

BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK

ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY PANEL

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Environment and Community Panel held on
Wednesday, 6th January, 2016 at 4.00 pm in the Committee Suite, King's
Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn**

PRESENT: C Sampson (Chairman)
Councillors L Bambridge, Mrs C Bower, A Bubb, Mrs S Collop, Mrs S Fraser,
G Hipperson, T Smith, Mrs S Squire and Mrs J Westrop

Portfolio Holders

Councillor A Lawrence - Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community
Councillor Mrs E Nockolds - Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and
Health
Councillor D Pope – Portfolio Holder for ICT, Leisure and Public Space

Officers:

Chris Bamfield, Executive Director Commercial Services
Duncan Hall, Strategic Housing and Community Safety Manager
Ray Harding, Chief Executive
Honor Howell, Assistant Director - Central and Community Services
Sarah Moore, Operations Manager

EC13: **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Daubney, Long
and Rochford.

EC14: **MINUTES**

RESOLVED: The minutes from the meeting held on 25 November
2015 were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

EC15: **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There was none.

EC16: **URGENT BUSINESS**

There was none.

EC17: **MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

There was none.

EC18: CHAIRMAN'S CORRESPONDENCE

The Chairman had received emails from Councillors Gourlay and Mrs Wilkinson relating to the Grounds Maintenance Review and would raise the issues contained in the correspondence during consideration of EC22.

EC19: MATTERS REFERRED TO THE PANEL FROM OTHER COUNCIL BODIES AND RESPONSES MADE TO PREVIOUS PANEL RECOMMENDATIONS/REQUESTS

The Panel noted the responses made by Cabinet to the recommendations from the Environment and Community Panel meeting held on 25 November 2015 in respect of the following items:

- Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Conditions Review.
- Freebridge Community Housing Representation.

EC20: NORFOLK MUSEUMS SERVICE UPDATE

The Panel received an update on the work of Norfolk Museums Service from Steven Millar and Robin Hanley.

A copy of the presentation is attached.

The Panel received information on the work of the Norfolk Museums Service over the previous year and how they worked with other partner organisations and Local Authorities. The Service also had schools and early years programme.

The Panel received an update on Lynn Museum. Robin Hanley explained that he provided regular updates on the Museum at King's Lynn Area Museums Committee meetings. He explained that visits to the museum were increasing year on year and was supported by volunteers and friends of the museum. The Museum operated under a Service Level Agreement with the Borough Council and the Museums Service was also supporting the Borough Council with the Stories of Lynn Project at the Town Hall.

The Panel were provided with an overview of key activities carried out in King's Lynn and how the Museum worked with schools and linked into the History National Curriculum.

The Chairman thanked the representatives from Norfolk Museums Service for their update and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

The Vice Chairman explained that she was a Governor at Greyfriars School who were involved in the Arts Award and asked how many

other schools were involved in the Award. Robin Hanley agreed to send through details of the schools which had taken part.

The Chairman asked if many schools outside of King's Lynn visited the Lynn Museum. Robin Hanley explained that the majority of schools were within walking distance and a small amount of schools visited from further afield. Robin Hanley agreed to circulate details of the schools which had visited Lynn Museum. Robin Hanley explained that Key Stage 2 primary sessions linked to Seahenge and a lot of schools visited the Museum for this exhibition. Schools also visited the Museum when looking at local themes and community relevance.

Robin Hanley informed those present that information had been presented to the previous meeting of the King's Lynn Area Museums Committee on understanding the importance of changes to the national curriculum.

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health, Councillor Mrs Nockolds explained that the Museums service was very important with Schools as well as tourism and marketing. She reminded those present that admission was free from October to March to encourage visitors and local people to attend. She referred to the Youth Project Team and how the project run through the Museums Service had assisted the young people and given them something to add to their CV.

The Executive Director informed those present that Lynn Museum would be open on Sundays from March to October to fit in with the launch of the Stories of Lynn Project. A joint ticket could be purchased to visit both sites. The Sunday opening would be trialled for one year and its success would be monitored.

The Vice Chairman congratulated all those involved in bringing the Olive Edis exhibition into Norfolk. Steve Millar felt that this was an amazing asset for Norfolk as she was an outstanding photographer, but little known. The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health informed those present that there had already been two lectures held in King's Lynn on Olive Edis.

The Portfolio Holder for Culture, Heritage and Health encouraged Members to read the King's Lynn Area Museums Committee Minutes which provided a lot of information and would keep Members updated on the Museums Service.

