

Brettenham Village Review Report

November 2016



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Report Summary

The Village Review event at Brettenham was held on 24.10.16 and was run by Community Action Suffolk and supported by Suffolk County Council and Babergh District Council.

The event was open to all residents of Brettenham and 35 residents attended the consultation session and contributed their thoughts regarding what they liked about Brettenham and what they felt could be improved.

The 4 key areas requiring improvement that were identified are:-

Broadband

Mobile phone signal

Roads/Traffic

Children & Young People/Play Equipment

Each area was discussed in detail and an Action Plan for each was drawn up to address these issues.

Residents also commented on a number of areas they liked about Brettenham including a useful Village Hall, an approachable Parish Council and a real community spirit where neighbours look out for each other.

1. Background Information

The rural parish of Brettenham is located in the Suffolk district of Babergh. It is located 7 miles south west of Stowmarket, 9 miles north west of Hadleigh, 11 miles south east of Bury St Edmunds and 5 miles north east of Lavenham.

Brettenham's neighbouring parishes are Hitcham, Rattlesden, Felsham, Thorpe Morieux, Preston St. Mary and Kettlebaston.

The 2011 Census data indicates that Brettenham has a population of 353 and 122 dwellings. 56% of the population is male, 44% female. 91% of residents indicated their health was 'Good' or 'Very Good'. Of the 202 residents in the 16-74 years age category, 71% were economically active.

Brettenham has a [parish website](#) which is well populated and kept up to date with information. The website contains Living in Brettenham, a guide for new and existing residents as well as previous editions of Brettenham Parish Magazine. A number of community activities and clubs are listed on the website.

The Village Review event was run by Community Action Suffolk at the request of Brettenham Parish Council. A Village Review is a community consultation exercise carried in one day/evening to gain a snapshot of what is working well and what may need improving based on the opinions of those taking part. Using a range of activities, participants are able to comment on a wide range of topics relating to their parish. Everyone has an equal voice and exercises are done on an individual basis to enable participants to express their own opinions without the need to stand up and speak in front of an audience or be swayed by someone else.

2. Village Review Event

The event was open to all residents. Advance promotion of the event was undertaken by the Parish Council and included posters, parish newsletter article and Brettenham Parish [website article](#)

The event took place at Brettenham Village Hall on Monday 24th October 2016 at 7pm. The event was facilitated by staff from Community Action Suffolk, Suffolk County Council and Babergh District Council. The weather was dry and cool.

On arrival attendees were asked to complete an activity to capture demographic information which showed the number of people attending, male/female split, how long a person had lived in Brettenham, which clubs/organisations a person participated in and where in Brettenham they lived.

Chris Clarke, Chair of Brettenham Parish Council extended a warm welcome to all present including Babergh District Councillor Michael Creffield and Suffolk County Councillor Jenny Antill.

The evening was split into 3 activities:-

1. Brainstorming

Attendees were asked to look at each of the 5 topic sheets at stations around the room and write on post it notes what they liked about Brettenham and what they felt required improvement for each one. The 5 stations were:-

- Station 1** Parish/Town Council effectiveness & Utilities
- Station 2** Community Services, Social Interaction, Communication & Village Hall
- Station 3** Traffic, Transport & Highways
- Station 4** Health, Education, Child Care, Young and Old People
- Station 5** Environment – Housing, Business Development and Natural Environment

Attendees were asked to tick the post it note if they agreed with the comment rather than repeat the comment.

2. Voting

Attendees were each given 3 red dot stickers and asked to place them on the 3 most important ideas/statements across all 5 topics. These were used to determine which areas received the most interest in the night and would form the basis of the discussion groups.

3. Discussion Groups

Attendees were asked to choose the discussion group which interested them the most. Each group was facilitated by a staff member from Community Action Suffolk, Suffolk County Council or Suffolk Council. Each group completed an action plan template for each topic.

