

New Buckenham Parish Council

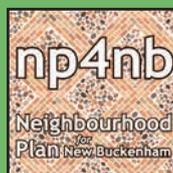


New Buckenham Neighbourhood Plan 2017–36

Pre-submission consultation version



In association with
Breckland District Council



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Design and artwork by Roberta Rees (robbie@robertareesdesign.uk)

Foreword

Welcome to New Buckenham Parish Council's Neighbourhood Development Plan, or 'the Plan' as we call it. This is the first time the Council has gone through a formal process to plan the village's future. The Plan lists your thoughts and ideas gathered through public events and focus groups over the last two years. These have resulted in a set of policies dealing with life in this village, mindful of New Buckenham's celebrated heritage, rural surroundings and the need to keep up with changing times.



This Plan lasts until at least 2036. It is a guide to making changes, as and when they happen, to enhance the life of this village.

The village support for our open days and focus groups has been excellent, not least for the survey of residents in 2017, called **SURVEY17**. The questionnaire was completed by 83% of residents aged 16 and over, a far higher level of participation than similar surveys elsewhere. In some ways this is not surprising as New Buckenham has a long tradition of working together for its common good.

This is the 'Pre-Submission Version' of the Plan and is now open for consultation by all who live and work in the village and other interested parties. It is also available online at www.np4nb.online. Please read it carefully and let us know what you think (see the back page).

All your comments must be received by 14th February 2020.

A collection of documents, called the Evidence Pack, contains all the evidence supporting the Plan. It's long and therefore published online only at www.np4nb.online.

After this consultation is over, the Parish Council will send the Plan to Breckland District Council (or 'Breckland' as it will be referred to in this document) together with all the comments received. Breckland will subject it to statutory consultation and scrutiny leading to the Plan's final version.

Breckland will then organise a referendum of village residents to ask whether the Plan is acceptable or not. If there is a majority of residents in favour of the Plan it will become part of Breckland's statutory land-use planning framework.

On behalf of the Parish Councillors, I wish to thank the whole community for getting involved in the surveys and events and also the Neighbourhood Plan team that has done all the work.

Karen Hobley

Chair, New Buckenham Parish Council

December 2019

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1. Context

1.1. What is a Neighbourhood Plan and what difference does one make?

- 1.1.1. Neighbourhood Plans were introduced by the Localism Act 2011 to allow residents a say in the development of where they live. It's not just about the provision of housing but also about how this village looks and works within its unique environment. All the things indeed that make an area a vibrant, happy and sustainable place to live both now and in the future. The Plan looks forward across two decades to 2036 and will be reviewed at regular intervals throughout this period. At that point it has statutory weight and must be referred to by the local authority, in our case Breckland. Both Breckland's Local Plan (currently under Independent Examination) and the New Buckenham's Plan will have equal weight. This Plan's policies will be central to the planning decisions in our geographical area and, if more up to date, take precedence over non-strategic policies in the Local Plan.
- 1.1.2. Although neighbourhood planning is a lengthy process, it's increasingly recognised as being vital to local democracy. In February 2019 across England there were 2,536 designated Neighbourhood Plan areas and 750 referenda had taken place.

1.2. What is the benefit of having a Neighbourhood Plan?

- 1.2.1. Unlike other planning policies, a Neighbourhood Plan is the work of the community to which it relates. It becomes finalised when that community agrees it in a local referendum. The Plan will begin to have influence on the planning system after its independent examination has been done and it will then be 'material to' any planning application.¹ The Plan is formally in place once it is approved in the village referendum.²
- 1.2.2. In order to reflect the residents' views, the Parish Council has drawn up this Plan consisting of policies and guidelines. The Parish Council will use this Plan when commenting on applications and Breckland will refer to it in determining those applications. Developers should therefore use it as a resource before making planning applications and engage in early discussion with the Parish Council.
- 1.2.3. During the preparation of this Plan issues have been raised and debated that are outside any development controlled by formal planning legislation.³ These issues lend themselves to being dealt with by the community itself. Community Actions are therefore suggested, highlighted in green boxes in this Plan. They need to be addressed by the Parish Council and local residents to enhance the village for present and future generations.

¹ s70,c3, Town and Country Planning Act 1990

² s38,c5, Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004

³ S.55 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 (as amended)

1.3. What a Neighbourhood Plan can and can't do

- 1.3.1. When decisions are made on planning applications, the policies in a Neighbourhood Plan must be taken into account by Breckland.
- 1.3.2. All decisions about building and development across England must have regard to the policies and legislation in the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), revised in 2019. Local authorities must write their own Local Plans and these must be updated every five years as is currently happening in Breckland. Approaches to planning are thus being changed constantly. However, a Neighbourhood Plan gives the residents of New Buckenham an unprecedented opportunity to influence those vital planning decisions. Even a draft plan has weight in the planning process and it will be referred to during the decision making. A Neighbourhood Plan however cannot 'undo' previously granted planning permissions or strategies determined by a district council in its current Local Plan.
- 1.3.3. The rules by which this Plan is written are known as the 'Basic Conditions'. The Independent Examiner will ensure that it conforms to those Basic Conditions during the formal examination stage.

1.4. Description of New Buckenham and its life

New Buckenham is a small rural parish in southern Norfolk. Covering an area of 1.73 sq km (0.67 sq mi), it has a population of about 460 people mainly living within a relatively densely built area of a 12th century planned settlement⁴ that was laid out for the purpose of commerce and trade. This area is about 10% of the whole Parish. This economic activity continued and the village had over 50 businesses and trades in the 19th century. Its wealth of old buildings surrounded by open fields is remarkable, as is the village's compact layout where residents walk by choice. It has always been on the edge of District and Parliamentary boundaries. Its five neighbouring villages are all much bigger but there has never been one town or village on which New Buckenham relies. Possibly as a result, New Buckenham has developed a distinct ethos of neighbourliness and mutual self-reliance. Its events, particularly the annual fête and arts programme, attract many visitors from other towns and villages, possibly making the village attractive to new business ventures.

- 1.4.1. Fuller descriptions of the history of New Buckenham's building and social development are given in the Evidence Pack.

1.5. The local planning context

- 1.5.1. Breckland's Local Plan, recently revised and close to completion in October 2019, anticipates substantial growth in this part of the county. Breckland's population is expected to grow from 131,857 in 2012 to 153,678 by 2036.⁵ The Local Plan notes Thetford (16 miles away) and Attleborough (5 miles away) as "major towns" and "key areas for future housing and business growth". Attleborough's population is set to double by 2026 to

⁴ In this Plan, the term 'settlement' is used as a planning term and also where there is a historical context. The almost interchangeable word 'village' is used to describe the settlement and community in modern times.

⁵ Office of National Statistics 2014 projections 2012-2036

20,000 with at least 4,000 new homes and an £18 million new southern link road on the eastern side of the town. Continued expansion is anticipated along the A11/M11/A14 corridors as the growth of regional centres like Norwich and Cambridge is promoted.

- 1.5.2. In planning terms 'settlements', whether towns, villages or hamlets, are classified according to the number of essential services they provide, namely (1) public transport, (2) community facilities, (3) employment, (4) shop or post office and (5) a school. The presence of these features makes living there 'sustainable'. Many of the villages around New Buckenham like Banham, Old Buckenham and Kenninghall have three out of the five characteristics and are therefore classified as 'Local Service Centres', a designation that actively encourages development.⁶ Thus, by 2036, Breckland District Council expects Banham to increase in size by at least 100 houses, Old Buckenham by at least 56 houses and Kenninghall by at least 39 houses.
- 1.5.3. In contrast, New Buckenham is categorised by Breckland in its Local Plan 2019 as lacking a number of basic facilities.⁷ For this reason there is no local government requirement for the community to identify specific areas of land for development although it is recognised that such settlements are living and working communities that need to adapt and change all the time.
- 1.5.4. The need to adapt offers opportunities and challenges to a unique, historic village like New Buckenham. This is why our Plan is based on a vision for the future formed by the residents themselves yet necessarily remaining compatible with Breckland and National policies. The development of this vision is described in the Consultation Statement in the Evidence Pack.

1.6. What do we want New Buckenham to be in 20 years?

- 1.6.1. In preparation for this Plan, the village residents have had three years of surveys, events, discussions and focus groups. The early **SURVEY17** had an extraordinarily high (83%) response rate from all residents over the age of 16. It's clear that residents want the village to be an attractive, friendly and healthy place in which to live, maintaining its rural character and its unique heritage. There's a strong desire to modernise our infrastructure and allow sustainable development as needed. Apart from problems such as the lack of a mobile phone signal and congested parking, there is a sense of contentment within the village. It is understood that there will be change. There is a wish however that changes should have as little impact as possible on the environment, and on the natural and built landscapes, by being sustainable in all social, economic and environmental aspects.
- 1.6.2. The village is known for its close-knit community in a uniquely compact and somewhat detached geographical situation. It is supported by small businesses working from home, and some of them online, alongside a collection of respected retailers and services that include pubs, shop, café and a garage. Of note is a well-used village hall and Church. The accessible open countryside and Common are highly valued by residents and they wish to retain these essential components of the character of New Buckenham.

⁶ Breckland Local Plan para 2.16

⁷ Breckland Local Plan HOU 02

1.6.2. Being part of a community



1.7. What are the aims of this Neighbourhood Plan?

1.7.1. In this Neighbourhood Plan the Parish Council wishes to:

- Consider new, good quality development that fulfils local need without doing harm to the village's character, heritage, and landscape setting.
- Enhance facilities to meet the wellbeing, recreational, and social needs of all in the village.
- Make a positive contribution to the social, environmental, and economic functioning of the village.
- Conserve and enhance the village's heritage and natural environment.
- Conserve and enhance the village's setting and landscape character, including the open views and ecological environment.
- Ensure new development recognises and minimises increased flood risk.⁸
- Maintain public footpaths, improve pedestrian safety and address parking issues.
- Support appropriate renewable and sustainable energy sources.
- Improve existing poor quality telecommunications.

1.7.2. To achieve these aims, the Parish Council welcomes proposals for development that comply with the policies that follow in this Plan.

⁸ Sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) are designed to manage stormwater locally (as close its source as possible), to mimic natural drainage and encourage its infiltration, attenuation and passive treatment.

1.8. How has this Plan been drawn up?

- 1.8.1. Over the years there has been little formal appraisal of the village other than that published 21 years ago⁹ and the Parish Council has no written policy guidelines. Rather than continue to react to development proposals it was decided the Parish Council should take the lead and develop a Neighbourhood Plan. A Working Party was commissioned by the Parish Council to do the task and the process has been undertaken according to Government regulations. Full details are available in the Evidence Pack.
- 1.8.2. The Plan results from a major survey of individual residents, commissioned reports, open days, public awareness campaigns in local printed and online media, and endless face-to-face discussion with residents.

1.9. New Buckenham Neighbourhood Plan area

- 1.9.1. Figure 1 shows the Plan's area surrounded by the red line. This includes the whole Parish of New Buckenham (shown in pink), plus that part of New Buckenham's designated Conservation Area which extends into Old Buckenham (shown in blue). The reason for extending the boundary outside the parish is to encompass the whole of the Conservation Area which includes Buckenham Castle and its immediate surroundings, as these are

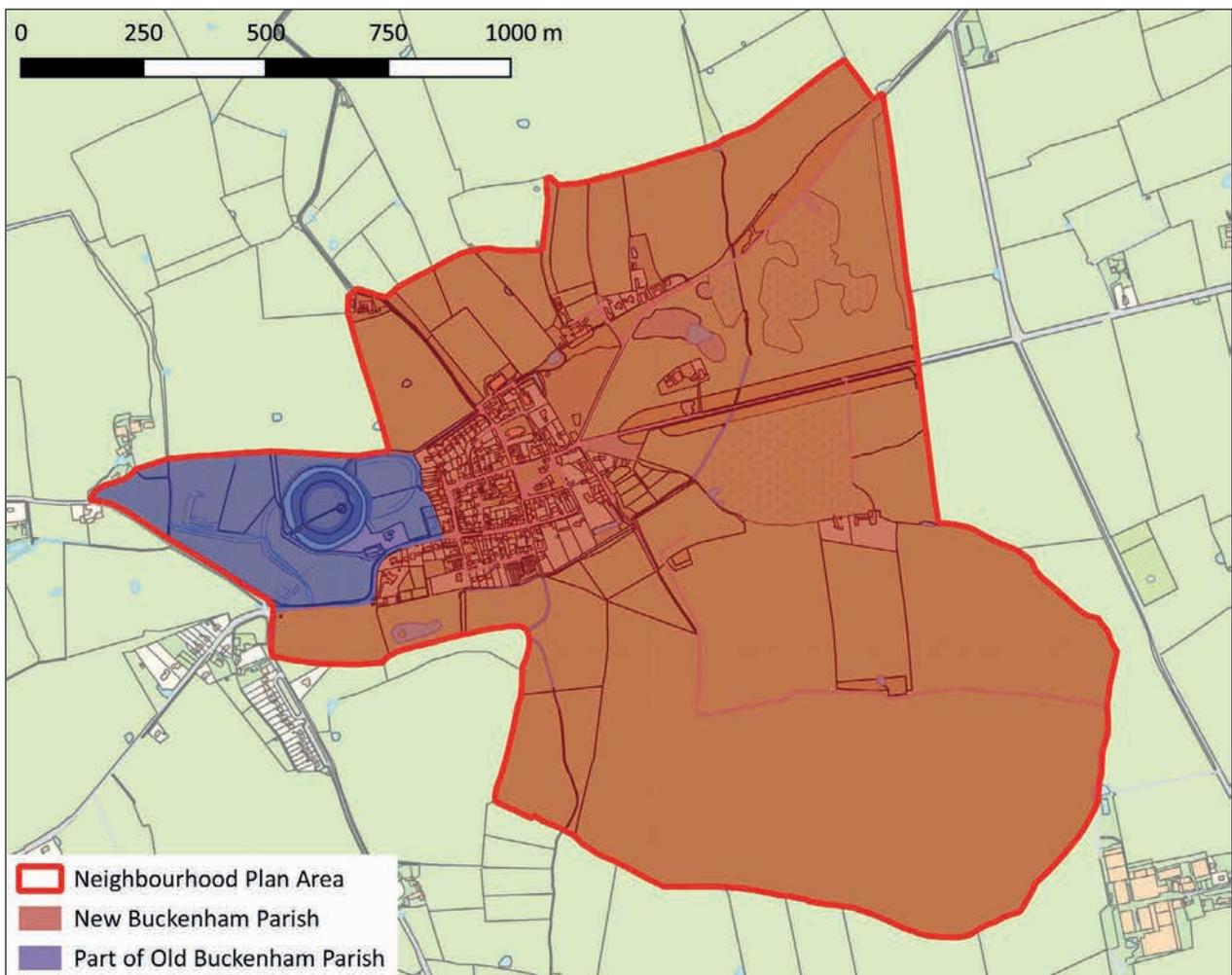


Figure 1 Neighbourhood Plan Designated Area

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⁹ New Buckenham Society, *New Buckenham, Norfolk – an Appraisal*, 1998

inextricably linked to the history of the village. This Plan area has the kind endorsement of Old Buckenham Parish Council.¹⁰