RESOLVED: (i) The update was noted.
(ii) The Panel be kept updated on Norfolk Museums Service.

EC21: **CABINET REPORT - SMOKE AND CARBON MONOXIDE REGULATIONS**

The Strategic Housing Manager presented the Cabinet report which noted the new duties placed upon the Council in relation to the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations. The report outlined the impact of the regulations, the role of the Council as enforcing authority and the power to impose a penalty charge of up to £5,000 in cases of non-compliance. The Strategic Housing Manager explained that the approach to deal with the penalty charge was consistent with the Council's general enforcement approach and information, advice and guidance would be provided to landlords. The Council also had a stock of alarms which they had been giving to landlords for free.

The Chairman thanked the Strategic Housing Manager for his report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

The Chairman felt that owner and occupiers of properties should be encouraged to ensure that adequate alarms were installed in their properties.

In response to a question from Councillor Bubb, the Strategic Housing Manager explained that high risk properties were regularly inspected and the inspecting officer would carry out a check to ensure that the appropriate alarms were installed. Housing Services had also asked Visiting Officers to check when they were conducting visits.

Work had been carried out to educate and support landlords and look at tenancy agreements where appropriate.

Councillor Mrs Collop referred to page 24 Regulation 4.3 and asked who would be liable if the tenant damaged or removed the alarm. The Strategic Housing Manager explained that if the landlord had fitted the alarms and they had been wilfully damaged the landlord should not be liable unless they were aware that the alarms were not in working order and had not taken any action.

Councillor Mrs Bower referred to elderly and vulnerable people and felt that they may not be aware of the regulations and the Strategic Housing Manager agreed to take the comments on board.

The Vice Chairman informed those present that she had previously attended sessions run by the fire service on the importance of alarms.

The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community, Councillor Lawrence commented that this report dealt with the duties placed on private landlords. He explained that alarms were cheap to purchase and easy to install. He explained that he met with Care and Repair regularly to raise awareness of the importance of alarms in the properties of elderly and vulnerable people. The Portfolio Holder informed the Panel that it was a Building Regulation that new properties had alarms hard wired into the electrical system.

In response to a question from Councillor Squire, the Strategic Housing Manager confirmed that information had been shared with letting agencies regarding the new regulations.

Councillor Mrs Fraser explained that she was unaware that wood burners were a Carbon Monoxide risk. The Strategic Housing Manager explained that the act only excluded gas appliances and focused on open fires and solid fuel, which could cause a Carbon Monoxide risk if the chimney or flue became blocked.

The Assistant Director informed the Panel that Careline installed smoke alarms and tested them once a year. Careline also held records of whom had a smoke alarm installed and when the batteries needed replacing.

The Chairman requested that consideration be given to promoting the importance of smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms, not only to private landlords, but to the wider public. The Portfolio Holder for Housing and Community suggested that an item could be published in the Members Bulletin.

RESOLVED: The Environment and Community Panel support the recommendations to Cabinet as set out below:

- (i) Cabinet note the report.
- (ii) Cabinet recommend the approval of the statement of principles in relation to determining the amount of the penalty charge as detailed in Appendix A to Council.

EC22: **GROUNDS MAINTENANCE REVIEW**

The Operations Manager presented the report which considered current arrangements for Grounds Maintenance in the Borough and potential changes to regimes for 2016.

A copy of a presentation provided to the Panel by the Operations Manager is attached.

The Operations Manager explained that a review of the grass cutting had been carried out. She informed those present that the grass cutting season ran from March to October/November, which was an average of 35 weeks depending on weather conditions. During the review it was noted that there was variation in the service delivery from between 18 cuts to 8 cuts per a year and the review looked at how the schedules could be rebalanced to ensure that areas received the same rates of grass cutting.

The Operations Manager explained that a land audit had been conducted using GIS Mapping which detailed the different land types

and land ownership. Land types had then been categorised and a proposed work schedule was created as set out in the report.

The Panel was informed that Norfolk County Council paid the Borough Council to cut some Norfolk County Council owned land in the Borough. However the payment did not reflect the actual cost. Norfolk County Council had recently undertaken a review of their grass cutting and was due to reduce the payment that they made to the Borough Council.

The results of the review would have an impact on Special Expenses. The charges would be increased, but would be lower than the charge which would have been levied prior to the review. The Panel was informed that any Special Expense increase would be capped at £10 per financial year. This would have no effect on Parish Precepts.