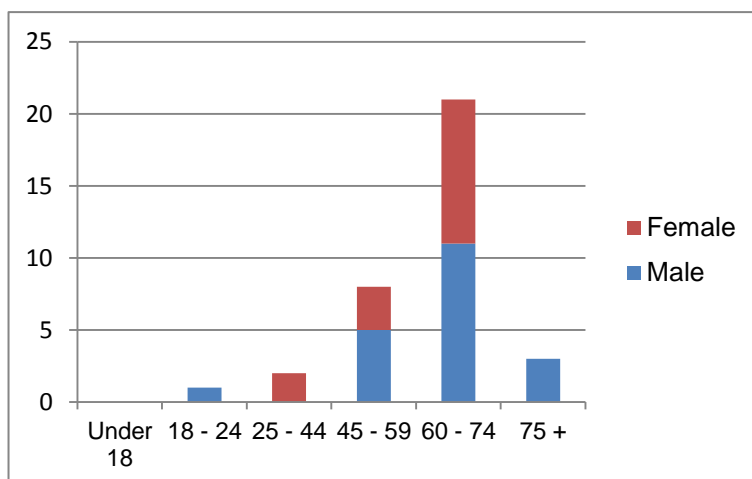
2.1 Demographic Information

35 people attended the event which is 10% of the population. This is a good number of people and there was buzz in the air throughout the evening. Participants were keen to put forward their thoughts and discuss them others in the room.

The tables below show demographic information for those who attended.

2.1.1 Age and Gender

Age	Male	Female	Total
Under 18	0	0	0
18 – 24	1	0	1
25 – 44	0	2	2
45 – 59	5	3	8
60 – 74	11	10	21
75 +	3	0	3
Total			35

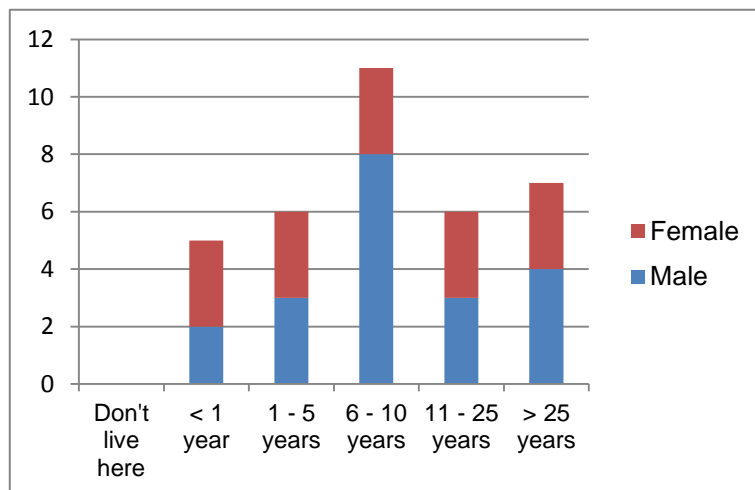


There was a lack of people representing the under 45 year old age category with no-one under 18 years present. This may have been due to it being half term week and many families had gone away. Typically, under 18s are not well represented at community engagement events and the Parish Council may wish to consider

engaging and consulting with this age group in another way such as a survey, a face to face conversation or group discussion.

2.1.2 Length of Time Living in Brettenham

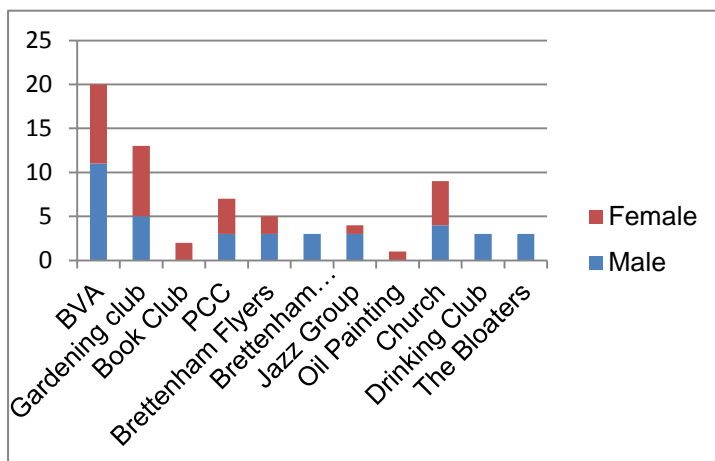
Time	Male	Female	Total
Don't live here	0	0	0
< 1 year	2	3	5
1 - 5 years	3	3	6
6 - 10 years	8	3	11
11 - 25 years	3	3	6
> 25 years	4	3	7
Total			35