1.9.2. The Plan's area was formally designated by Breckland on 30 March 2017.

1.10. New Buckenham Conservation Area

1.10.1. A Conservation Area is an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance.¹¹

1.10.2. The main attributes that define the special character of a Conservation Area are its physical appearance and history, i.e. the form and features of buildings and the spaces between them, their former uses and historical development that often result from local and wider economic requirements. Where there are a number of periods of historical development, the character of individual parts of the Conservation Area may differ. Contrasts between the appearance of areas and the combination of buildings of various ages, materials, and styles may contribute to its special character.

1.10.3. New Buckenham amply satisfies these requirements and achieved Conservation Area status on 15 January 1973.¹²

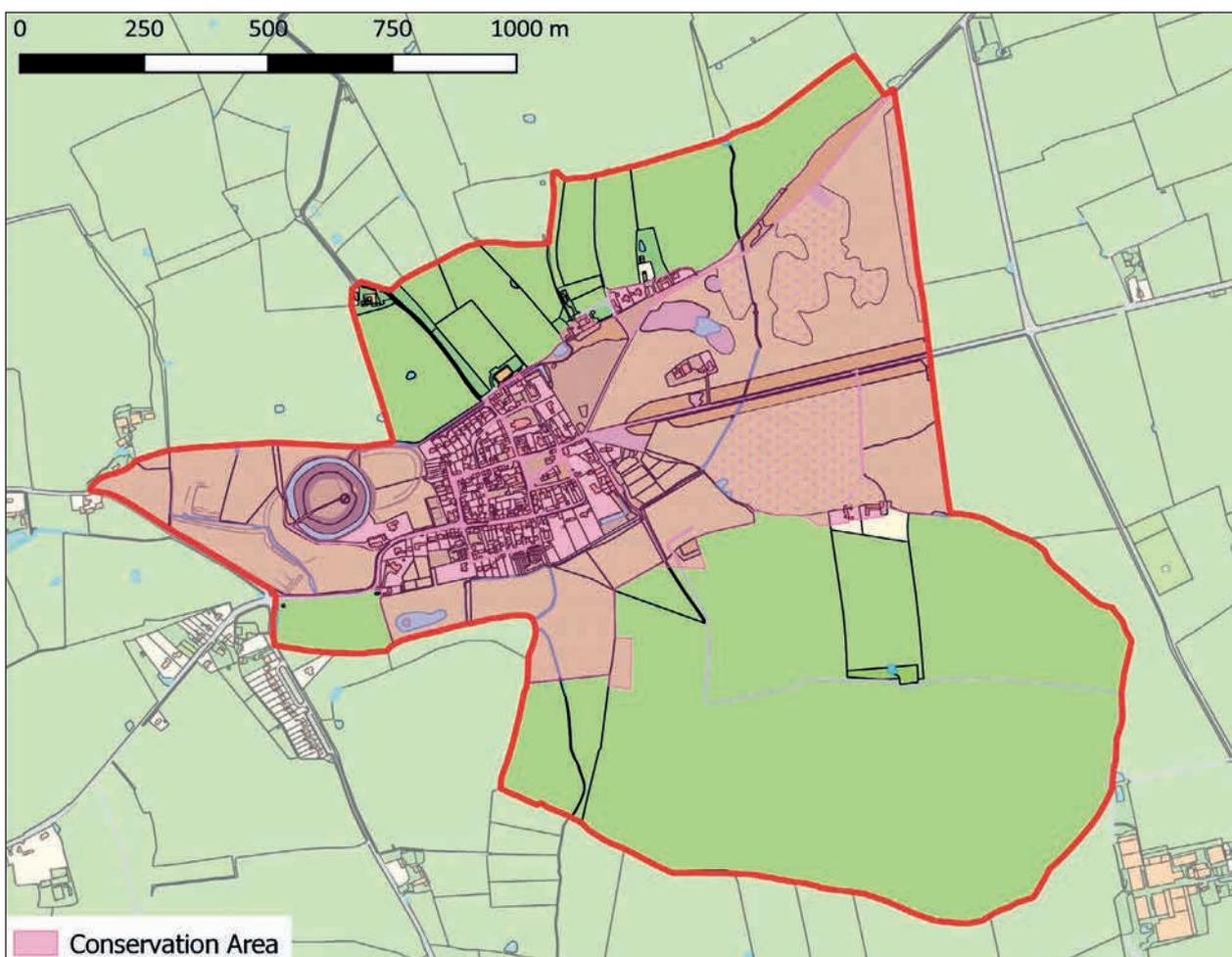


Figure 2 New Buckenham Conservation Area

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¹⁰ Old Buckenham Parish Council minutes 16 November 2016.

¹¹ Section 69 of The 1990 Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act.

¹² Breckland District Council designation 1973.

2. New Buckenham Neighbourhood Plan policies

- 2.1.1. This section of the Plan deals with separate topics, each one describing the relevant facts and issues concluding with the proposed policies. The topics are:
- Landscape and heritage
 - Countryside and environment
 - Housing and building
 - Traffic and parking
 - Business and tourism
 - Recreation, health and leisure
- 2.1.2. The Parish Council welcomes proposals for sustainable development that comply with the policies in this Plan.
- 2.1.3. For each topic, Community Actions that are not part of the statutory Plan are suggested and these are highlighted in **green** boxes.

2.2. Landscape and heritage

- 2.2.1. A comprehensive Landscape and Heritage Assessment was commissioned to accompany the Plan and is available to view in the Evidence Pack at www.np4nb.online.
- 2.2.2. New Buckenham's economy was founded on trade and commerce, resulting in a built environment that is characterised by tightly-packed buildings, regularly-aligned streets, numerous crossroad junctions and long narrow burgage tenement plots¹³. Although the planned settlement has its origin in the medieval period, the buildings within the settlement are the products of a wide range of periods and architectural styles, giving the village its distinctive character. It is also unusual for being entirely designed and contrived for servicing the castle and trade in an otherwise agricultural landscape.
- 2.2.3. The historic and natural environment of New Buckenham contributes greatly to the significance and character of the parish. The most important heritage assets are the extensive earthworks and ruins of the medieval castle, and the associated planned town laid out in the 12th century and the Church (mid-13th century). Taken as a whole, the castle and town with the deer park to its north and rabbit warren and dovecote to the south, are one of the best surviving examples of Norman town planning and are of national importance. The archaeological value of the Plan's designated area is high.
- 2.2.4. The significance of New Buckenham's heritage is reflected in the high concentration of heritage designations (two Scheduled Monuments, more than 40 Listed Buildings and a Conservation Area) to be found within it.

¹³ Long narrow rented plots and dwellings with street frontage, the residents being typically traders or artisans

2.2.3. Earthworks and ruins of the medieval castle

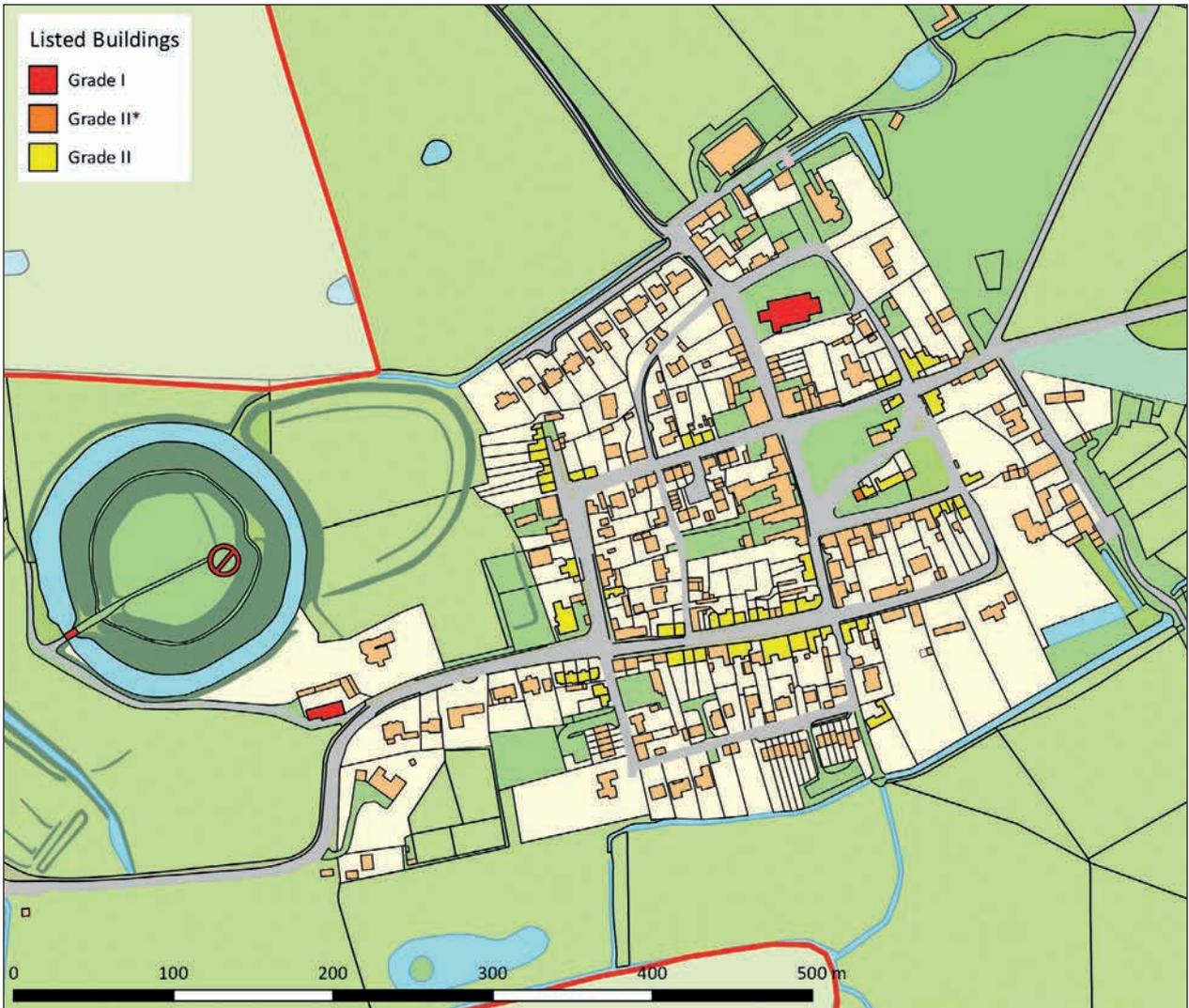


Figure 3 Listed buildings in New Buckenham

Scheduled Monument and Listed Building data
© Historic England copyright and/or database right 2018

2.2.5. The original grid layout of the village has remained relatively static, although there has been encroachment onto the central market place and limited expansion beyond the town's original boundary ditch from the 16th century onwards, mainly in Castle Hill Road. Historic mapping demonstrates that the town developed at a rapid rate throughout the 20th century (see Figure 4), with some of the older properties being replaced and much of the open space within the town being in-filled.

