer groups to help with cutting removal
- **Cons**
 - Complaints from residents about ‘untidiness’
 - Need to explain new regime to residents – leaflets, signage etc.
 - Difficulty in removing cuttings.

- Cost of cut-and-collect equipment.
- Long grass in areas used by children and dog walkers may be a problem, because of ticks and dog excrement.

Suggested Trial for Aylsham:

Carry out a Survey of existing botanical species in conjunction with Norfolk Wildlife Trust

We suggest that Aylsham Town Council carry out a trial of different cutting regimes in two areas in the town. This will allow an assessment of these regimes and the public response.

- Henry Page Road
- Wildflower areas on the left of the Norwich Road near the roundabout, with surrounding grass cut once a month to 4 inches approximately.

Suggested cutting regimes for:

- Henry Page Road:
 - First cutting in February and second cutting in September
 - Removal of cuttings
 - Partial cutting of the verge in some areas– e.g., the 0.5-1metre next to the road, and leaving wide uncut areas around trees and on the bank.
- Norwich Road
 - Monthly cutting of grass to approximately 4"

It will be important to communicate with the residents and Aylsham inhabitants to explain the trial and reasons for doing it, by e.g.,

- Pamphlets to residents whose houses abut onto trial areas.
- Signage to highlight trial areas.
- Articles in Just Aylsham and on ACE website
- Posters
- The Norfolk Wildlife Trust (NWT) will advise on carrying out the trial.

Local and best practice information:

Norfolk has 112 roadside nature reserves, The County Council has plans for reducing cuts across the rest of the verge network. Norwich has been taking part in 'No Mow May'.



Grass Verges on the Earlham Road, Norwich on 1.6.23 after “No Mow May”



Stevenage Verges after two years.

Grass has been encouraged to grow long on some roadside verges by Stevenage Borough Council and Hertfordshire & Middlesex Wildlife Trust for the past two years, as part of a trial to help the town’s wildlife thrive.

Many other councils have already made changes to their cutting regimes and report a significant increase in biodiversity.

See the Plantlife website for many examples – www.plantlife.org.uk

REPORT TO COUNCIL

Subject: Future Grounds Maintenance

Author: Sue Lake

Date: 27th July 2023

The current grounds maintenance contract ceases on March 31st 2024. In view of the proposal from the ACE Group regarding verges and previous discussions this would seem the ideal time to look at whether to take the grass cutting in-house.

We currently pay £44,683.92 to the grounds maintenance contractor. This covers cuts every two weeks during the growing season and shrub and hedge clearance once a year but does not include any tree work. The current contractors (who we have used for over 16 years) are very good and there are no issues with them. However, we have to rely on their timetable and although very accommodating they cannot always react immediately to a request. In the last couple of years the extreme heat followed by wet weather has meant that places like the churchyard and cemetery can sometimes get overgrown, mainly by weeds, in two weeks and can look untidy.

With the options of the previous proposal and the creation of wildflower beds on Norwich Road having grounds maintenance that can be directed from the office may prove to be an advantage.

The downside would, of course, be the costs. Gavin and I have met with Ben Burgess to look at machines and although expensive they are very sturdy and should last up to 20 years. I am also contacting their Norwich branch which deals with commercial lettings. There would also be the need to employ at least one extra member of staff but there could also be the opportunity of looking at an apprentice.

In the near future the groundsman at the Recreation Ground has indicated he would look to retire and the maintenance there could also be included – which could generate further income.

In the last two budgets the council have reserved money for this scheme so there is a starting budget of £10,000.

Council are asked to consider the principle of this before I look at detailed figures to present.



**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE AYLSHAM TOWN COUNCIL
CHURCHYARD COMMITTEE HELD IN THE TOWN HALL AYLSHAM
ON MONDAY 24 JULY 2023 at 10.00am**

PRESENT:

Mrs A Overton Chairman
Mrs J Bennett
Mr T Bennett
Mrs M Evans
Mr M Martin
Rev Canon Julie Boyd

Two members of the public

OFFICER: Mrs S Lake, Aylsham Town Clerk

1. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies were received from Mr L Mills

2. MEMBERS DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST & DISPENSATIONS

None declared

3. MINUTES

The last meeting of the churchyard Committee was held on 22nd May 2023. The minutes were **AGREED**

4. ADJOURNMENT OF THE MEETING

A resident advised that a new compost heap was starting to be created. She also wondered about possible seeding of the area near the wall that requires repairing. These will both be looked at and action considered.

5. INFORMATION ON MATTERS ARISING

All items on agenda

6. PATHWAYS/ROADS

a) To discuss any issues that have arisen

Nothing has been reported.

b) To receive update from meeting with Conservation Officer

The Town Clerk had met with the Conservation Officer from Broadland regarding the driveway and the option to re-lay with resin. He did not feel there would be any issue with this but planning permission would be required and also advised that different coloured resins could be used to encourage traffic calming and try to ensure no vehicles use the narrower paths. He did say that he thought there would be a need to have an archaeological watching brief during the works.

The Town Clerk had contacted a possible contractor to get a rough idea of cost but had not received any details yet.

7. WALLS

The quinquennial inspection had been sent to the Structural Engineer and a response is awaited.

It was felt the area did look untidy at the moment so the idea of removing the weeds behind the fencing will be looked into.

8. GROUND MAINTENANCE

a) To receive an update on the faculty re constructing waste areas

Full details of the proposed layout will be sent to the PCC in time for their meeting on Monday July 31st.

b) To receive an update on creating the garden area

The Town Clerk will meet with Wendy Sadler and Erica Fisher to review the garden plan.

An updated tree survey had been undertaken and this will be sent to the PCC for approval at their next meeting and then a faculty and planning will be applied for

9 WAR MEMORIAL

The reduction of trees around the war memorial is included in the revised survey.