There was a good range when it came to how long attendees had lived in Brettenham. All groups were represented.

2.1.3 Involvement in Clubs/Activities/Organisations

Organisation	Male	Female	Total
Brettenham Village Association	11	9	20
Gardening club	5	8	13
Book Club	0	2	2
Parochial Church Council	3	4	7
Brettenham Flyers	3	2	5
Brettenham Swimming Club	3	0	3
Jazz Group	3	1	4
Oil Painting	0	1	1
Church	4	5	9
Drinking Club	3	0	3
The Bloaters	3	0	0
Total			67



2.1.4 Where People Live in Brettenham



There was a good spread of attendees from across Brettenham, particularly from The Street, Buxhall Road and Church Road. The Parish Council may wish to consider whether an area of Brettenham is particularly under represented and carry out some targeted consultation.

2.2 Brainstorming

The following tables show the comments received by attendees and the number of votes received.

A good number of positive comments were received across all topics which were endorsed by others in the room.

2.2.1 Station 1. Parish/Town Council effectiveness & Utilities

Comment	No. of People Who Agreed	Votes
Good Points		
Good Parish Council	13	1
Very active and approachable County Councillor (not the same for District Councillor)	7	1
Issues		
Broadband		
Poor broadband speed	16	
Very slow broadband	64	19
Broadband speed atrocious, gotten worse	21	5
Broadband is no good when running a business	15	8
Mobile Signal		
Mobile phone signal - rubbish even with a new mast at Bildeston	25	15
Parish Council		
What is a Parish Council matter and what is a Village Association matter?	1	
Water		
Low water pressure	2	
Other		
Defibrillator	12	
No mains gas	7	1
Far too many overhead wires	7	
Ditch on western side of The Street doesn't appear to drain anywhere and is frequently full - who is responsible for maintenance?	1	
Flooding/blocked drain, no main sewerage	10	2
Leading to unwanted development	3	1

2.2.2 Station 2. Community Services, Social Interaction, Communication & Village Hall

Comments	No. of People Who Agreed	Votes
Good Points		
Excellent Parish magazine	40	1
Well equipped village hall	11	
Village hall used as village inn twice a month, very good place to meet	19	5
Gardening Club & open gardens	11	
Good range of events e.g. Apple Day, Produce show, Fete, Village Inns	5	
Good neighbours care for each other	4	
In lower part of village good neighbourhood network and support (and north end)	1	
Good recycling facilities in nearby villages		
Good website, not used enough	4	
Issues		
Village Hall		
Noisy village hall, acoustic boards would help	5	3
Crime		
Concern about recent break ins (sheds)	3	
Shop/Post Office		
Village shop/Post Office needed	10	1
Willing to set up a Community Shop	4	
Other		
No recycling facilities e.g. bottles and glass	10	