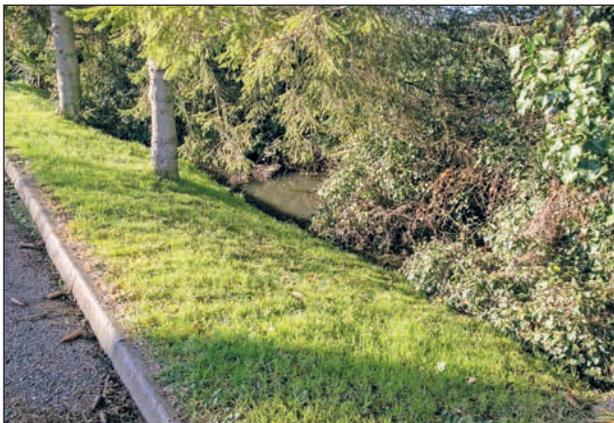
2.2.4. Some village heritage buildings





2.2.6. In the middle of the 12th century New Buckenham was probably laid out as a defended settlement with the status of a mediaeval town. It was surrounded by a square moat that was at least five metres wide and three metres deep.¹⁴ In 1493 this was referred to as the 'borough ditch' and in 1598 as the 'greate ditch'. By 1600 the moat was no longer being maintained although evidence of it remains today, not least the water-filled ditch parallel to St Martin's Gardens and a large pond on private property at the south-east of the village. Other areas such as around The Grange are overgrown with trees. The remnants of the ditch are therefore important because they delineate the original (and largely remaining) boundary of the village.

2.2.6. Some remnants of settlement moat



¹⁴ Paul and Tom Rutledge, *New Buckenham. A Moated Town*, New Buckenham Society, 2002

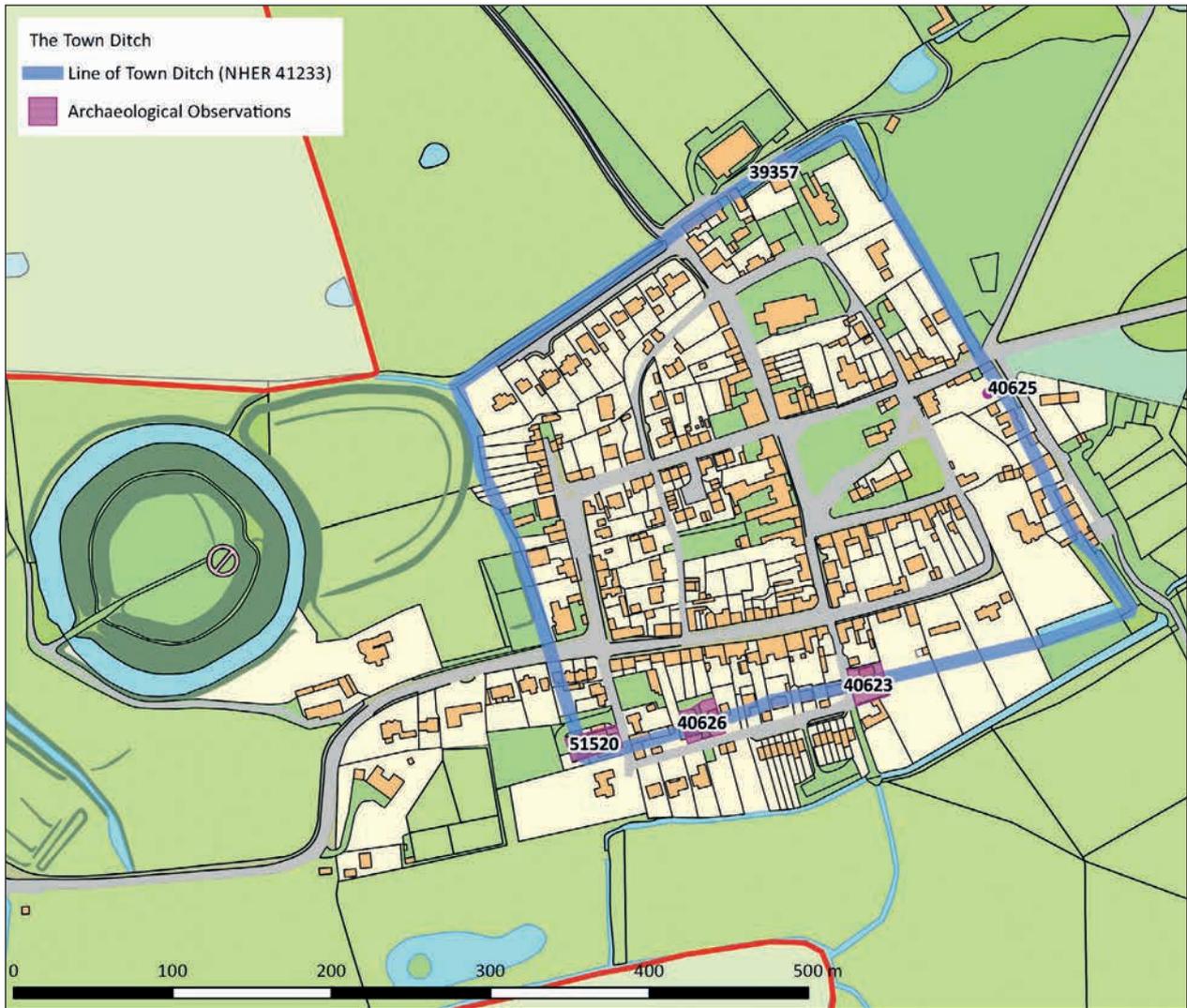


Figure 4 Map showing site of former settlement moat

OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2018

2.2.7. For the most part newer properties have been integrated into the fabric of the village with architectural innovation sitting comfortably alongside medieval earthworks and timber-framed buildings. Perhaps because of its close-knit structure and relatively isolated position, New Buckenham has always been a dynamic village continually adapting to change, and driven historically by trade and commerce rather than agriculture.

Landscape and heritage (LH) issues

2.2.8. **SURVEY17** revealed issues and concerns:

- 73% of respondents said that protecting village heritage is 'extremely important'.
- The need to balance the requirements of modern living and modern building standards with the fabric and form of an historic village.
- The need for the village to continue to develop and prosper while at the same retaining its historic character.
- New Buckenham's concentration of Listed Buildings, Scheduled Monuments and Conservation Area can be perceived by some as a constraint to renovation and development.

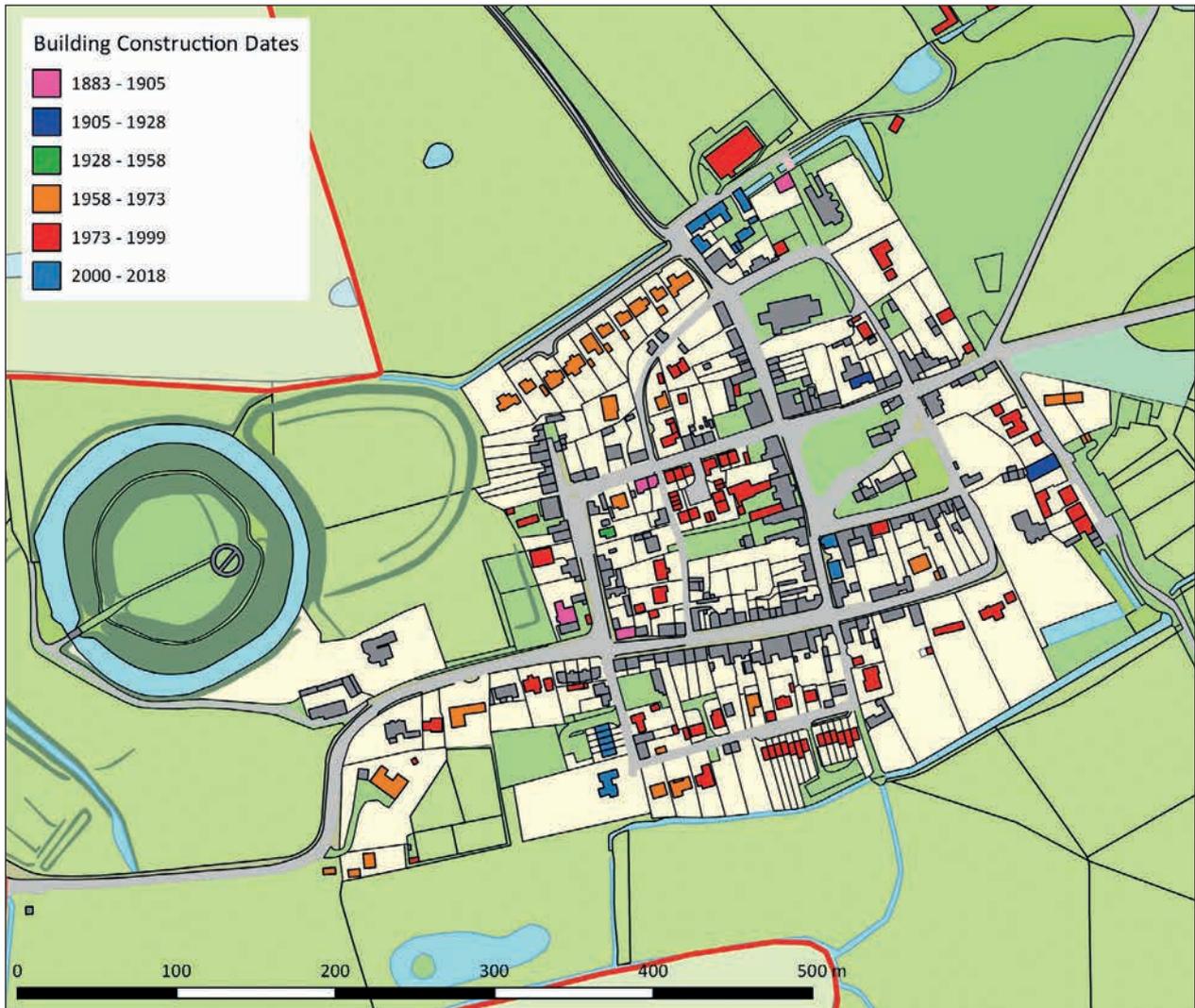


Figure 5 Building 1883–2018

OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2018

The grey buildings shown predate Ordnance Survey First Edition 1-to25-inch map of 1883

- 2.2.9. In practice innovation is not precluded, rather that it requires greater consideration of form, context and materials that could be realised by the Parish Council taking an early, active involvement in planning proposals.
- 2.2.10. The views looking towards the village are important because they illustrate its defined boundary set in the open landscape.

Owing to the national significance of New Buckenham’s heritage and landscape setting, national bodies such as Historic England have a significant part to play in advising Breckland Council on planning and other issues.

Landscape and heritage (LH) policies

POLICY LH 1 Change of use and extensions to historic buildings

2.2.11. The Parish Council should support planning applications that seek to retain and revitalise historic buildings involving alterations or change of use, where sufficient information is provided to demonstrate their potential positive impact on the local context of social, environment or business.¹⁵

POLICY LH 2 New buildings

2.2.12. Planning applications should demonstrate a positive effect upon the historic character and fabric of the village.¹⁶ Building design and materials, whether traditional or contemporary, should be of good quality and not be harmful to neighbouring properties and the village's built and natural landscape. This can be demonstrated through submission of a range of drawings as shown in the technical guidance in Appendix 1.

POLICY LH 3 New development and layout of the village

2.2.13. All development proposals should demonstrate an awareness of and respect for the historic boundaries of the village, including the line of the town ditch, the medieval street grid and individual tenement plots.¹⁷

POLICY LH 4 New development and open countryside setting

2.2.14. Development must maintain and, where possible, enhance the special quality of the open countryside setting of the village, especially the relationship between the Castle and the planned settlement, as originally designed.¹⁸ Notable views that illustrate the village's countryside setting should not be unacceptably compromised. Such views are shown in Figure 5.

Community Action: Landscape and Heritage (LH)

CA LH1 Wherever possible, opportunities should be taken to liaise with utility companies about minimising the visual impact of street furniture and services on the historic character of the settlement, and preserving key views both inside and outside the settlement boundary.