10 LYCH GATE

The quinquennial mentions some rotting to the Lychgate. This is noted and will be monitored.

11 CHURCH BUILDING

A new microphone system has been installed and work is still ongoing regarding changing the lights to LED's.

There is still no news regarding a date for the cycle racks. In the meantime the PCC will apply for approval to site them.

12 CHURCH CLOCK

The bells are scheduled to return on August 14th. The Town Clerk has written to the horological company to see what may be needed to ensure that the clock can chime when the bells return. They have also been asked regarding silencing the chimes at night. A reply is awaited.

13 AYLSHAM CEMETERY

a) To receive an update on the benches

The benches have now been installed.

b) To receive an update on headstone testing

This has still to take place as due to staff illness and the weather it has been delayed.

c) To consider the installation of Commonwealth War Graves Signs

This was **AGREED**.

14 PAUPERS GRAVEYARD

a) To receive an update on maintenance

The fence and gate have recently been repaired and the grass is cut by the Town Council facilities team.

b) To receive an update on signage

A final design has now been agreed and signs will be ordered. Directional signs will also be included.

c) To receive details on Biodiversity Award

Unfortunately the Paupers did not win.

15 ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/NEXT AGENDA

It was queried whether things could be actioned quicker without always having to get permissions from everyone. The representatives of the church advised that the PCC must be agreeable to all work in the church and would not be willing to give more leeway to the Town Council by agreeing actions in principle but require the full detail. However, they did feel that the joint committee was a positive thing.

16 DATE OF NEXT MEETING

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 11.45am. The next meeting is scheduled for 2nd October at 10am.



AYLSHAM COMMUNITY EVENTS COMMITTEE

**MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE
AYLSHAM COMMUNITY EVENTS COMMITTEE
HELD IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, TOWN HALL
ON WEDNESDAY 19 JULY at 7:00pm**

PRESENT:

Giles Margarson	-	Chairman (Town Resident)
Joan Bennett	-	Councillor
Patrick Prekopp	-	Councillor
David Anderson	-	Councillor
Cheryl Bould	-	Councillor
Fiona O'Hara	-	Town Resident
Ian Gravenell	-	Town Resident
Paul Marks	-	Town Resident
Sue Lake	-	Aylsham Town Council Town Clerk

1. WELCOME INTRODUCTIONS & APOLOGIES

The chairman welcomed Paul Marks to the meeting. He had received an invitation from Richie Barnett to attend. He is currently raising money for Breast Cancer and has two events booked a Treasured Chests event on the 16th September and a Halloween Disco on the 28th October

2. TO RECEIVE MEMBER'S DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST IN AGENDA ITEMS

None received.

3. TO CONFIRM MINUTES OF MEETING HELD ON 21 JUNE 2023

The minutes of the meeting held on 21st June 2023, as previously circulated were then confirmed and signed.

4. INFORMATION ON MATTERS ARISING

None.

5. TO ADJOURN THE MEETING TO ALLOW MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC TO SPEAK

None present.

6. TO RECEIVE EVENTS OFFICERS REPORT FOR THE STREET PARTY

The Events Officer had reported the event went well with no major issues reported, The number of 750 worked well and might be a sensible cap level for the event.

The chairman took the opportunity to thank everyone who helped on the day and advised the German Twinning Group who were present loved it.

Ian Gravenell advised that the Christmas Lights Committee were thrilled with the collection which made over £500.

Discussion turned to future events and whether changes were needed. There is a logistical problem in gathering the tables and chairs as this cannot take place until the Friday afternoon. There was a suggestion that more volunteers could be sought but sometimes this can lead to more issues rather than less.

The possibility of people bringing their own furniture would see a problem with placement and also the need for more traffic movements as people would not be able to carry everything. This would only work if it was just chairs and no tables or food which defeats the object of the event.

7. TO DISCUSS POSSIBLE EVENTS FOR 2024

A long discussion took place and the following suggestions were put forward

Date/Event	Comments
March 9 th /Mothers Day Tea	This went very well this year and could be extended slightly next year provided timings were detailed
July 7 th /Street Party	Check date does not clash with Wimbledon Men's Final and Euros. Possibly have a theme and dress the town accordingly.
August/Aylsham Snail Race	First event will be held on August 5 th this year. If it works well potential event for future years
Late October/Halloween Event	A Halloween event will be taking place this year on October 28 th . As celebrating Halloween has become so popular possibility of creating a large event in the Market Place and/or Town Hall
29 th November/Christmas Lights	Switch-on event and other associated activities
7 th December/Christmas Craft Fair	Craft Fair in the Town Hall
No Confirmed Date	
Colour Run	This was very popular in 2019 and was organised by an outside company. It was felt it would be possible to do it ourselves working with Aylsham Runners
Afternoon Cinema	Suggestion of showing popular classics in the afternoon – once a month?
Food Trail	A suggestion from the Cittaslow Committee about organising a food trail

	in and around Aylsham visiting producers etc. This will be led by Cittaslow/Slow Food.
Quiz	Following the success of the quiz for the SkatePark to hold a further one but without the food. Offer tea, coffee and cake at half-time

It was suggested to possibly look at attending the Aylsham Show to promote the Events Committee.

In 2025 it will be the 40th anniversary of ACT and the 25th anniversary of Aylsham becoming a Cittaslow town. Each group will be looking at their own events but there maybe something (similar to the Platinum Jubilee event) that could be done together.

8. TO NOTE ITEMS FOR INFORMATION/DISCUSSION AT THE NEXT MEETING TO

Nothing raised.

9. TO AGREE DATE OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday 20th September 2023 at 7pm in the Council Chamber.

10. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING

There being no further business, the Chairman closed the meeting at 8:20pm