

Theberton and Eastbridge Parish Council

‘Respecting, Preserving and Improving our Parish for Residents and Visitors’

Draft Strategic Aims and Objectives for 2023-2028

A parish council is a local authority that makes decisions on behalf of the people in the parish and has an overall responsibility for the well-being of its local community. It is the lowest level of government closest to the community, with the district authority (East Suffolk Council) above it in the hierarchy.

The council is an elected body in the first tier of local government. Local councils have the legal power to take action, but they have very few duties and greater freedom to choose what action to take. They can play a vital part in representing the interests of the communities they serve and improving the quality of life and the local environment. Furthermore they influence other decision makers and can, in many cases, deliver services to meet local needs.

The job of the council is to represent the interests of the whole community. Understanding the needs of different groups in the community (such as young and elderly people) is an important part of its role.

What the Council Must Do

The law gives local councils choice in activities to undertake; but there are very few duties, or activities that they must carry out in delivering services to local people. These are to:

- comply with its obligations under the Freedom of Information Act 2000, the Data Protection Act 1998 and the Equality Act 2010
- publish certain information such as annual accounts, notice of meetings, agendas and meeting notes
- comply with the relevant Local Government Transparency Code
- comply with employment law
- consider the impact of its decisions on reducing crime and disorder in its area
- have regard to the protection of biodiversity in carrying out its functions
- consider the provision of allotments if there is demand for them from local residents and it is reasonable to do so
- decide whether to adopt a churchyard when it is closed, if asked to do so by the Parochial Church Council.
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The Council also has a duty to ensure that all the rules for the administration of the council are followed. It must:

- appoint a chairman of the council
- appoint officers as appropriate for carrying out its functions
- appoint a responsible financial officer (RFO) to manage the council's financial affairs; the RFO is often the clerk, especially in smaller councils
- appoint an independent and competent internal auditor
- adopt a Code of Conduct
- hold a minimum number of four meetings per year, one of which must be the Annual Meeting of the Council

Draft Strategic Aims and Objectives for 2023- 2028

Against this legal background Theberton and Eastbridge Council proposes to adopt the following Strategic Aims and Objectives. This will enable the council to work in partnership with others to secure a better future for Theberton and Eastbridge residents. This is a 5 year plan that will be reviewed annually.

Strategic Aims:

- 1. To preserve the rural character of the parish and to care for its community and its built and natural heritage.**
- 2. To ensure that the work of the Parish Council is driven by the community and it represents their needs and aspirations.**
- 3. To protect and improve community amenities and the development of the parish as a visitor destination.**
- 4. To work to secure better local transport, including relating to road safety, public transport, walking, cycling and horse riding.**
- 5. To promote the importance of nature and sustainability in the parish and to address climate change challenges.**
- 6. To develop a sense of parish pride and community cohesion – a better place to live, work and visit.**
- 7. To represent the local community in all public sector activities (including Local Government, environment, planning, education, social care, transport and highways, emergency services).**

1 To preserve the rural character of the parish and to care for its community and its built and natural heritage		
Ref	Objective	Actions
1.1	Engage with the developers of proposed energy infrastructure projects in East Suffolk and to represent the community in the planning process. If development is approved to build relationships with the developer in the community interest.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek to ensure adequate mitigation and compensation from developers and to minimise disruption to the community during construction and operation • Seek regular and effective working arrangements with infrastructure developers, in particular Sizewell C Ltd. • Seek to ensure that local people have the knowledge to engage with energy developers and the public sector

		<p>organisations that are responsible for overseeing the development</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote the EDF Property Price Support Scheme • Identify projects which qualify for EDF Neighbourhood and other community funding opportunities as they arise and apply for funding if appropriate • Consider Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape funding opportunities
1.2	Consider developing a Neighbourhood Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consult East Suffolk Council about the preparation of a Neighbourhood Plan • Determine whether to produce a Neighbourhood Plan • Consider preparation of joint plan with local Parish Councils • If we proceed with a Neighbourhood Plan to prepare and deliver a plan for public engagement and consultation. And to set out the vision for the area and the planning policies for the use and development of land within the parish or Neighbourhood Area to <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consider the impact of ESC planning policies (Local Plan and Supplementary Planning Guidance) on the Parish ○ promote sustainable development ○ promote quality design in new development ○ promote the protection and enhancement of the built and natural heritage ○ consider a cap on second home ownership/holiday rentals ○ seek payment of Community Infrastructure Levy ○ encourage protection and enhancement of rural and natural landscapes ○ consider implications of climate and coastal change
1.3	Protect and restore local built and natural heritage.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of the local built and natural heritage by