¹⁵ Breckland Emerging Local Plan Policy COM 01

¹⁶ See Appendix 1

¹⁷ Breckland Emerging Local Plan Policy COM 01

¹⁸ Breckland Emerging Local Plan Policy COM 01

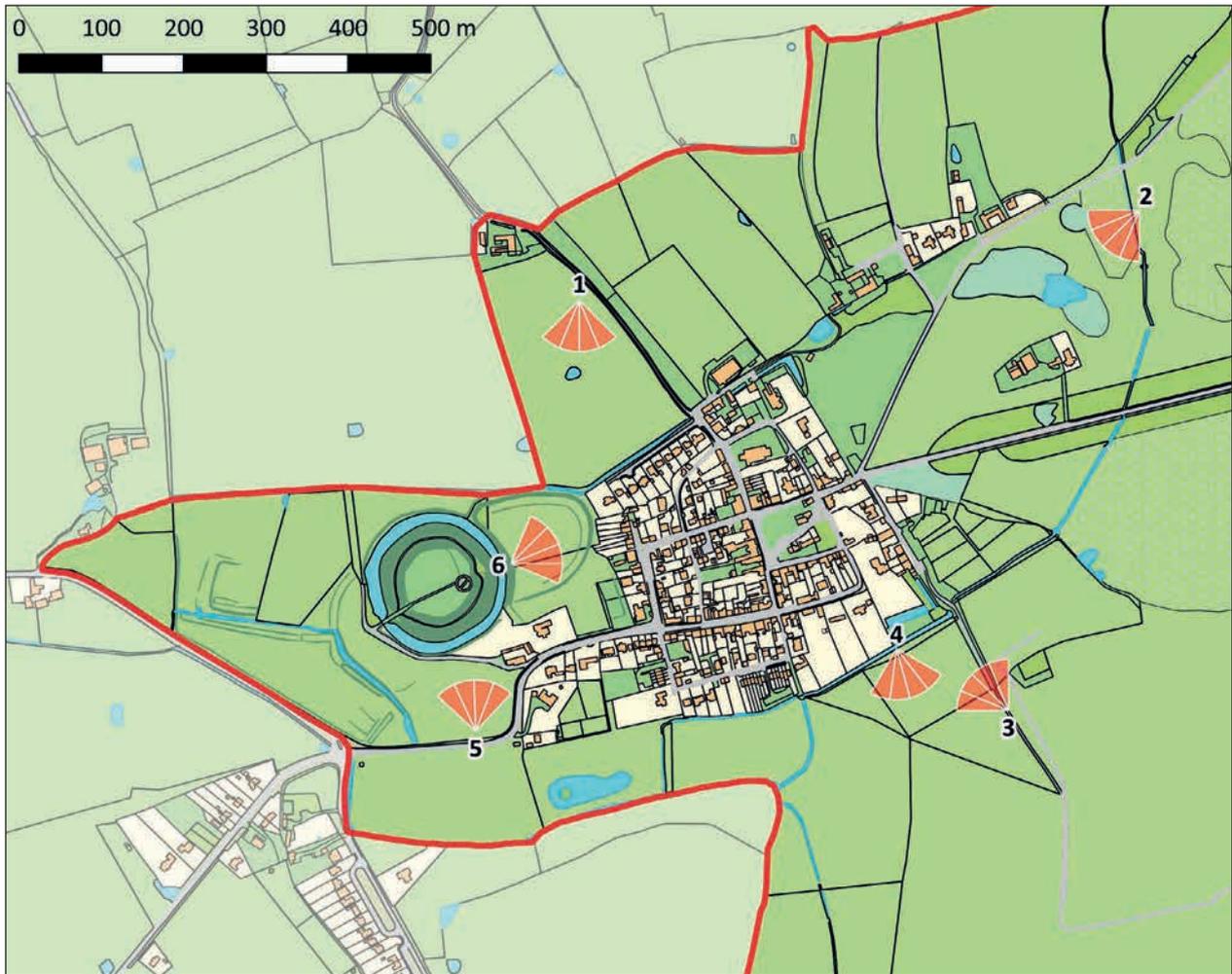


Figure 6 Village views to be preserved

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2.2.14. Important views around the village



1 View from Cuffer Lane showing the village between Church and Castle



2 View from Common of village and Church



3 View of southern boundary of the village



4 View from public footpath of flood meadows south of village



5 View from road from the Dam Brigg showing the Castle and St Mary's Chapel



6 View from the Castle of west boundary of the village

2.3. Countryside and environment

- 2.3.1. A comprehensive Preliminary Ecological Appraisal was commissioned for the Plan and is available to view in the Evidence Pack at www.np4nb.online.
- 2.3.2. New Buckenham is a rural parish covering 0.67 sq. miles (1.73km) of which 10% is built. This small, built part of the Parish is densely populated due to its Norman grid structure. **SURVEY17** showed that three quarters of residents thought the “small village in a rural setting” was important. Most specifically they enjoyed the wildlife, the walking and the peacefulness. Access to allotments was vital for almost a quarter of respondents and, since many have children and more than 60% of residents have dogs, the access to footpaths and quiet lanes contributes to a healthy and pleasant life-style.

Green and blue assets¹⁹

- 2.3.3. As well as the Common which extends across approximately a quarter of the parish, there are two County Wildlife Sites and four more CWSs within 2 km (a critical distance for wildlife assessment). The Spittle Mere on the Common represents 1800 sq. m. of open water, although this varies greatly depending on rainfall, and there are many ditches and small ponds which are sometimes dry in summer, resulting in its special ecology.

New Buckenham Common Site of Special Scientific Interest and Wildlife Sites

- 2.3.4. The Common is a major aspect of the wildlife in and around New Buckenham. It is managed by the Norfolk Wildlife Trust. It was designated a Site of Special Scientific Interest in August 1985 because it was “a large area of unimproved grassland” managed only by grazing and occasional mowing and without the use of fertiliser²⁰. It is noted most particularly for the large colony of rare green-winged orchids which flourish there.

NEWS Diss Mercury, 21 May 2019

How an increasingly rare orchid is thriving in a Norfolk village

Once a common sight in meadows and pastures, the green-winged orchid is now at risk due to changes in farm land.

But in one area of Norfolk, the small purple orchid is making a staggering comeback.

The Common at New Buckenham, near Wytonham, is one of the biggest areas of unimproved grassland in south Norfolk, making it the ideal habitat for the rare orchid.

Lined in a row of significant scientific interest because of its impressive flora and warbler population, members of the green winged orchid have been growing year on year since the early 1980s.

In May 5, the 2019 orchid count was conducted by a team of local volunteers - and the results were astounding.

In total 3,352 plants were recorded, an increase of nearly 2,000 from 2017.

Devy Hamerton, chairman of the New Buckenham Common rights committee, has organised the count for the past three years and said the success of the flower

BETHANY WALES
bet.h.wales@norfolkcc.gov.uk

was down to a 12-year agreement with a local farmer.

He said: “The land is rented to a farmer for nine months of the year for grazing cattle, which helps keep the wild grasses down so the orchids can come up.

It is a very nice public space and dog walkers benefit from it.

Sustaining the habitat is very important to the village.”

As well as being an established haven for orchids, New Buckenham provides a tempting home for a variety of rare animals.

Last year tens of thousands of bats were counted in the 14 species still living in the UK.

Among those was the crested and most protected breed in the UK - the barn owl, which is listed as near threatened.

Counters for 2019 will be conducted over four summer months but early figures have revealed hundreds in the first

New Buckenham
Picture: LIBRARY




2.3.4. The orchids and essential grazing



¹⁹ Geographical areas of vegetation, wildlife and water

²⁰ Unimproved grassland supports a rich diversity of species like butterflies, invertebrates and birds, many of which are now threatened nationally. Between 1932 and 1984, an estimated 95% of England’s unimproved grassland was lost. A study in 2013 showed that with the protection of an SSSI the grassland was 91% likely to survive. Without it, the grassland was only saved in 27% of cases.

Town moat

2.3.5. As discussed in para 2.2.6 New Buckenham was surrounded by a moat in the middle of the 12th century. Some remnants are still present, not least the water filled ditch parallel to St Martin's Gardens and a large pond to the south-east of the village. Other moat remnants such as around The Grange are overgrown with trees. The town ditch is therefore important as a green and blue asset as well as delineating the original boundary of the village.

Other Green Spaces

2.3.6. In and around the village there are several important green spaces and corridors that form a network to support wildlife: the playing fields behind the village hall; the cricket pitch; St Martin's churchyard where a wildflower meadow scheme has recently been started as a Parish Council initiative; the Cemetery field on the east side of Cuffer Lane; the allotments; the Town ditch remnants around the village; the land and moat surrounding the Castle and Haugh Meadow sloping down to Dam Brigg; the open water and water meadows behind Marsh Lane and, of course, the gardens and areas attached to private houses.

2.3.7. Apart from the Common's orchids, the village and its surroundings are home to many rare or endangered wildlife species. The most notable of these are turtle doves, cuckoos, thrushes and yellowhammers. A recent study²¹ confirms the presence of nine species of bat including the rare and protected barbastelle and the noctule. Protected amphibians and reptiles such as great crested newts and grass snakes are also present.

2.3.7. Rare and endangered wildlife in and around the Common.



²¹ Dr S Newson, British Trust for Ornithology (2018)

Countryside and environment issues

- 2.3.8. The extensive surrounding countryside provides an exceptionally 'green' location for New Buckenham. However, despite various studies having taken place over the years, until now there has been no formal ecological study of the immediate area and there are no Breckland-held records of wildlife and species. There are county and national databases but these are sketchy. Similarly, there are few reliable records of the wildlife on the Common even though it is owned and managed by the Norfolk Wildlife Trust. The wild orchid count has traditionally been done by village volunteers rather than the Trust although the results are curated by the Trust.
- 2.3.9. The Neighbourhood Plan project has provided an opportunity to commission a report by The Ecology Consultancy in 2018²². This, together with three years of close work with the British Trust for Ornithology on their ground-breaking Norfolk Bat survey, has for the first time in village history provided a map of wildlife activity although more observation and recording needs to be done.
- 2.3.10. With more ecological evidence, increasingly informed decisions can be made. It should be remembered that the fact that there are inadequate formal wildlife records does not mean that there is no wildlife present. For example, the County Recorder had only one record of fungi on the Common despite a spectacular range of fungi seen by enthusiasts and experts in October 2019.
- 2.3.11. The issues emerging from **SURVEY17**, village discussions and the report by The Ecology Consultancy in its Preliminary Ecological Appraisal are:
- 85% of our residents wish to protect the countryside and wildlife, nearly 25% rate the allotments as an important amenity, and others are keen to support the playing fields and children's play area.
 - The green environment is increasingly recognised as being necessary to promote healthy human life. It improves air quality, maintains the soil and reduces flooding. It is a place for healthy recreation, growing food, a source of livelihood and a tourist attraction.
 - New Buckenham's Neighbourhood Plan allows us to plan for the protection and promotion of wildlife in and around the village. It is not only the wildlife that must be addressed in the Plan but also the environmental, health and heritage values that support it.
 - A higher profile of the village's "green" assets would encourage visitors but may also increase parking problems, an issue recognised by NWT's Senior Conservation Officer who stated "an increase in visitor numbers would be desirable at New Buckenham Common, provided it is within the limits of existing on-site visitor infrastructure and off-site local infrastructure."²³
 - In **SURVEY17** more than half the residents supported more tourism, recognising that a greater footfall would bring increased business to the pubs, the coffee shop, the village store and B&B businesses, but that it would need to be sensitively managed so as not to damage the views that visitors come to see or cause more traffic disruption.

²² Full report in Evidence Pack

²³ Personal communication

- There is a requirement in the revised NPPF to “protect and enhance biodiversity” through planning positively for the creation, protection, enhancement and management of habitats and networks²⁴ but there is currently no strategy for ‘green planning’ at Breckland or Parish level.
- Although Breckland has no green infrastructure strategy of its own, its Emerging Local Plan states: ‘Developments that fail to exploit opportunities to integrate and enhance the existing local green infrastructure network will not be favourably considered’, and the NPPF itself grants neighbourhood plans powers to designate certain areas as Local Green Spaces. Where such a designation is in place, development will be resisted except in very special circumstances’. This Plan’s policies are in compliance with the Government’s Biodiversity 2020 initiative.²⁵

Designating green spaces

- 2.3.12. Green policies impose demands upon local people and future developers to mitigate harm to wildlife and to improve and maintain green areas and green corridors. All these would improve the quality of life for the local community, business and visitors. This Plan encourages the protection of existing habitats and the provision of wildlife corridors to promote biodiversity. If achieved, a local sense of place due to the landscape character and built heritage can be enhanced, invigorate our local economy and promote green tourism. Furthermore, any increased planting tends to mitigate adverse climate effects including flood risk.
- 2.3.13. A successful implementation of green policies needs the involvement of local householders and neighbouring villages. Any policies must be compatible with Breckland Council and its emerging Local Plan,^{26 27} which in turn reflects the legal requirements of the NPPF and provides guidance. Green policies benefit village residents and visitors by encouraging physical activity and recreation for all ages, especially those of school age and the elderly. Awareness of our local green assets such as footpaths and green spaces can be promoted by improving access for all users, especially those with reduced mobility.
- 2.3.14. Any new development should respect and enhance the existing green infrastructure, thus allowing opportunity for wildlife to thrive. From the outset, developers should consider and comply with environmental policies from Government to Parish Council level, including parish neighbourhood plans.²⁸

²⁴ NPPF para 174

²⁵ Joint Nature Conservation Committee

²⁶ Breckland Emerging Local Plan ENV 01

²⁷ Breckland Emerging Local Plan 5.8

²⁸ Breckland Emerging Local Plan 5.10, 5.11

2.3.15. This Plan can address these issues by confirming the Open Spaces^{29 30} designated by Breckland, i.e. that such spaces are:

- Not subject to existing planning permission or allocated for future development
- Not an extensive "tract of land"
- "Local in character"
- In proximity to the community it serves
- Demonstrably special to the local community

and each Green Space must meet at least one of the following criteria:

1. "Particular local significance.....because of its beauty"
2. "Particular local significance.....because of its historic significance"
3. "Particular local significance.....because of its recreational value"
4. "Particular local significance.....because of its tranquillity"
5. "Particular local significance.....because of its wildlife"
6. "Particular local significance.....for any other reason"

2.3.16. Green corridors are thin strips of habitat that allow the movement of wildlife along it. Although a term often used within urban settings, green corridors are important in arable countryside to link isolated areas of wooded land, hedgerows and water bodies. This Plan identifies examples of such corridors where, although not formally designated, interruption of continuity would be resisted.

Countryside and environment (CE) policies

POLICY CE 1 **Developments and natural environment**

2.3.17. All new developments and major alteration of existing properties should demonstrate that building work will at least maintain, and if possible enhance, biodiversity and protect wildlife habitats and networks. Such proposals should not impact adversely on areas used for recreation. Developers should be encouraged to submit a green space and landscaping strategy along with the planning application.

2.3.18. New development that makes a positive contribution to the existing network of green infrastructure or provides an increase in the amount of publicly available green spaces should be supported subject to other policies in this Plan.

