



# Greening Wymondham

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### Introduction

Ann Rostron

Greening Wymondham would like to wish you all a Happy New Year.

As we all start to look forward to better times in 2021, the key lies in joining together to improve our community here in Wymondham. Although we now have hope that things can improve with the new vaccines, the other major emergency of Climate Change still remains - Greening Wymondham has made Climate Action the centre of our activities. We may not be able to have direct influence on national or global changes but there are many ways in which we can make a difference locally at community level. The little actions that we can all take - planting trees, greening areas, encouraging diversity and wilding in our gardens, reducing our personal energy footprints - these will all add up and help the move to a more sustainable way of life.

We have to work together as a community to make things better and keep our hope alive that we will make a difference. We need your help, so join in our activities, talk to people about climate change and what they can do, lobby our councillors to do the best they can on issues such as the new cemetery and improving our open spaces. In this Newsletter you will find updates on our current activities. Always remember that we are a community group and please continue to support us and become actively involved if you can.

### Town Centre Study

Ann Rostron

South Norfolk and Broadland Council have engaged Ingham Pinnock Associates - Urban Flow specialists in the public realm and traffic management - to identify improvements that would benefit the town



centre for the future. This study will include parking and traffic issues, street paving and furniture. There will be consultations with all interested parties, including both residents and businesses to find out what people think and create input towards proposals for discussion.

The Team will start looking at Wymondham early next year. Early indications from businesses in the town are that the recent Covid Safe temporary improvements are supported, including making Fairland Street one way, the planters and the pavement café area near the Market Cross.

One of the towns' major projects in the next few years will be the development of a new cemetery on land located on London Rd (B1172) on the outskirts of the town, just south of the housing development.



This is good news. This presents an opportunity for Wymondham residents to influence the professionally employed designers to include green spaces. We are thinking flower meadow areas - allowed to naturally develop, no mowing, we are thinking a great place to be able to plant trees - not the usual (screen of conifer) suspects but slower growing trees such as Oaks, Beech and rarer trees such as the Wild Service Tree which have a more beneficial biodiversity impact. After all the cemetery will be around for a very long time so let's ask for trees suitable for the space! We'd also like some

unmanaged areas, set aside for nature to look after itself, no running costs for these areas.

To do this we need **YOUR HELP**. The council have set up a Working Group (which will meet in private) to work with the designers. Councillors on the Working Group need influencing with our ideas (see examples above). We are not directly involved with the Working Group. So, for the benefit of the environment & biodiversity, members & supporters can help by writing to the councillors in their wards.

There are several reasons why we believe this is most important.

The first is, if nobody writes or says anything we won't get anything! As part of our efforts to counter and mitigate against climate change this is a chance for the whole town to be able to say "look what we are doing, we are planting trees and seeding flower meadows, encouraging unmanaged spaces". This is not just an aspiration but something we can easily achieve - which starts by asking and telling our councillors just that.

Secondly, cost. The fact is, the council hasn't much reserve cash. The new offices at Kett's park - which the town needed as it has grown so quickly - used up all the reserves originally allocated for the new cemetery. This matters because it would be ever so easy for councillors to be persuaded to cut costs on the cemetery project by omitting or ignoring green spaces, trees, flowers and wilding areas. We don't want that and the only way we can try to prevent that is by holding councillors to account, requesting, nay, demanding, they include the green spaces we need.

Thirdly, climate change awareness. Remember, despite all the acknowledged evidence, Wymondham town council haven't declared a climate emergency, the collective council continues to bury its' head in the sand. If councillors see positives, the deniers amongst them they may be persuaded to change their minds.

So we need **YOU** to write a few words to your local council representative.

Your town councillors details can be found at <https://www.wymondhamtowncouncil.org/> and they are there to represent your views, **so if everyone who is a supporter writes a few words to their councillor, we can collectively make a difference.**

Many people aren't sure what to say. We suggest something along these lines (printed overleaf):-

Dear Councillor X,

I have recently learned that the design of the new town cemetery is now being considered and that a new Working Group has been set up tasked with developing the project.