To ensure a good standard of cut the mowers due for replacement would be replaced by Flail mowers.

The Chairman thanked the Operations Manager for her report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

The Chairman referred to correspondence which had been received from Councillors Gourlay and Mrs Wilkinson who had raised concern regarding the reduction in cuts within their Ward. They were concerned that this could make the area look untidy.

Councillor Squire suggested that work be carried out to increase the amount of roadside nature reserves which would reduce the amount of cuts needed and would promote wildlife and wildflowers. The Operations Manager explained that this could be investigated in more informal areas and she referred to parts of the Walks which had been left long to encourage wildlife. The Executive Director explained that the Council had previously bid for EU funding for wildflower planting projects but had been unsuccessful. Alternative funding sources could be investigated in the future.

In response to a question from Councillor Squire, the Executive Director explained that the proposals would not involve any redundancies as the operation was carried out by Seasonal staff and there would be a reduction in the amount of seasonal staff recruited at the beginning of the season.

Councillor Mrs Collop asked why the Borough Council cut Norfolk County Council areas and did not get paid accordingly for it. The Executive Director explained that this had been done historically and the Borough Council had maintained the areas to ensure that they remained visually appealing. The Council could take the option to no longer cut Norfolk County Council land if they felt it was appropriate.

In response to a question from Councillor Bubb, the Executive Director explained that discussions could be held with Parish Councils regarding contracting out grass cutting, but it would be dependent on economies of scale.

The Executive Director advised the Panel that the schedule would likely evolve and would be continually monitored during the season. The amount of cuts in areas could be increased or decreased as required.

Councillor Smith congratulated officers on production of the map of the Borough and asked if work would be carried out with Freebridge Community Housing to rationalise the amount of cuts on jointly owned land. The Executive Director confirmed that he would liaise with Freebridge Community Housing regarding the schedules. The Chairman, Councillor Sampson, who was on Freebridge Community Housing Board explained that he would also raise this at the next meeting.

The Executive Director agreed to provide all Members with a map of their Ward which showed land ownership and land types.

Councillor Hipperson asked if there would be an impact on the cut quality if there was a longer period between cuts and the Operation Manager explained that the mowers would be replaced so that this should not be an issue.

Councillor Westrop referred to the cutting of verges adjacent to properties and the reduction in the amount of cuts. She noted that residents may wish to cut the areas themselves, but informed those present that some of her residents had been advised not to cut the areas because of insurance and public liability issues. The Operations Manager agreed to investigate.

The Portfolio Holder for ICT, Leisure and Public Space congratulated the Operations Manager and her team for the work involved in the review.

RESOLVED: (i) The report was noted.
(ii) The Panels comments be taken into consideration.
(iii) An update be provided to the Panel in August 2016 on the revised schedules.

EC23: **WEST NORFOLK DISABILITY FORUM CONSTITUTION**

The Democratic Services Officer presented the report which set out amendments to the operation of the West Norfolk Disability Forum. The West Norfolk Disability Forum had recently conducted a review of their Constitution and proposed that, in future, the Forum report annually to the Environment and Community Panel and can make

recommendations to the Panel as appropriate. The Forums Constitution had also been amended so that the Environment and Community Panel could make recommendations to the West Norfolk Disability Forum and task the Forum with investigating issues within the Forum's remit.

The Chairman thanked the Democratic Services Officer for her report and invited questions and comments from the Panel as summarised below.

Councillor Bubb, Chairman of the West Norfolk Disability Forum explained that it was important for the Forum to become involved in projects early on in the process so that their input could be considered.

The Assistant Director informed those present that the Borough Council had a Corporate Equalities Officer Group which dealt with Equality Impact Assessments. The West Norfolk Disability Forum could become involved at this stage of the process, if appropriate.

Councillor Bambridge, Member of the West Norfolk Disability Forum explained that the Forum had been consulted on the bus station refurbishment, but some of their comments and suggestions had not been incorporated into the final plan.

The Chairman explained that the West Norfolk Disability Forum had previously reported to the Panel, but this report now formalised the arrangements.

RESOLVED: (i) That the Environment and Community Panel endorse the amended Constitution of the West Norfolk Disability Forum.

(ii) That the West Norfolk Disability Forum provide an annual report to the Environment and Community Panel.