POLICY CE 2 **Designation of local green spaces**

2.3.19. This Neighbourhood Plan confirms the following sites as Local Green Spaces³¹ as shown in Figure 7.

- Market Place
- St Martin's Church graveyard
- Cemetery and boundaries
- Allotments
- Cuffer Lane (Tas Valley Way) and boundaries
- Village Hall playing field
- Cricket ground and surroundings

2.3.20. Proposals for development in a designated Local Green Space should be only supported if it helps the public better use that land for recreation.

²⁹ Breckland Open Space Parish Schedule 2015

³⁰ NPPF paras 99-100

³¹ Breckland Emerging Local Plan 5.53

2.3.19. Local green spaces



Market Place



St Martin's Church graveyard



Cemetery and boundaries



Allotments



Cuffer Lane (Tas Valley Way) and boundaries



Village Hall playing field



Cricket ground and surroundings

POLICY CE 3 Loss and restitution of important habitats

2.3.21. Planning permission should be refused for development that results in the loss or deterioration of important habitats, particularly the Castle and the Common. Trees and hedgerows should be protected and conserved unless their long-term survival is compromised by their physical condition or there are exceptional overriding benefits in accepting their loss.

2.3.22. Restitution and improvement of green habitats should include, wherever appropriate, the new planting of deciduous trees and species-rich hedgerows.

2.3.23. Development work to provide essential infrastructure will be seriously considered where the benefits clearly outweigh any harm and there are no reasonable alternative sites available.

POLICY CE 4 Green living plan requirement

2.3.24. Proposals for new residential development, whether new build or major conversions, will be required to submit a Green Living Plan with planning applications in order to contribute to a coordinated approach to sustainable living in New Buckenham. Items for inclusion in the Green Living Plan are provided in Appendix 2: Green Policies checklist.

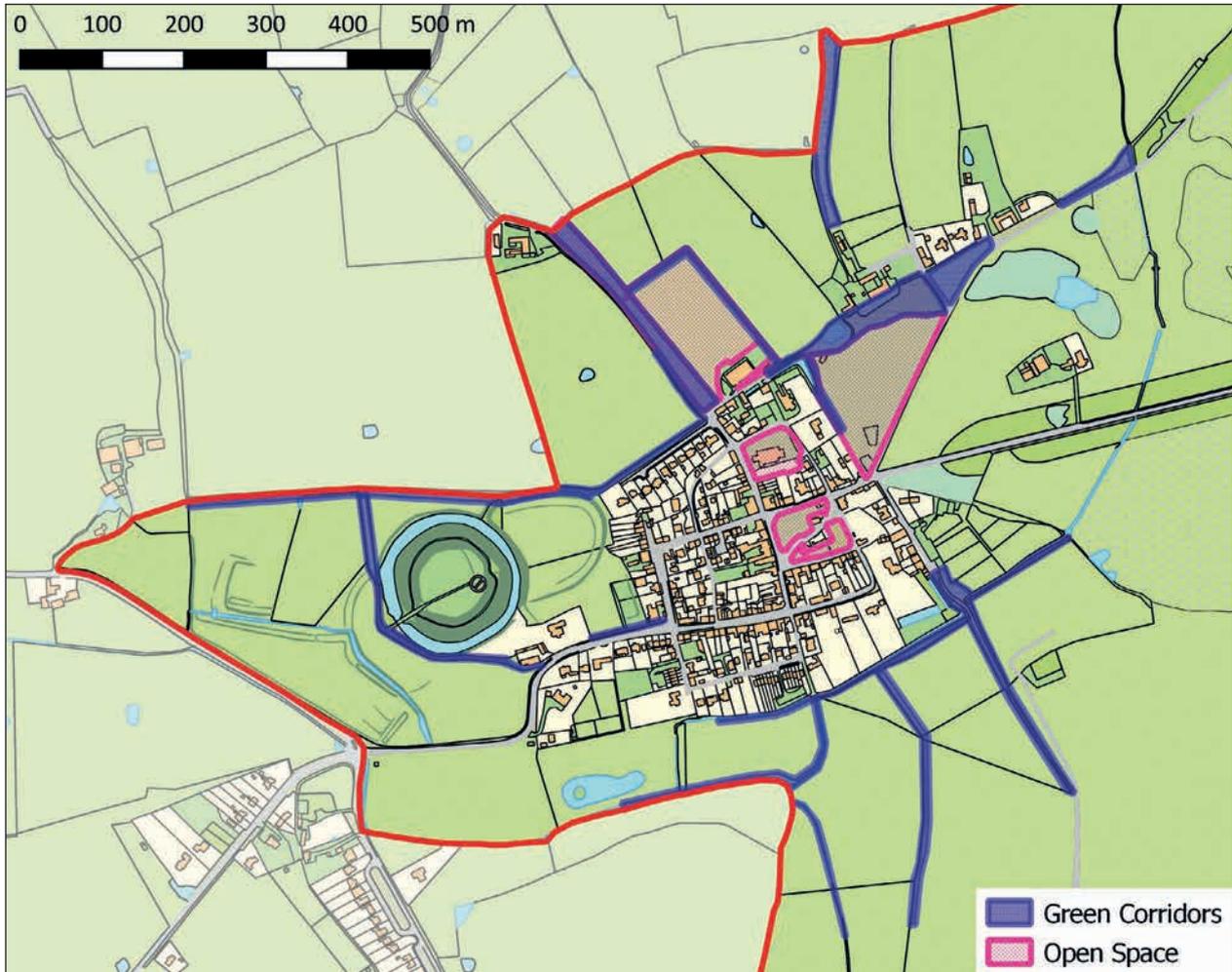


Figure 7 Public open spaces and proposed green corridors

OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2018

DESIGNATED GREEN SPACES see Figure 7

GREEN SPACE	OWNER	CONDITION	CRITERIA
Market Place	High Bailiff Trust	Well maintained	1,2,3
St Martin's Church graveyard	NBPB / PCC	Well maintained	1,2,4,5
Maintained cemetery and boundaries	NBPC	Well maintained	2,4,5
Allotments	NBPC	Well maintained	3,4,5,6 (food)
Cuffer Lane (Tas Valley Way) boundaries	NCC	Needs improvement	1,2,3,4,5,6 and (tourism)
Village Hall playing field	NBVHT	Well maintained	3
Cricket ground and surroundings	NBPC	Well maintained	3,4,5

Community Action: Countryside and Environment (CE)

CA CE 1 Further green and blue spaces and corridors should be identified, mapped and designation considered to benefit wildlife, landscape and recreation.

CA CE 2 Areas that are of heritage or environmental significance that may be partly in public and private ownership, such as the moat remnants near the Village Hall, should be identified and management plans drawn up with the relevant landowner.

CA CE 3 Footpaths should be assessed for accessibility and a reporting system be in place.

CA CE 4 A budget and funding sources should be identified to offer grants to landowners for tree planting and hedgerow improvement in appropriate places, possibly in association with grant giving bodies.

CA CE 5 Grassed areas in public areas should be assessed for alternative management such as has been done in the closed churchyard and village hall site.

CA CE 6 Information and advice should be available to private owners for enhancing diversity of wildlife in their gardens and other land within their ownership or control.

2.3.24. Result of delayed cutting, Village Hall amphitheatre



2.4. Dark skies and light pollution

- 2.4.1. New Buckenham is a small rural village surrounded by open countryside, the latter of high ecological value. There is some street lighting, recently changed from old technology lamps to LED. This was done to reduce running costs (borne by the Parish Council), reduce carbon use and improve the colour temperature of the lighting to a unified near-white. Light pollution (artificial light which shines where it is neither wanted nor needed) has been considerably reduced. The lamps are run at reduced power after midnight but there remains significant ambient lighting from private houses. The latter can cause annoyance to passers-by if excessively bright or allowed to spill into public places and other private properties. The amenity value of dark surroundings in appropriate places should be protected.³²
- 2.4.2. The ever growing Attleborough and Wymondham conurbations, together with the A11 trunk road have significant impact on the night. Otherwise, surrounding countryside is inherently dark. Only eight miles away is the Great Ellingham Dark Sky designated area and its Observatory. The creation of artificial light can threaten the survival of protected local wildlife. New Buckenham has a particularly large population of bats some of which are endangered. Both Norfolk County Council³³ and National policies³⁴ seek to restrict lighting and encourage dark skies in important areas.
- 2.4.3. Isolated farm and commercial lighting within and outside the Plan area is intrusive to the dark village surroundings, even at a distance. The use of bright continuous lighting is unnecessary as modern and inexpensive technology means that night time security cameras need relatively little light to function.

2.4.3. Dark Skies



³² Breckland Local Plan COM 03

³³ Environmental Lighting Zones Policy

³⁴ NPPF para 180(c)

Dark skies and light pollution avoidance policies

POLICY DS 1 Keeping dark areas dark

2.4.4. Development must not detract from the unlit environment of the Plan area. External lighting for security and floodlighting must be designed to be deflected downwards and mostly switched off no later than midnight.

POLICY DS 2 Outside lighting

2.4.5. Permanent lighting for a development associated with any activity, including leisure, recreation and business, should be demonstrated to be essential. It should be managed in such a way that reduces light pollution, energy usage, impact on wildlife, annoyance to local residents and visual impact on the local character of the area.

2.4.6. Outside lighting design and use should be compatible with the existing Dark Sky Policies adopted by Norfolk County Council.³⁵

POLICY DS 3 Minimum requirements for new external lighting

2.4.7. Where any new lighting is considered necessary in public areas for public safety reasons, it must be fully shielded and enclosed in full cut-off flat glass fitments; directed downwards; not tilted; switched on only when needed rather than on all night; and be white light low-energy lamps such as LED technology.

POLICY DS 4 Lighting away from built areas

2.4.8. Commercial or agricultural premises outside the village's built area must avoid continuous bright lighting.

Community Action: Dark Skies (DS)

CA DS 5 Publicity will encourage inappropriate commercial and domestic lighting to be modified so as not to affect public and other private space. Such lighting should, on the whole, be switched off after midnight and movement-sensitive triggers should be regulated to reduce illumination periods to a minimum.

CA DS 6 These guidelines will be applied to all public premises and will be strongly encouraged on private premises by ensuring that businesses and householders are aware of the adverse effects of outside lighting on the environment and on their neighbours.

³⁵ Parish Councils are invited to use CPRE Norfolk's Standard Light Pollution Clause in considering applications

2.5. Housing and building

- 2.5.1. New Buckenham is different from other settlements within East Anglia, and England more widely, because it was planned and established in the 12th century for trade rather than the more usual development from scattered dwellings in an agricultural economy. This explains its built environment of tightly packed buildings, mostly fronting directly onto narrow streets.
- 2.5.2. As previously mentioned, the village was originally enclosed by a water-filled ditch or moat, some of which still remains.³⁶ With a few exceptions, new buildings, replacements and alterations have been done within this boundary through infilling rather than expanding outside the boundary. Growth has been more rapid in the 20th century and the Plan area now has 209 households.
- 2.5.3. The deliberate initial planning and development of the village's streets and buildings, still largely retained, make it particularly noteworthy in both a local and national context.
- 2.5.4. Some newer buildings lack local character but there are exceptions that enhance the village.

Housing and building issues

Village character

- 2.5.5. New Buckenham is defined by Breckland in its Local Plan 2019 as a 'rural settlement without a boundary'³⁷ on the grounds that it has limited service provision and is 'unsustainable for additional growth'. There is therefore no local government requirement for the community to identify land for development but new building and remodelling, both by developers and existing property owners, can occur in the future and will be important for the social and economic viability of the community.