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Council website and other media ○ Village Signs ○ Delivery of Platinum Heritage Trail ○ Promotion of areas of nature conservation importance, e.g. Minsmere Valley, Theberton Woods ○ Supporting the Eastbridge swift tower initiative ○ Considering biodiversity in management of the public realm (e.g. common land, verges, play sites) ○ Seeking to protect Public Rights of Way
1.4	Identify funding opportunities that might be available to the Council to assist in the delivery of the agreed Strategic Plan.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● e.g. from <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Central and Local Govt. ○ Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape Partnership ○ Energy Infrastructure development grant schemes ○ National Lottery ○ Heritage England ○ Other NGOs ● Prepare funding priorities and draft funding bids

2 To ensure that the work of the Parish Council is driven by the community and it represents their needs and aspirations.

Ref	Objective	Actions
2.1	Improve communication between the Parish Council and residents and businesses.	Development of the following initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Council website ○ Review use of Social Media ○ Publish monthly newsletter ○ Publish Annual Report ○ Annual Parish Meeting ○ Regular community consultation ○ Establish email communication list using e.g. Mailchimp ○ Noticeboards – refurbish/reposition (at Eastbridge) with QR Code link to website ○ Use of the Yoxmere Fisherman and other publications
2.2	Maximise engagement with the community and to develop a clear public involvement policy.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Invite representatives from other collective groups and residents to address the Parish Council on key matters of interest ● Seek to engage young people ● Attend events ● Publicise Local Planning Authority ‘public access’ arrangements ● Use of surveys
2.3	Support and collaborate with other representative organisations.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Develop/restore relationships with <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Community Council ○ Jubilee Hall management committee ○ Parochial Church Council ○ Social housing organisations, e.g. Flagship Housing Association

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Ref	Objective	Actions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ neighbouring Parish Councils
2.4	Provide ongoing support to ensure vulnerable residents are supported.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Consider the development, funding and delivery of the following initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 'Pop-up' shop ○ Good Neighbours Scheme ○ to address loneliness and mental health issues. ○ Intergenerational connection events ○ Live Well Hub ○ Citizens Advice Bureau ○ Community Fridge/Foodbank
2.5	Consider the establishment of a Community Volunteers initiative for the Parish.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Set up volunteer group <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Agree management plan ○ Publicise ○ Prepare risk assessment plan for all activities ○ Insurance of volunteers and activities

3 To protect and improve community amenities and the development of the parish as a visitor destination.

Ref	Objective	Actions
3.1	Maintain and develop sustainable open spaces for the enjoyment of residents and visitors.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Playing fields – maintenance, explore funding opportunities ● Burial Ground – information availability for communication (including mapping)

3 To protect and improve community amenities and the development of the parish as a visitor destination.

Ref	Objective	Actions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allotments – explore need, site availability, cost and funding • Common Land – consider management/maintenance and development of wildflower meadow. • Identify site(s) for community orchard - to support volunteers, biodiversity and provide produce for residents. • Deliver Platinum Heritage Trail
3.2	Explore the possibility of additional facilities and services for the community (Theberton and Eastbridge)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examples <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Visiting GP surgery. ○ Visiting Outreach Post Office. ○ Weekly Youth Club/transport to neighbouring clubs. ○ Visiting Grocery/fish vans. ○ Regular Farmer's Market ○ Travelling library ○ Newspaper deliveries
3.3	Explore establishment of a Village Shop or 'Pop Up' shop.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 'Consider feasibility of a Pop-up' shop in Theberton and/or Eastbridge <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Partnership with Jubilee Hall or local business? ○ Self-service vending machines ○ Sale of surplus produce ○ Community loan/repair shop facility ○ Explore funding opportunities
3.4	Raise the profile of the parish as a visitor destination.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop following initiatives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Map local businesses on website with e.g. contact details

3 To protect and improve community amenities and the development of the parish as a visitor destination.

Ref	Objective	Actions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Promote the proximity of RSPB Minsmere and locations in Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape ○ Gateway to Southwold/Aldeburgh but less expensive ○ Partnership with Destination Management Organisation ○ Encourage improvement to Public Rights of Way network ○ Publicise visitor destinations on the council website ○ Deliver Platinum Heritage Trail ○ Improve public access to Theberton Woods - engage with Forestry England to develop initiatives and explore funding opportunities
3.5	Prevent rural isolation by improving telecommunication networks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with appropriate organisations to improve <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mobile Phone Signal ○ Superfast Broadband

4 To work to secure better local transport , including relating to road safety, public transport, walking, cycling and horse riding.

Ref	Objective	Actions
4.1	Seek solutions to reduce road speeds.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Work with Highway Authority, Local Planning Authority and developers to encourage improvements, including <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 30 mph speed limit in Eastbridge ○ 20 mph speed limit in Theberton ○ entrance 'gateways' in Theberton

4 To work to secure better local transport , including relating to road safety, public transport, walking, cycling and horse riding.