EC24: **WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD DECISIONS LIST**

The Chairman referred to the Panel's Work Programme and requested that Members of the Panel contact him if they had suggestions on items they would like to be considered.

RESOLVED: The Work Programme and forward decision list was noted.

EC25: **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Environment and Community Panel was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 27 January 2016 at 6.00pm in the Committee Suite, King's Court, Chapel Street, King's Lynn, PE30 1EX.

The meeting closed at 5.33 pm

Norfolk Museums Service

Service Update

Steve Miller

Head of Norfolk Museums Service



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ENGLAND**



Norfolk Museums Service

- NMS is a partnership between Norfolk County Council and Norfolk's district councils
- Arts Council England Major Partner Museum
- 10 museums and a study centre spread across Norfolk
- Designated collections of national importance
- Over 400,000 visits each year
- Award-winning schools programme reaching over 46,000 children
- A leading role in museum development across the region through the SHARE Museums East programme



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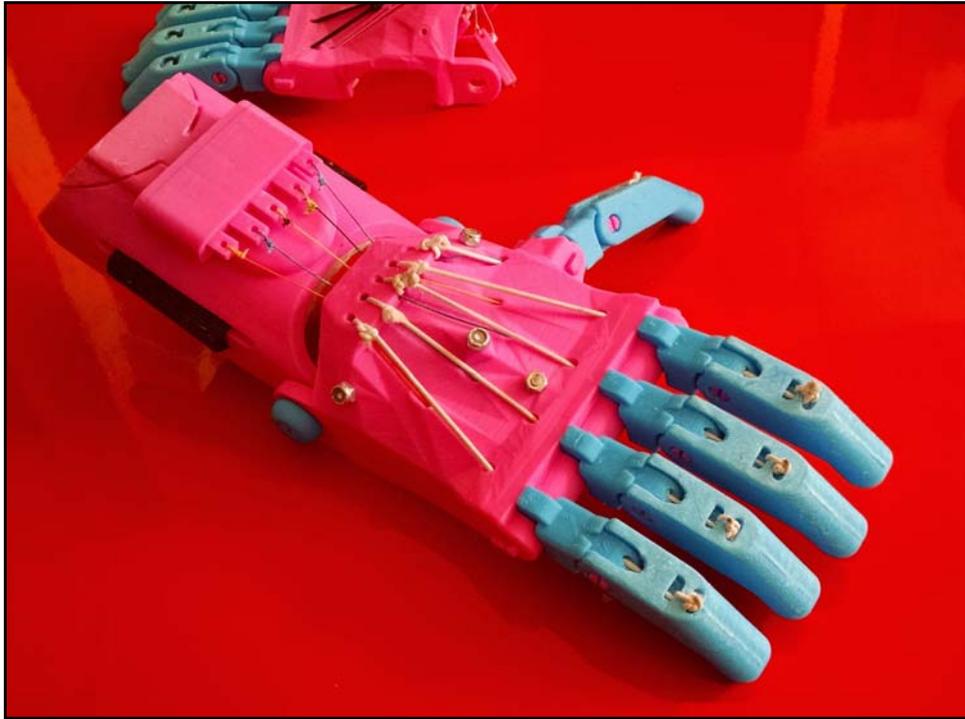
**BUILD YOUR OWN:
Tools for Sharing**

Exhibition at
Norwich Castle Museum & Art Gallery
3 October 2015 - 3 January 2016