Housing needs

- 2.5.6. Breckland's 2014 Housing Needs Survey (see the Evidence Pack) had reported that there was a wish for additional smaller houses, ideally at less than market value, and mainly for younger people. The response rate of this survey was 29%. There is currently no rentable housing in New Buckenham other than from the private sector where the rents are higher. **SURVEY17**, with its 83% response rate, provided the village with another opportunity to look at housing needs: 60% of the residents who responded to that survey did not think the village needed more houses but if there were to be more houses, they should be smaller rather than larger (60%) and should reflect a local style (85%). 80% thought building more houses would risk increased traffic and parking problems.
- 2.5.7. Individual needs change but at any one time there is likely be a wish by number of households (that may comprise single occupiers) to have housing that could be described as affordable as defined in the NPPF.³⁸

³⁶ Paul Rutledge and Tom Rutledge, New Buckenham Society 2002

³⁷ Breckland Local Plan HOU 02

³⁸ National Planning Policy Framework February 2019

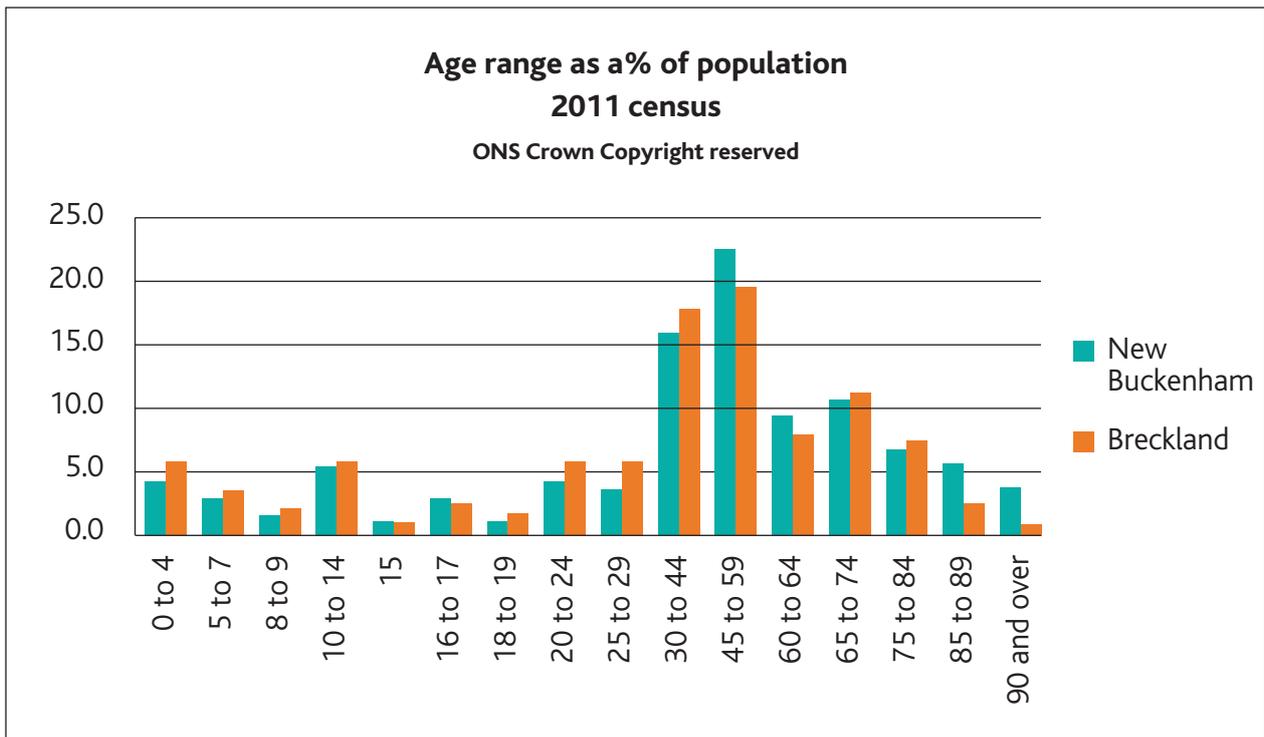


Figure 8 Age distribution of new Buckenham residents

- 2.5.8. The 2011 census indicates the majority of residents are in their middle age rather than elderly or in childhood. This is broadly similar to Breckland as a whole. About 15-18 of the New Buckenham elderly recorded in the census were permanently in St Mary’s Residential Home.
- 2.5.9. Although the rateable values of village properties are close to the Breckland average, the purchase values of properties are higher as the village is seen to be a desirable place to live for heritage and recreational reasons.³⁹ The Plan’s public consultations within the village highlighted the feeling that building larger, more expensive houses in or around the village was unlikely to benefit any local residents who wish to rent or buy at less cost or wish to downsize their existing accommodation.
- 2.5.10. It’s uncertain as to how cheaper housing, whether rented or for sale, can be achieved to benefit those with local connections, and especially in the long term. Normal commercial interests inevitably come into play with any new housing development. National research by Shelter/CPRE⁴⁰, the Town and Country Planning Institute⁴¹ and the experience of neighbouring communities shows that allowing further development is no guarantee of an increase in more affordable housing. Further, even if such housing does become available, ever changing regulations, interpretations and commercial forces allow those properties to drift towards the open market, putting them out of reach to people in the village, or closely connected with the village, who most need them. New housing is planned for Old

³⁹ Personal communication, A D Beales FNAEA, Millbank Estate Agents

⁴⁰ Grayston and Pullinger (Shelter and CPRE, March 2018)

⁴¹ Planning for Affordable Housing (Town and Country Planning Association), October 2018

Buckenham and Banham (each two miles away) and large estates are being built in Attleborough (less than five miles away), so opportunities for more affordable housing will exist near New Buckenham even if not in the village itself.

Infilling

2.5.11. In **SURVEY17** there was almost unanimous support for protecting both the village's heritage (buildings and layout) and the surrounding open countryside and its wildlife. Development by 'rounding off' is usually the way in which most settlements can enlarge, using small areas of land abutting irregular and ill-defined housing boundaries. New Buckenham's unique well-defined almost squared-off building boundary makes 'rounding off' problematic without harming this key heritage character and therefore any developments proposing to do this should clearly demonstrate no harm would be caused to the historic settlement layout.⁴²

Housing and Parking

2.5.12. On-street parking is already a problem with inappropriate parking likely to obstruct emergency services and some through traffic. Recently proposed conversions to residential use have provided no extra off-street capacity and so will increase the number of vehicles parked on village streets still further.

2.5.13. Traffic and parking issues are further discussed in Section 2.6

Environment and heritage context

2.5.14. Development in the surrounding countryside is problematic as the immediate area supports a wide range of wildlife owing to the protected Common, the hedgerows, the occasional ponds around the fields, the small wooded areas around the Castle and the continuation of Tanning Lane towards farmland.

2.5.15. The Parish Council endorses the design guidelines outlined in Breckland Council's Design Principles 2004.⁴³ All developments including extensions and alterations should be of good design and make a positive contribution towards its surroundings.⁴⁴ In principle, new building design should not have an adverse effect on neighbouring properties or natural surroundings through poor design and inappropriate scale.⁴⁵ Design should be sympathetic with the local vernacular in ridge heights, plot sizes and, usually, materials.⁴⁶ Many planning applications for development are, unfortunately, not seen by the Parish Council until they are at an advanced stage thus losing an opportunity to influence design details. This is addressed in Appendix 1, para 3.1.3.

⁴² Breckland Local Plan 3.31-2

⁴³ Breckland District Council designation 1973

⁴⁴ Breckland Local Plan GEN 2

⁴⁵ Breckland Local Plan HOU 11

⁴⁶ Breckland Local Plan HOU 05

Housing and building policies (HB)

POLICY HB 1 Housing types

2.5.16. A mix of housing types and densities that reflects local needs and demographic changes should be supported, subject to other policies in this Plan. The development of smaller, less expensive dwellings is particularly encouraged especially if the quality of their design and materials is high.

POLICY HB 2 Housing and car parking

2.5.17. The Parish Council's approach to parking will take into account the parking requirements of existing residents and visitors, and will look more favourably on proposals that provide off-street parking.

POLICY HB 3 Change of use of commercial and business premises

2.5.18. Proposals that result in the loss of commercial and business premises that currently provide a service to the local community, such as pubs and shops and other commercial premises, will be required to demonstrate that either the use is no longer viable or the proposed use would provide an alternative community benefit.

POLICY HB 4 Design of new building

2.5.19. Proposals for new development should demonstrate how they respond to their settings. Drawings should clearly show the relationship of a proposed development to neighbouring buildings, perhaps the whole street if applicable, and the surrounding landscape. Details of building design is covered in Appendix 1.

2.5.20. Improvements to the public areas in and around the village will be encouraged and supported. New development should contribute to enhancement work such as the provision of street trees, improved shop fronts, high quality surface materials, provision of cycle parking, and the avoidance of street clutter and barriers to pedestrian movement.

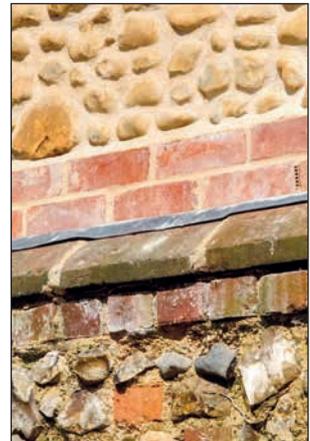
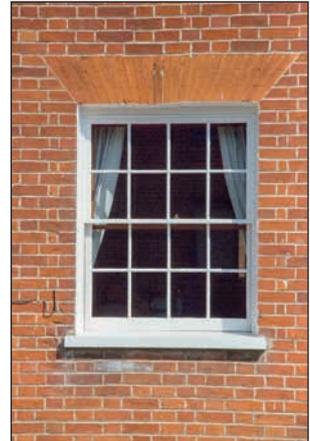
POLICY HB 5 Low impact access routes

2.5.21. A new development proposal should demonstrate how it relates to existing pedestrian and cycle routes. Any opportunities available should be taken to provide new or improve existing, convenient, safe and direct links for pedestrians and cyclists to local facilities and surrounding local centres and countryside.

POLICY HB 6 Encouraging sustainable development

2.5.22. New development which incorporates energy efficiency measures and sustainable energy generation technologies will be encouraged, subject to other policies in this Plan. Careful consideration should be given to the impact on heritage assets and buildings of local merit. Provision should be considered for accommodating electric vehicles.

2.5.20. More modern village building materials and styles



POLICY HB 7 Green living plan requirement

2.5.23. Developers should submit a Green Living Plan with planning applications in order to contribute to a coordinated approach to sustainable living in New Buckenham. Items for inclusion in the Green Living Plan are provided in the Appendix 2: Green Living Plan checklist.

POLICY HB 8 Boundaries

2.5.24. Developments should consider green rather than hard boundaries, ideally of mixed species native hedging. If hard boundaries are essential, they should be of good quality brick and flint rather than fence panels, provision always being made for allowing movement of small wildlife such as hedgehogs.

POLICY HB 9 Utilities and signage

2.5.25. In new developments and alterations, there should be no overhead wires, poles, or masts. Signage should be kept to an absolute minimum.

2.5.24. Boundaries – some better than others for wildlife movement



2.6. Traffic and parking

2.6.1. Traffic and parking are the most contentious issues for the residents and visitors to New Buckenham. They represent by far the largest number of problems expressed in **SURVEY17**: traffic (28%) and parking (12%) of responders respectively. However many aspects cannot be influenced by the Plan since they are categorised as strategic matters dealt with by the County Council. Nonetheless the Plan and the Community Actions can review and address some of the difficulties.

Traffic and parking issues

2.6.2. New Buckenham has 209 households with a high level of car ownership in a densely-built village with narrow streets. The village sits astride the B1113, a designated lorry route, and all the streets have a 20mph speed limit. Apart from the main road, the narrow street network is a space shared by pedestrians and vehicles where residents nearly always walk by choice due to the compact nature of the village. Driving within the village can be difficult.

2.6.3. Car ownership has increased significantly over the last two decades and remains essential for travelling outside the village as there is still only a rudimentary bus service. The increase in number and size of work-related vehicles contributes towards parking congestion. **SURVEY17** showed that 16% of households keep three or more cars or vans in the village.

2.6.4. With a sharp bend at each end of the village and two in the middle, congestion is worsened by heavy goods vehicles, farm machinery and coaches attempting to negotiate the tight 90-degree corners in a narrow road in the village centre. Vehicles can and do speed through

2.6.4. Large vehicles in narrow road



the village, especially in King Street and Castle Hill Road. Chapel Street is used as a rat run to beat large slow moving vehicles on King Street. In **SURVEY17** heavy lorries with their sheer size and speed, were perceived to cause vibration to historically-significant Listed Buildings with little or no foundations. It is noted that a fully laden beet lorry can weigh 44 tonnes.

- 2.6.5. Access into and out of the village is limited almost exclusively to the single main through road. The only other access is from Cuffer Lane. This is narrow and only suitable for very little vehicular traffic, being used mainly by pedestrians to the allotments and cemetery, and recreation walkers.
- 2.6.6. Parking is at a premium with most car owners having to use on-street parking. Some properties in the village struggle for nearby parking space. St Mary's residential home is a particular 'hotspot' where emergency vehicles are often unable to get access owing to parked vehicles, some of which are parked inappropriately. Other areas may be inaccessible to bin lorries for the same reason.
- 2.6.7. King Street can be a major problem for pushchairs, wheelchairs, and those with limited mobility and visual impairment, due to its pavements containing bollards, parked vehicles and planters. Elsewhere, narrow streets have flint cobbled pavements (as on Church Street) and other streets have no pavements at all. In such streets people walk in the middle of the road.
- 2.6.8. Meetings with Norfolk County Council's Highways Department have confirmed that there is little or no funding to improve even "minor traffic issues".
- 2.6.9. Two buses travel to Norwich in the morning and three return later in the day. One bus currently goes on to Diss on Saturday mornings. Only 15% of responders said they would use a bus service if it went to Attleborough, probably reflecting the high availability of a car and the infrequency of the service. There is also an active Community Car Service but one in six people did not know about its availability.
- 2.6.10. Restricting parking outside St Mary's Residential Home to improve emergency access would cause nuisance to nearby residents and the King's Head, potentially provoking opposition and moving the parking congestion elsewhere. Double yellow lines would cost £5,000-15,000, mainly through legal costs, and this would have to be met largely by local funding. Alternatively, the road could be widened opposite St Mary's Residential Home but the telegraph poles by the kerb make this difficult and there would be resulting loss of designated Local Green Space in the picturesque heart of the village.
- 2.6.11. There are currently fewer lorries than before the recession but the large ones (40-44 tonnes) are now about 22% of lorries compared with 15% in 2007. Although they are increasingly improving in emissions and 'road-friendly' suspension technology, they are still large, heavy and intimidating to the village. Large farm vehicles are more local than large lorries although their technologies are less sophisticated. Re-routing heavy lorries would require alternative roads with equivalent or higher-grade classification, but nearby roads do not

meet these requirements. Achieving this could only be done after extensive consultation, piloting and upgrading which would be prohibitively expensive. Any injuries or fatalities from heavy lorries might increase priority but not hasten change.