As a nation, the UK, has declared a climate emergency, this is a great opportunity for the town's councillors and residents to do their bit to mitigate the effects of climate change by planting trees and encouraging biodiversity with wild flowers and additional unmanaged wild areas within the cemetery, reducing our carbon footprint for the benefit of future generations.

What I would like to see are areas with native trees such as [you put in here what you think - Beech, Oak, even my favourite Wild Service Tree!] and wild flower meadows which will encourage insects and increase biodiversity. Wild flower areas are low maintenance and cost very little. Unmanaged wild areas cost nothing at all.

Our native slow growing trees will mature as the cemetery develops and the carbon capture (value) of these trees will increase. Wild flower meadows and unmanaged areas would not be needed for burials for some considerable time, by the time they are, the utilised burial areas could be converted to wild flower areas.

I know the council hasn't large reserves of money but please do not take the short term view of reducing costs by omitting trees and wild meadows just to save a few pennies when the clock is ticking on the climate emergency.

Please support my suggestions at council meetings (or if you are involved, with the Working Group) and ask what is happening about allocating green Spaces.

This is an opportunity for a positive message to be sent to all who wonder what the council and the residents are doing to combat climate change. Positive intentions lead to positive actions which beget positive outcomes - and votes!

Yours faithfully,

A.N.Other/G.Thunberg

**Support Greening Wymondham with your weekly shop**

**Sue Knights**



Greening Wymondham are very pleased that we have been selected for this years Co-op Local Community Fund. The fund will run until October 2021 and the more members that select our cause the more funding we will receive. The Coronavirus pandemic has highlighted the importance and need for accessible and creative public green spaces both for physical and mental well being. Therefore, Greening Wymondham plan to use the funds raised to enhance Wymondham's existing green spaces for the benefit of all in our town. We plan to carry this out with our existing volunteers and with the local community. Find out how to register us as your local cause by visiting [www.coop.uk/membership](http://www.coop.uk/membership) or by calling into the Wymondham town centre or Hingham store.



Neighbourhood Plans came into being under the Localism Act 2011. This is an official policy document, giving communities statutory powers to shape how their towns and villages will develop. The Plan will inform Planning actions and future policies by the local District and County Councils. Our Plan has been commissioned by Wymondham Town Council and a team has been assembled including residents, community action groups and representatives from Town, District and County Councils. The work is being done under the

guidance of consultants Ingham Pinnock Associates and will take about a year to complete.

The important thing to remember is that the Neighbourhood Plan will be written by the local Community rather than the Planning Authority. The Plan cannot alter previously agreed Council policies or Planning Permissions but only seek to influence future policies and plans and the Council will attract a larger share of the Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) that comes from developers, to be used for schemes to benefit the community.

Throughout the process the public will be consulted and there will be a referendum on the final version of the Plan before it can become official policy.

The Consultants have already identified two key issues - the separation between the Town Centre and the larger surrounding areas of new development and the unusually large number of active community groups working to improve the quality of life in Wymondham.

Please fill the online survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2SGPJJK> as it will give an early indication of what residents consider to be most important about our Town and help the Plan Team as it works towards its conclusions.

The Neighbourhood Plan will give us a chance to express our views about Wymondham and how we would like to see it develop in the future, which we have never had before. Green open spaces, walks and quiet lanes can be identified, with policies to protect and enhance them. How good the plan will be is up to us and the work we can put in to creating it.

### We ask you to

- Please write to your local councillors to give your thoughts & preferences with respect to the new town cemetery.
- Please complete the Neighbourhood Plan survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk/r/2SGPJJK>
- Keep a look out for the new bulbs planted on the bank opposite the Bridewell Museum on Avenue Road

**Want to get more involved?** We are always pleased to welcome new supporter and volunteers - especially if you have expertise in lobbying local government.

If you have friends in Wymondham interested in supporting us, please ask them to send an email and we will be happy to add them to our circulation list.

Our spring newsletter will report on several of our activities: The regeneration work in Kett's park, Wilding Wymondham's verges and how you can volunteer (when Covid "Tier" regulations are relaxed).