On show now **#BYO**









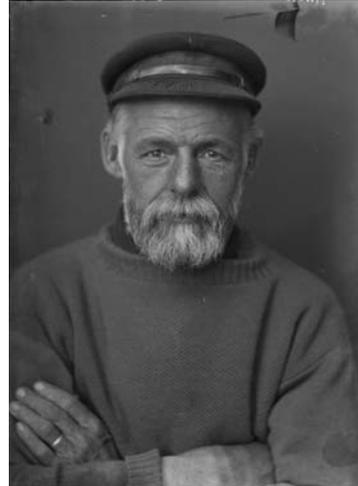
British Art Show 8

N 170
1845-2015



The Work of Olive Edis





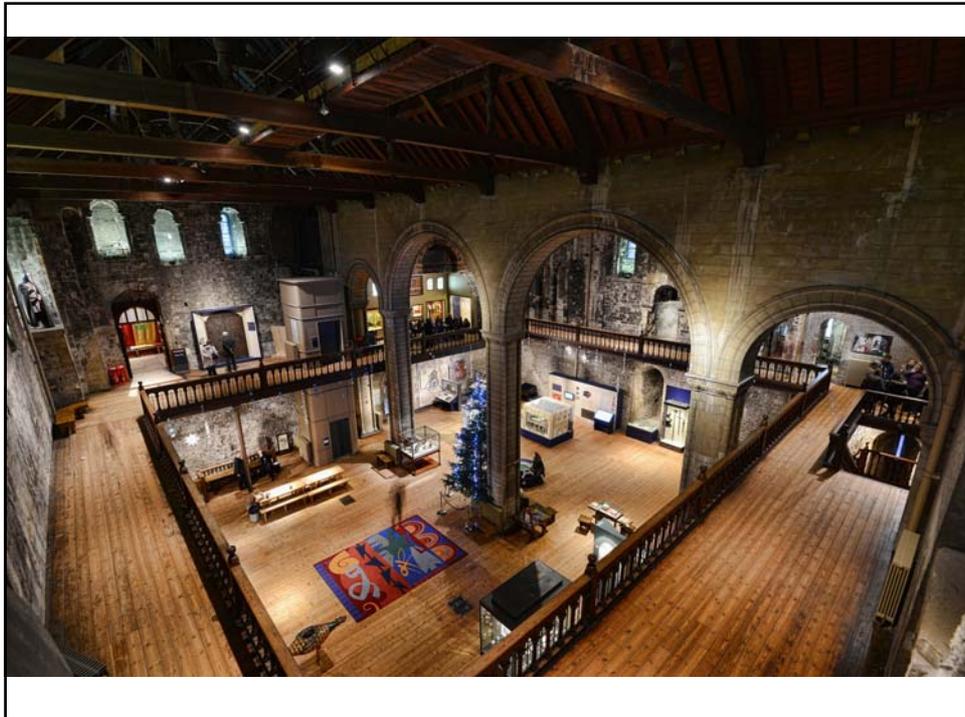
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lottery fund
LOTTERY FUNDED