- 2.6.12. 75% of villagers would support traffic calming either in King Street or at each end of the village. The loan of community speed watch equipment is currently not freely available to villages with a 20mph limit, so establishing a speed monitoring 'community presence' within the village is difficult other than by the use of flashing speed signs.
- 2.6.13. A village boundary 'gateway' is another concept used to slow down traffic⁴⁷. Possibilities include reducing road width, changing the colour of the road surface, planting schemes on verges – perhaps flowers or small shrubs, or incorporating mature trees to create 'side friction', or altering the nature of the road surface or painting simple road murals.
- 2.6.14. In **SURVEY17** 75% of residents support increasing the village's capacity for car parking by enlarging the car park by the play area (Parish Council land). There is on-street parking capacity elsewhere in the village such as Grange Road north of the churchyard but these are little used. Visitors could, however, be directed to these free parking places if informed through advertising and co-operation with businesses and organisations that attract visitors.

Traffic and parking policies

POLICY TP 1 Highway developments

2.6.15. All development involving a public highway link should, as appropriate, incorporate shared walking, parking and road surface characteristics similar to most of the rest of the village.

POLICY TP 2 Flashing speed signs

2.6.16. An extra flashing speed sign is to be installed.⁴⁸ The cost would be in the region of £3,500–£4,000, paid for using Parish Partnership schemes, an initiative created to enable local communities to apply for match funding to deliver additional highway projects.

POLICY TP 3 Boundary gateways

2.6.17. Village boundary 'gateways' are to be installed at either end of the village.⁴⁹

⁴⁷ Department of Transport Guidance TAL 13/93

⁴⁸ This could be a VAS (Vehicle Activated Sign) similar to the one on the Turnpike, placed at the Castle Hill end of the village, although a SAM2 (movable speed sign) might be more effective as it can be designed to our specifications and can also be moved between two or three different locations.

⁴⁹ A simple made-for-purpose structure is the least expensive, possibly with associated permissible planting. This could be installed through partnership funding, the continuation of which is in doubt, the cost to the village being around £4000 for both B1113 ends of the village.

POLICY TP 4 Car park

2.6.18. The Parish Council's car park near the play area should be enlarged, ensuring a sustainable drainage system as appropriate.

2.6.18. Current car park



Community Action: Traffic and Parking (TP)

CA TP 1 Maps published by the Parish Council or local businesses should show clearly where parking is easily available.



2.7.1.
Former regular and special bus services
from the village

BUSES! BUSES!! BUSES!!!

BARNARD
(New Buckenham)
Is Now Booking for

Seaside & Pleasure Trips

Up-to-Date Buses.
Comfortable and Reliable.
School Treats and Private Parties
Catered for.

SPECIAL TERMS FOR SCHOOLS.

**BOOK EARLY TO AVOID
DISAPPOINTMENT.**

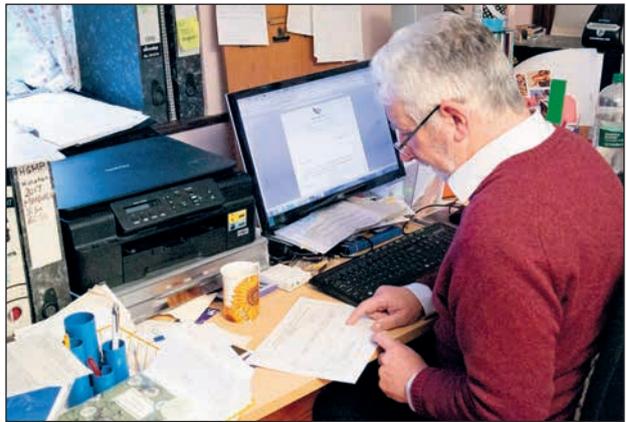
2.7. Business and tourism

- 2.7.1. Unlike other rural villages of comparable size, New Buckenham was founded as a trading settlement in the 12th century, initially to service the Castle and later holding a regular market. The village flourished and some 800 years later Pigot's Directory (1839) records a lawyer, a surgeon, three bakers, five shoe-makers, five carpenters, two chemists, five grocers and drapers, three pubs, two ironmongers, a miller, two saddlers, four tailors, a watchmaker, a cooper, a glover, a tallow chandler, a painter and glazier and a mason. There was also a Post Office and a number of carriers and vans which, arguably, provided a better transport system than public services offer now. In total there were about 50 businesses in this tiny area.
- 2.7.2. Visitors came to the village for goods and services and they still do. Increasingly visitors come for recreation and to enjoy the heritage and the village's traditional welcome at public events such as the fête and arts events.
- 2.7.3. The village's few remaining shops belie the ongoing business activity. The Neighbourhood Plan's Business Survey (March 2018) was circulated to those who were understood to have businesses in the village. 33 people responded, many of whom had a wide range of business interests. Many are 'invisible' either through working at home or out on the move. In the same month a forum was addressed by leaders of the Norfolk Chamber of Commerce and New Anglia Business Growth with some 15 businesses represented.

2.7.2. Old businesses in the village



2.7.3. Some current businesses in the village





2.7.4. In the Business Survey many difficulties were highlighted: a lack of suitable space (48%); cost of commercial premises (20%); poor mobile phone service (44%); and other issues such as slow or expensive broadband (34%). However the most pressing need (51%) was for a community of business people to offer contacts and help.

2.7.5. The Biz Buzz group was immediately set up and has a current mailing list of nearly 100. All are businesses in the village or nearby.

2.7.5. Bizz Buzz group



Business and tourism issues

- 2.7.6. Business in the village faces significant problems, not least the lack of a useable mobile phone signal. Promises of a new mast have been in existence for more than three years. There is a fast fibre broadband service but that is less effective in the east part of the village and for outlying households where there are long lengths of traditional copper wiring.
- 2.7.7. There are no premises available for use as a business hub which might solve many of the problems highlighted in the Business Survey. Gradually premises that might have been retained for business, commercial or community use have been converted into housing.
- 2.7.8. Encouraging visitors to New Buckenham and increasing footfall could be a major boost to some village businesses. **SURVEY17** showed that the majority of residents are in favour of more tourism and fewer than one in five thought it was a bad idea. Tourism in New Buckenham is not likely to encourage mass coach arrivals since the majority of visitors come to walk, cycle, investigate history and enjoy village events. Their numbers could be accommodated with improvements in parking or bus services. In the Business Survey 75% of responders considered that tourism, B&Bs, walkers, cyclists and visitors of all types could provide a good source of business income and all businesses were prepared to contribute towards the cost of appropriate publicity.
- 2.7.9. A way forward is to attract more visitors to enjoy the heritage, wildlife and quiet rural countryside that the village offers. As elsewhere, tourism attracts investment and if handled well can be beneficial to sustaining the village in the future.⁵⁰ Within a decade there will be 10,000 more people in Attleborough as a result of the new housing estates. New Buckenham is ideally placed to benefit from this potential source of tourist income. If handled judiciously there can be a clear advantage for village businesses that cater for visitors and tourists.

Business and tourism policies

POLICY BT 1 Communications infrastructure

2.7.10. The Parish Council will support proposals to provide access to a super-fast broadband network to serve the village and other properties in the local countryside. Within the village, new overhead wires will be resisted. Outside the village any above-ground network installations, if essential, should be sympathetically chosen and designed to reflect the character of the local area.

POLICY BT 2 Better communications for individual homes business

2.7.11. Applications for new development must contain a 'Connectivity Statement' to demonstrate easy connection to telecommunication and broadband services without overground wires.

⁵⁰ Breckland Local Plan EC 07

2.7.9. Visitors to the village



POLICY BT 3 Support for business and tourism development

2.7.12. Business and tourism development initiatives should be supported, subject to other policies in this Plan, where they can be shown to make improvements to the economy, environment and landscape, and well-being of the village. Where planning permission is required, development that does not demonstrate any such benefit to the village will be refused.

Community Action: Business and Tourism (BT)

CA BT 1 The Parish Council should actively lobby for the provision of an effective mobile phone reception, useable by different telecom service providers. If a mast is situated in New Buckenham it should be in a place where it does no harm to the natural, historic or visual environment.

CA BT 2 The Parish Council should extend its car park adjacent to the play area and develop methods of increasing capacity for visitor parking.

CA BT 3 The Parish Council should support initiatives to promote New Buckenham's "visitor assets" by supporting advertising and other media including leaflets, maps, articles and books. An effective mobile signal would enable newer technology to be used.

CA BT 4 Premises that can be seen as having potential benefit to the village and its businesses should be considered by the Parish Council for designation as a Community Asset.

2.8.1. St Martin's Church



2.8. Recreation, health and culture

2.8.1. There is strong community support for preserving important community assets.

SURVEY17 showed over 80% joined in village events and cited community spirit as being important to them. Village activities help to create a sense of identity and belonging. Similarly, over 80% stated that village amenities such as pubs, shops, restaurant, beauty salon and garage were extremely important to them. Residents feel that New Buckenham is well served by its community assets and amenities.

- A modern, well-equipped village hall, used by local clubs and societies, provides a range of sporting and recreational activities including arts events, drama, film shows and exhibitions. This is available for hire for external events serving the wider community such as Pilates, slimming and fitness groups.
- The village hall grounds provide a football pitch for a thriving Junior Football Club. A cricket pitch and pavilion are supported by the Parish Council for New Buckenham Cricket Club.
- The Parish Council owns 16 allotments, all of which are taken and well tended.
- St Martin's Church (pictured facing), a beautiful 13th century Grade 1 Listed building. The Church has toilet and kitchen facilities, and its churchyard is available for social events and occasional concerts.
- Children's play area, equipped and supported by the Parish Council, is well used by villagers and visitors.
- Community Car Scheme, especially important to ensure access to healthcare as there are no healthcare facilities within the village.
- A network of good public footpaths (see Figure 10) provides varied walking routes for ramblers and dog walkers, including a circular route around the village and part of longer routes including the Tas Valley Way (Figure 11).
- Two pub/restaurants, a coffee and cake shop, a general store and a garage provide invaluable facilities and services, both practical and social.

Figure 9 New Buckenham's community assets

2.8.1. Recreation, health and culture in the village



2.8.2. New Buckenham is on the Tas Valley Way long distance path from Cringleford to Attleborough. It is used daily throughout the year. A variety of circular walks exist in and around the village, largely avoiding roads.