Ref	Objective	Actions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Support for the 'Quiet Lanes' initiative ○ encourage local use of Norfolk and Suffolk Constabulary speed camera van
4.2	Prevent rural isolation by securing and improving access to public transport.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Promote <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Connection routes for school and colleges ○ Connection routes for shopping/visiting/walking ○ Community bus use ○ Bus stop safety in Theberton ○ School Crossing (Lollipop) service ○ Promote CATS bus service
4.3	Address highway concerns effectively and efficiently.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● On Parish website provide clear and accessible information about who and how to contact regarding highways issues
4.4	Work with the Highway Authority, other local councils and landowners to protect and improve the network of Public Rights of Way.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Encourage the ongoing review of the Definitive Map of Public Rights of Way ● Promote signage and installation of appropriate furniture to permit accessibility for people with mobility difficulties ● Engage with PROW teams of the County Council and the Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape Partnership ● Seek to re-open Black Walks footpath ● Deliver the Platinum Heritage Trail project ● Consider regular maintenance of the PROW network by community volunteers ● Inform Highways Authority of PROW maintenance, obstruction issues ● Explore connections with neighbouring parishes

4 To work to secure better local transport , including relating to road safety, public transport, walking, cycling and horse riding.

Ref	Objective	Actions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify funding opportunities for PROW improvements (e.g. from AONB) • Work to ensure that important paths remain open, e.g. Eastbridge to Minsmere Sluice (PF No 20), Eastbridge to Middleton path along Minsmere New Cut (PF No25)
4.5	Promote safer cycling, walking and horse riding.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support and monitor success of the 'Quiet Lanes' initiative • Public Rights of Way Map – publicise on website • Safer cycling and horse riding routes – publicise on website • Consider funding and provision of cycle parking • Identify funding opportunities for walking, horse riding and cycling improvements (e.g. Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape)

5 To promote the importance of nature and sustainability in the parish and to address climate change challenges.

Ref	Objective	Actions
5.1	Improve the ecology and habitat of Common Land.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seek professional advice on creation and maintenance of wildflower meadow • Tree survey • Appoint Parish Tree Warden
5.2	Consider ways to improve bio-diversity and sustainability in playing fields and Burial ground.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of wildflower areas • Tree survey • Appoint Parish Tree Warden

5 To promote the importance of nature and sustainability in the parish and to address climate change challenges.

Ref	Objective	Actions
5.3	Support the building of a Swift Tower at the Eel's Foot Inn, Eastbridge.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage and support Waveney Bird Club. • Research suitable sites for swift nesting boxes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Approach St Peter's Church ○ Explore funding opportunities
5.4	Seek solutions to reduce vehicle emissions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Electric Vehicle Charge Points ○ Electric/hydrogen Community Bus (CATS)
5.5	Designate qualifying 'Dark Skies Areas' in the parish.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engage with District Council
5.6	Support the work of other organisations to manage the local environment and promote nature.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Suffolk and Essex Coast and Heaths National Landscape Partnership • Suffolk Wildlife Trust • RSPB • National Trust • Environment Agency
5.7	Reduce, re-use, recycle.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explore ways of encouraging community and business sustainability initiatives • Develop local recycling initiatives

6 To develop a sense of parish pride and community cohesion – a better place to live, work and visit.

Ref	Objective	Actions
6.1	Identify ways to improve the appearance of the parish	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider the following <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Civic pride - promote respect for and care of the public realm ○ Britain in Bloom Competition ○ Best Kept Village Competition ○ Open Gardens/National Garden Scheme ○ Reduce litter initiatives ○ Routine maintenance improvements ○ Verge management
6.2	Preserve/improve the connectivity between the villages.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with other representative organisations. • Communication – website/APM/newsletter
6.3	Support and facilitate events which bring the community together.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By for example <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Annual Fete ○ Scarecrow Competition ○ Christmas Trees. ○ Fireworks Display ○ Jubilee Hall clubs and societies

7 To represent the local community in all public sector activities (including Local Government, water, energy, waste, environment, planning, education, social care, transport, highways, emergency services)

Ref	Objective	Actions
7.1	Liaise with the Local Education Authority to ensure the delivery of adequate primary school facilities for the Parish.	<p>Consider relationship with other local councils Consider as part of Neighbourhood Plan</p>

7.2	To understand and inform education, adult social care, social services, highways, planning, waste services, emergency services.	Consider as part of Neighbourhood Plan
7.3	To respond to planning application consultations, local plan and other planning consultations.	Respond appropriately