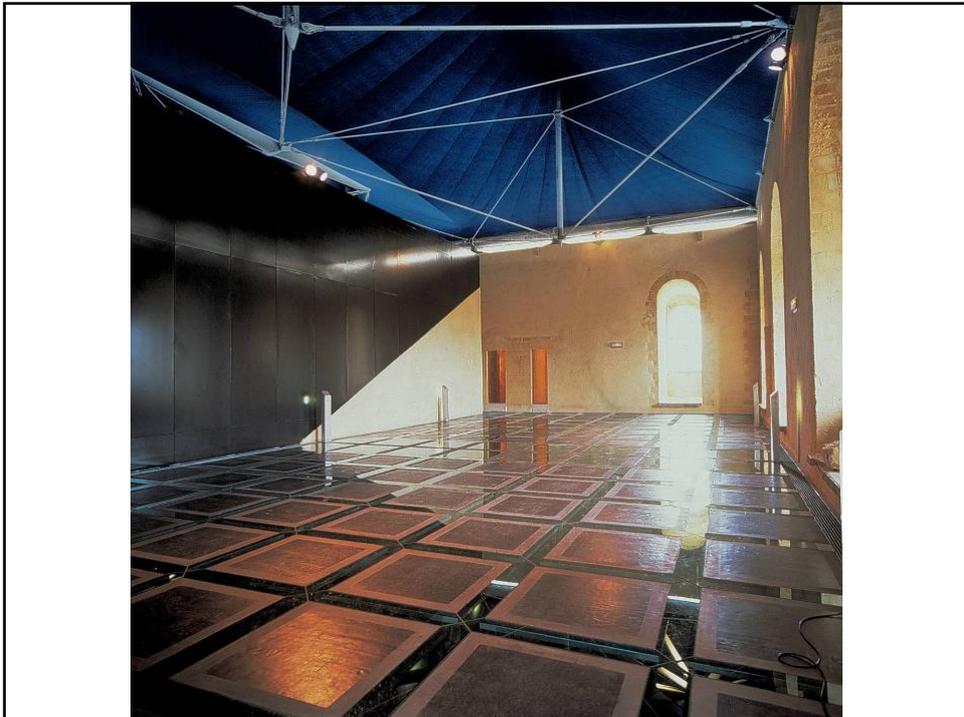


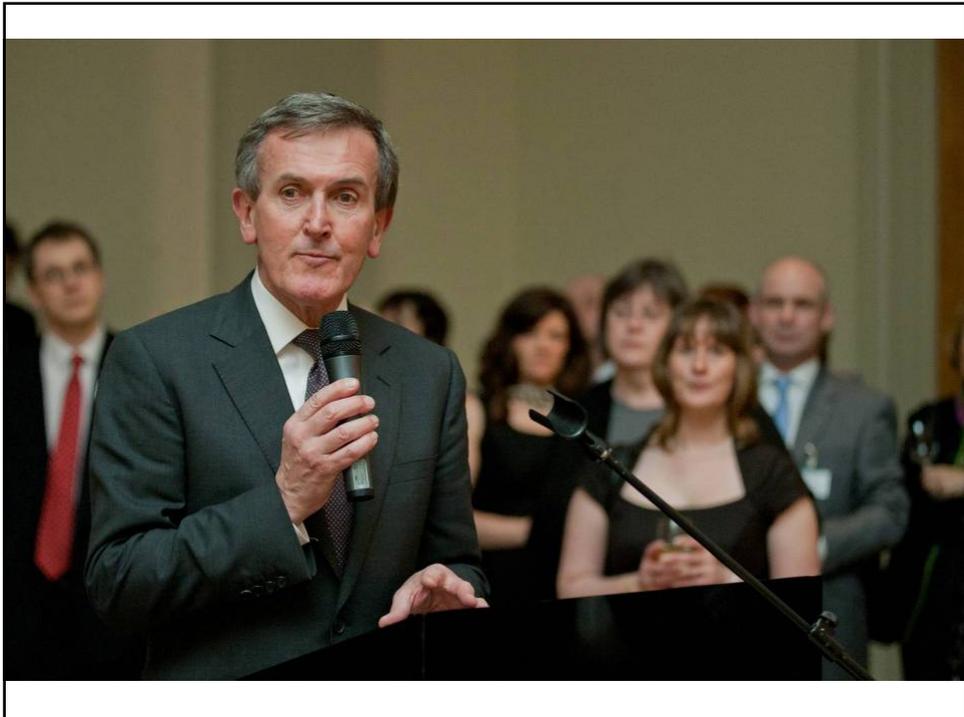
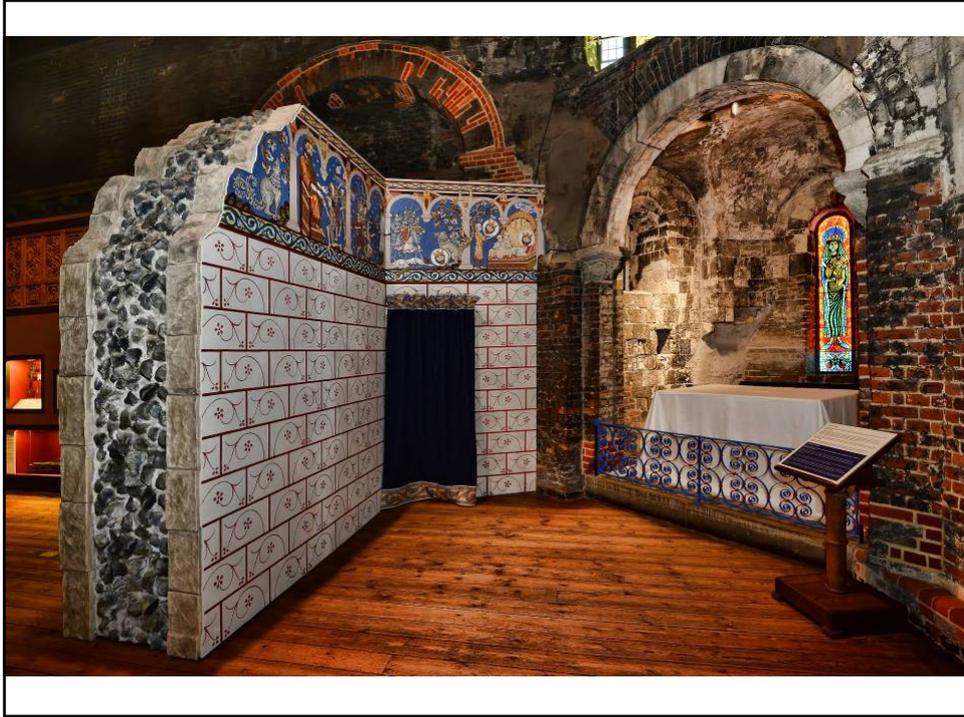