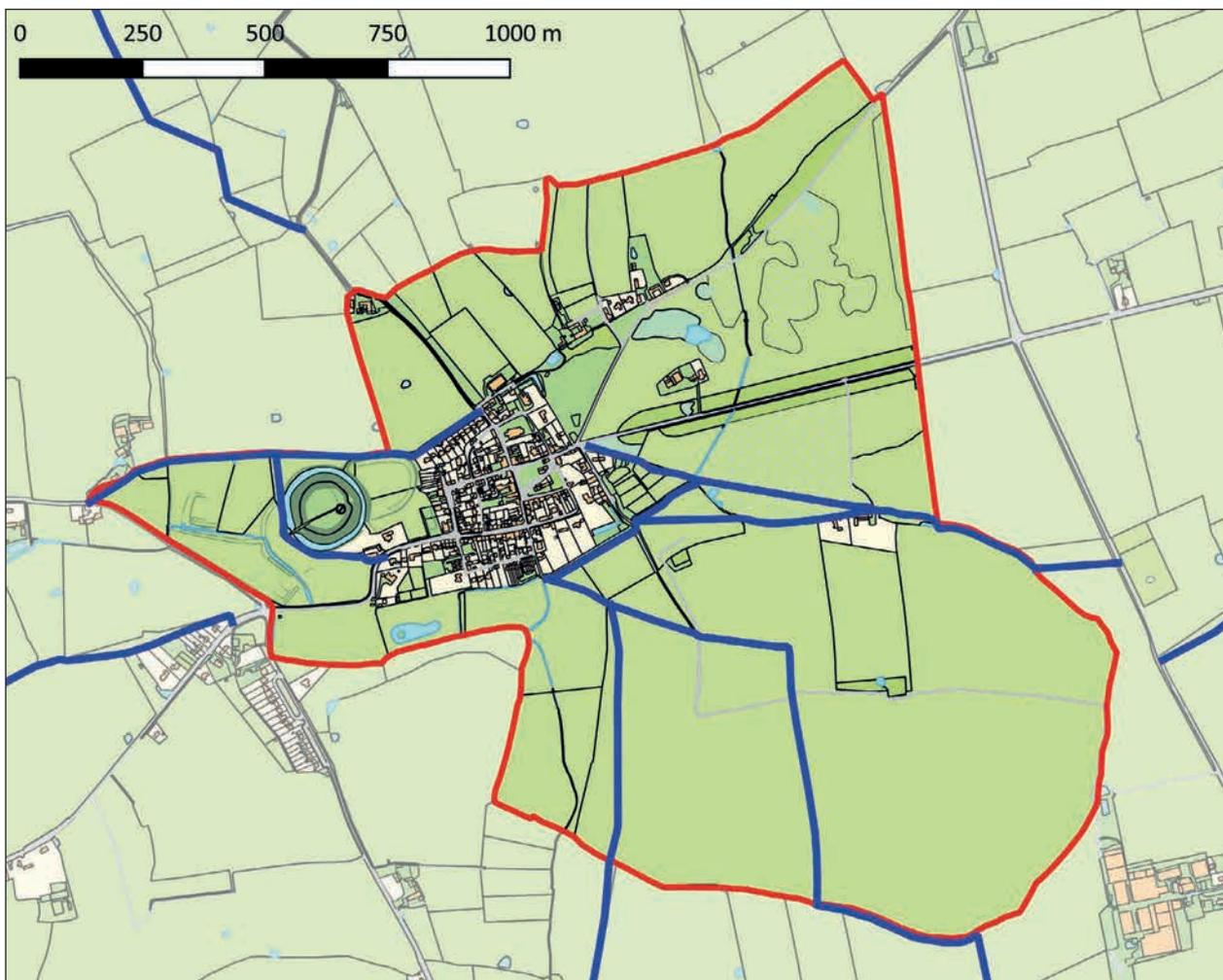


Figure 10 Public footpaths

OS data © Crown copyright and database right 2018

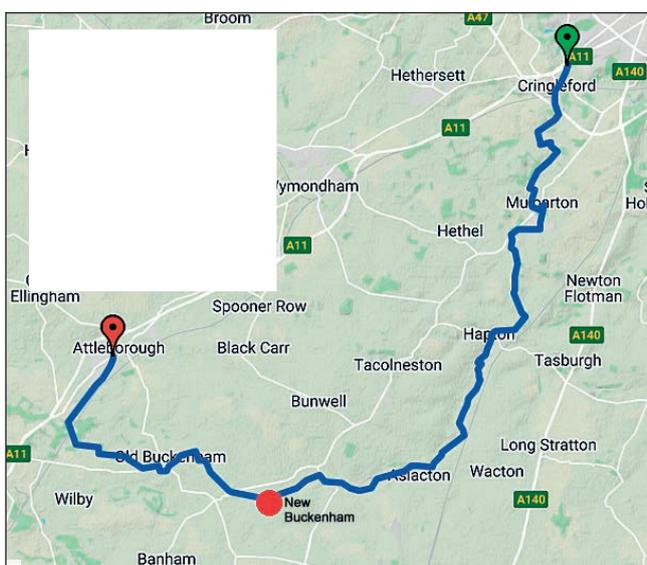
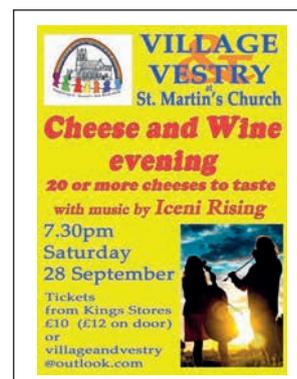
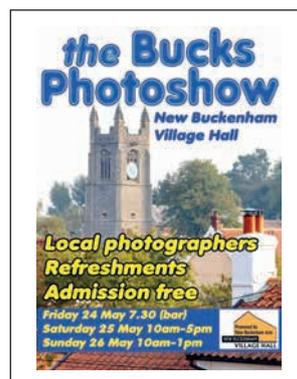
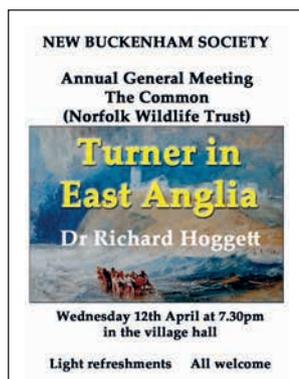


Figure 11 Tas Valley Way (long-distance footpath)

Recreation, health and culture issues

- 2.8.3. New Buckenham has a wealth of local activities most of which flourish. The events themselves are reasonably well supported mainly by an older age group, although there are exceptions such as junior football which is very popular. Most activities are run by volunteers although commercial classes such as for exercise and weight loss have similar health and social benefits.
- 2.8.4. To make events and organisations viable, improving promotion and publicity is essential. Parish News, posters and word of mouth are used by 90% of the population. Social media much less so (35%), although this will increase when there is an effective mobile signal and an older demographic is replaced by an internet-enabled age.
- 2.8.5. Good facilities and activities help to maintain the strong sense of community that has probably always existed in this compact, relatively isolated village.
- 2.8.6. As with many other communities, there is difficulty in attracting new members to some clubs and societies and getting them to be involved with charitable, community and fundraising events.

2.8.3. Advertising what's on offer



Recreation, health and culture policies

POLICY RHC 1 Social interaction and community life

2.8.7. Development related to community use including changes of use or alterations to permitted opening hours where express planning permission is required, will be supported subject to other policies in this Plan.

POLICY RHC 2 Local facilities

2.8.8. Proposals will be supported that allow local facilities to be developed and modernised in a sustainable way for the benefit of the community subject to other policies in this Plan.⁵¹

POLICY RHC 3 Reducing impact of loss of facilities

2.8.9. Development of existing community facilities will be supported where they will enhance their community function subject to other policies in this Plan.

2.8.10. Development resulting in the loss of an existing community amenity will only be permitted where there is an adequate facility nearby, or all reasonable efforts have been made to preserve the facility but it has become unviable for community use.

2.8.11. Where it is demonstrated that an existing community use is not viable, preference will be given to the change of use or redevelopment to alternative community uses before other uses are considered where express planning permission is required.

Community Action: Recreation, Health and Culture (RHC)

CA RHC 1 Seek to provide facilities for young people's activities e.g. youth club, parent and toddler. Getting volunteers to organise is a prerequisite.

CA RHC 2 Make more use of the Church and Churchyard space especially during Summer months, something now addressed by the Vestry & Village group.

CA RHC 3 Protect green open spaces and continue maintaining footpaths for use by villagers and visitors as it is essential for recreation and health. In **SURVEY17** about two-thirds of households have a dog so more dog waste bins should be provided.

CA RHC 4 Improve communication with better use of social media, village website and notice board and use local businesses to promote events. Forming links between village organisations for publicity and promotion should be developed.

CA RHC 5 Protect and promote the Community Car Scheme and encourage new drivers.

⁵¹ Breckland Local Plan COM 04

3. Appendix 1

Building design checklist for Parish Council and developers

- 3.1.1. Proposals for development are welcomed in New Buckenham if they can be demonstrated to fit in with the historical, social and economic context of the village. This Appendix should be used to help householders and developers who wish to carry out new building and alteration work in New Buckenham. Householders and developers should also take into consideration the guidance in Appendix 2: Green Living Plan.
- 3.1.2. The Local Authority to which planning applications should be made is Breckland District Council and attention is drawn to its guidance on planning applications⁵²:
 - <https://www.breckland.gov.uk/media/13520/A-Guide-to-the-Validation-of-Planning>
 - <https://www.breckland.gov.uk/article/2938/Validation-Local-List-OS-Map-Service>
 - <https://www.breckland.gov.uk/article/2941/Design-Principles>
- 3.1.3. New Buckenham Parish Council is a statutory consultee for all planning applications proposed within the Parish. Householders and developers are urged to send proposals including plans, elevations and illustrations to the Parish Council at an early stage so that guidance and comment may be given at that point.
- 3.1.4. Not all planning applications will have a visual impact but, given the historic character of the village, some residential extensions and other new buildings could have more impact than anticipated. An application that shows more detail about a proposed development's setting in the street scene and landscape will help the Parish and District Councils assess its potential impact and respond appropriately.
- 3.1.5. New Buckenham's special character of medieval grid layout of streets should be preserved.
- 3.1.6. New house design for older residents and for those with young families are particularly welcomed.
- 3.1.7. Developments should incorporate energy efficiency and local generation technologies, the siting and design of which should not harm local character.

Illustrating the context of proposed developments

- 3.1.8. Accurate plans and illustrations should demonstrate how the proposed development sits with neighbouring properties and street scene, and, where relevant, the surrounding countryside, also the juxtaposition with any existing feature that will be retained.

⁵² Breckland Council Design Principles Guide 2005

Design

3.1.9. All housing developments, whether renovation, alteration, conversions or new building, must take account of the local character and:

- Be of high visual quality and be in harmony with neighbouring buildings, street scene and, where relevant, surrounding countryside
- Reflect local topography, ridge heights, window size, proportions, layout and plot sizes
- Have boundaries that ideally are green, using mixed native species rather than hard building materials
- Incorporate energy efficiency and local generation technologies for new developments, the siting and design of which should not harm local character
- Use for older residents and those with young families
- Developments should not impact on the views in and around the surrounding countryside as listed in the Plan

4. Appendix 2

Green Living Plan checklist

- 4.1.1. Proposals for development, whether for new building, change of use or major conversions, will be required to submit a written Green Living Plan with planning applications to ensure a coordinated approach to sustainable living in New Buckenham.
- 4.1.2. A Green Living Plan should show that there has been regard to the following points:
1. Installation of energy efficiency and water conservation measures
 2. Provision of energy generation systems, while avoiding adverse visual impact
 3. Minimising light pollution in and around the development
 4. Provision of recycling and waste facilities that include the storage of bins away from the building frontage with are compatible with local collection arrangements
 5. Provision of modern underground telecommunication and internet connection to main services
 6. Provision of easy access to existing footpaths and cycle ways
 7. Provision of charging points for electric vehicles
 8. Sustainable drainage systems for roofs, driveways and car parking spaces to minimise surface water run-off
 9. Use of species-rich hedging rather than walls and fencing as a boundary
 10. Appropriately sited provision of bat and swift boxes on walls
 11. Holes in hard boundaries to allow movement of hedgehogs

5. Glossary

Basic Conditions

A statement explaining how the proposed neighbourhood development plan meets the requirements of paragraph 8 of Schedule 4B of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990.

Community facilities

Land and buildings used to help meet health, educational and social needs in terms of developing and maintaining the health and well-being of everyone in the community.

Conservation Area

An area designated under Section 69 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990 as being of 'special architectural or historical interest', the character and appearance of which it is desirable to preserve and enhance.

Evidence base

The background information that any development plan is based on and is made up of studies on specific issues, such as play areas or housing mix, facts about an area or views from stakeholders. In our case the evidence is all in a supplement available online.

Green infrastructure

A network of green spaces and other features, such as parks, open spaces, woodlands, playing fields, allotments and gardens providing a range of quality of life benefits for the local community.

Independent examination

Assessment taken by a third party examiner to ensure a Neighbourhood Plan meets the required conformity and legal requirements.

Listed Building

Any building or structure which is included in the list of 'buildings of special architectural or historic interest' as drawn up by Historic England.

Local Plan

A document that sets out the vision and strategic policies for the local planning authority, in our case Breckland District Council.

Local Referendum

A direct vote in which communities will be asked to either accept or reject the Neighbourhood Development Plan.

Material consideration

Factors which are relevant to planning such as sustainability, design and traffic impacts.

Mitigation

Measures taken to reduce adverse effects of a development. For example changing the way the development is carried out to minimise adverse effects through appropriate methods or timing.

National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF)

Sets out national policy and how this is expected to be applied. Provides a planning policy framework for Local Plans and Neighbourhood Development Plans.

Neighbourhood Area

Area to which a proposed Neighbourhood Development Plan will relate.

Neighbourhood Plan

A local Plan prepared by a parish council and community representatives for a particular neighbourhood area, which includes land use topics.

Open Space

All open space of public value including land, rivers, canals, lakes which offer important opportunities for recreation and can act as a visual amenity.

Planning permission

Formal approval sought from the district council allowing a proposed development to proceed.

Qualifying bodies

Bodies who can initiate the process of neighbourhood planning e.g. a parish council.

Scheduled Monument

An historic building or site that is included in the Schedule of Monuments kept by the Secretary of State for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport.

Shared Space

Shared space is a design approach that seeks to change the way streets operate by reducing the dominance of motor vehicles, primarily through lower speeds and encouraging drivers to behave more accommodatingly towards pedestrians.

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

The legal designation of an area of Britain that is, in the opinion of the statutory agency concerned, of special scientific interest for its flora, fauna, geological or geomorphological features.

Stakeholder

People who have an interest in an organisation or process including residents, business owners and national organisations and government departments.

Sustainable development

Development that allows growth without damaging the environment or natural resources and that meets the needs of the present, without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs, as documented by Breckland Council.

Village Design Statement

A document which contains a description and analysis of the distinctive features of an area and outlines design guidance for further development. Adopted Village Design Statements can form material consideration in determining planning applications.

6. Acknowledgements

Neighbourhood Plan Team:	Don Crossman (PC), Mary Dowson (PC), Violet Highton, Mary Manning (PC), Karen Hobley (<i>ex officio</i>), Charles Oxley and Janet Trewin.
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Consultation Administration:	Mark Greenhow
Professional adviser:	Clare Wright MA PG Dip (BRS) MRTPI MILM
Breckland Council:	Susan Heinrich MSc MRTPI, Neighbourhood Planning Co-Ordinator
Funding:	Locality, Breckland Council and New Buckenham Parish Council

Please visit **www.NP4NB.online** for the Evidence Pack

Results of ***SURVEY17***

Ecology report

Landscape and heritage report

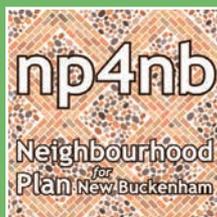
Traffic report

New Buckenham, Norfolk – an Appraisal 1998

Parish demography

Basic conditions statement (to be published March 2020)

Consultation statement (to be published March 2020)



All comments about New Buckenham's Neighbourhood Plan are welcome.
They have to be received by Friday 14th February 2020.

Please send your comments to:

info@NP4NB.online

or

on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/np4nb

or

leave comments at Kings Stores

We will acknowledge all comments received if you include
your contact details.

All comments and our responses will be posted on
our **www.np4nb.online** website
but we will withhold your identity if requested.