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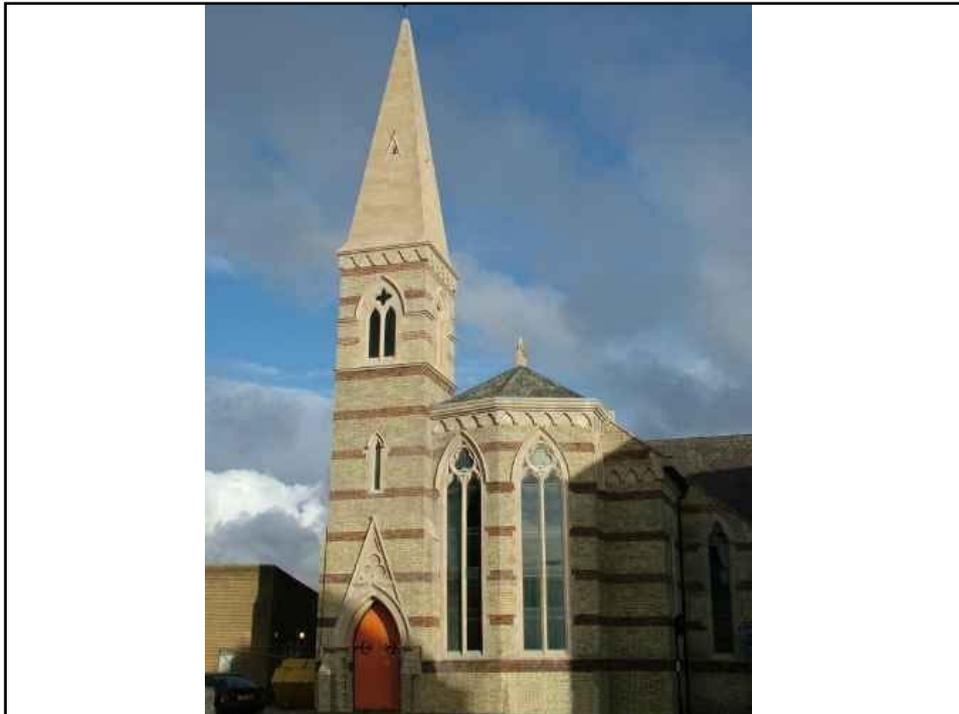
Norfolk Museums Service

King's Lynn Update

Dr Robin Hanley
Head of Operations & Learning



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ENGLAND**



Service Level Agreement

- Opening and operation of Lynn Museum
- Free admission offer October-March
- Exhibition and event programmes
- Formal and informal learning programmes
- Specialist advice and support to Borough Council
- Specialist advice and support for heritage organisations across West Norfolk including the SHARE training programme
- Stories of Lynn project – lead for curatorial & collections management elements and Activity Plan development & delivery

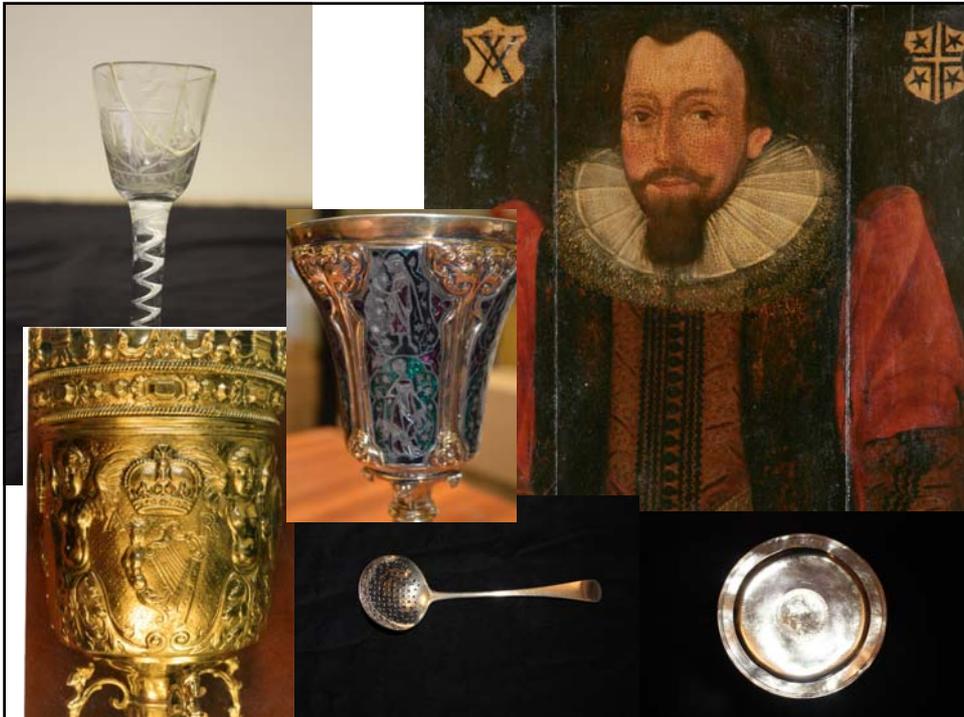
NMS operations in King's Lynn

- Part of NMS Western Area
- Sites: Lynn Museum, Aickmans Yard stores, Queen Street offices
- Core Staff:
Front of House, Curator, Curatorial Assistant, Learning Officer, Teaching Museum intern
- Project staff: Town Hall team
- NMS support: conservation, display, youth engagement, curatorial, marketing, commercial.











Borough Council of
**King's Lynn &
West Norfolk**



Grounds Maintenance Review

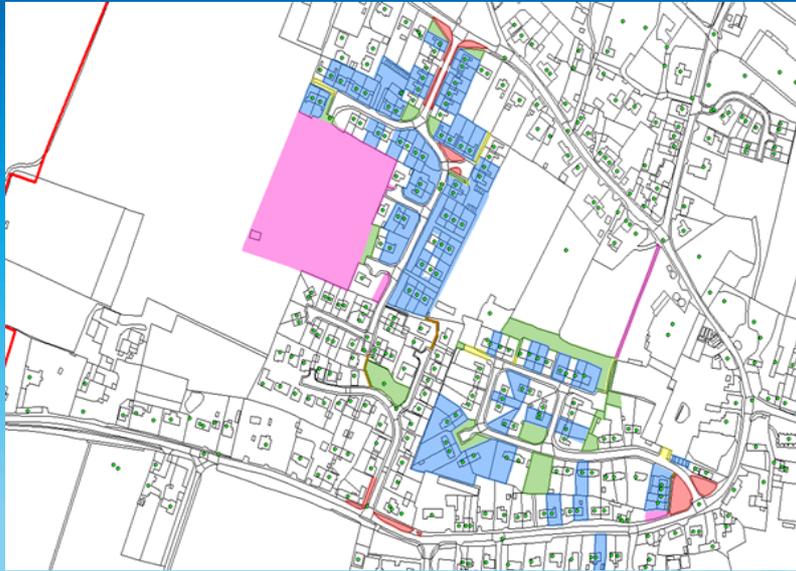
The Review

Borough Council of
King's Lynn &
West Norfolk



- Grounds Budget Review
- Focus on Grass Cutting
- Grass cutting Season
- Variation in Service delivery 2015 18 to 8 cuts per year
- How to reduce schedules
- How to rebalance variation

Land Audit



Categorising Grass Cutting Areas



Assessed the areas according to the following:

- What use it served
- Proximity to residential areas and houses
- Proximity to main carriageways/ arterial routes
- Geographic location within borough
- The impact that reduced cutting may have

Resulting in 5 main category's

High Profile Parks and Gardens



Highway Splays - Residential



Highway Splays – non residential



Norfolk County Highways - Residential



Land Adjoining front of properties



Norfolk County Highways Work



- NCC only pay for 5 cuts per year
- NCC review requires a reduction to 4 cuts
- Anticipated reduction in NCC payment from £47,000 to £37 600
- Est Cost of NCC works carried out by BC £149,000
- Reviewed Schedules reduce this to £99,000
- Saving of £50,000 but still £61600 more than payment provided

Special Expenses

- No Increase on any Special Expenses Charges for past 5 years
- Variation from the current charges
- New regime will reduce the increased charges
- In some areas the Special expense charge is low in cost but high in %
- Special Expenses increase to be capped at £10 in any financial year

Financial Implications

The schedule changes will produce an annual budget saving of £110,000 in the 2016/17 financial year and on an ongoing basis.

This is broken down as follows:

Council Services	£20,000
Highway Works	£50,000
Cost Recovery Special Expenses	£40,000
Total	£110,000

Changes in the fleet of mowers from Cylinder to Flail, can be contained within the Grounds Capital provision.