2.2.3 Station 3. Traffic, Transport & Highways

Comments	No. of People Who Agreed	Votes
Good Points		
Daily public bus service to Bury St Edmunds	2	
Footpaths really well maintained	1	
Issues		
Roads		
Pot holes in village roads	26	3
Speed reduction signs needed	11	
Speeding traffic	20	15
Extend 30mph limit to other end of the village	8	3
Need sign for single track road on Lower Lane	1	
Problems of road closures either not finished or started	1	
T junction at Mill Corner is a triangle and used as a turning circle/roundabout. Please remove the corner next time it is resurfaced.	1	
Poor road repairs when they are done, in some cases repairs do not last 12 months	9	1
Pavements		
Poor maintenance of pavement between village hall and church	1	
Difficulty getting round the village with prams and wheelchairs - narrow paths or no paths	5	
Verges		
Farming contractors drive over verges leading to blocked drains	13	1
Heavy vehicles cut up verges outside houses on corners	1	1
Overgrown verges	11	
Bus service		
Public transport not available when needed	6	
Poor Public Transport - affects older people and non drivers	2	2
Parking		
Parking on the main street	4	
Vehicles parking on pavements	12	
Road/Tree Maintenance		
Who is responsible for cutting the overhanging boughs which trucks hit regularly	5	

Footpaths		
Some farmers not looking after footpaths	2	

2.2.4 Station 4. Health, Education, Child Care, Young and Old People

Comments	No. of People Who Agreed	Votes
Good Points		
Wide range of clubs for such a small community	6	1
Good access to good health facilities e.g. drs, dispensary, gym (in Bildeston)	6	
Issues		
Older People		
Care facilities for elderly	1	
Children & Young People		
Better equipment for playground	11	5
No facilities for young people at all	6	
Very few young children in the village so not much call for child care	1	
Need to refurbish/expand play area	10	
Sports/Recreation		
Hard surface for sports for all ages	3	1
Not enough use of school facilities e.g. very limited access to swimming pool, artificial pitches	2	

2.2.5 Station 5. Environment – Housing, Business Development and Natural Environment

Comments	No. of People Who Agreed	Votes
Good Points		
Generally satisfied	4	
Attractive and well kept in general	6	
No Street lighting	15	
We all have good views, wildlife and rare birds	10	3
Can see the stars	13	
Issues		
Housing		
Affordable Housing	4	
No low cost housing	6	2
Dogs		
No dog bins	3	1
Other		
Loss of view	1	
Community woodland would be nice	3	
Excessive external lighting on private houses	4	
Start up business facilitation for small/new businesses	1	
Bulk buying facility for fuel oil	1	

2.3 Voting

The following table shows the number of votes received per topic

Issues	Number of Votes
Broadband	32
Mobile phone signal	15
Roads/traffic	21
Children & young people/play equipment	5
Village hall	3
Housing development	3
Verges	2
Flooding/blocked drain	2
Bus service	2
Sports & recreation	1
Village shop	1
No mains gas	1
Dogs	1

The 4 topics with the highest number of votes formed the basis of the discussion groups:-

- Broadband
- Mobile phone signal
- Roads/traffic
- Children & young people/play equipment

2.4 Discussion Groups & Action Plans

Each discussion group produced an action plan for the issues they identified

2.4.1 Mobile Phone Signal

Issue	Action	Priority	Lead Organisation & Partners	Resources Required	Update/Progress Report Due By When?
Signal Strength O2/Vodafone	Contact BT Open Reach – Service Provider	1	Parish Council Suffolk CC Awareness Groups	People Money	
BT Open Reach	Create pressure group	2	Proactive Community Service Providers BaberghDC	People	
Contacting Drs Surgery in Bildeston	Signal strength checker Make people aware can dial 999 or 112 with no signal	3	Suffolk CC Landowners Service providers	People	

2.4.2 Roads/Traffic

Issue	Action	Priority	Lead Organisation & Partners	Resources Required	Update/Progress Report Due By When?
Traffic speed is excessive	Communication with Old Buckenham Hall school re parents travelling through village	3	Parish Council Suffolk CC	None	
	Speed signs		Parish Council Suffolk Police Suffolk CC	Funding	
	Set up Speedwatch		Parish Council Suffolk Police	Volunteers Funding	
	Request SNT Speed check		Parish Council Suffolk Police		
30mph sign is unseen	Clear overgrown greenery around signs to make them more visible to motorists	1	Parish Council Suffolk CC – possible scheme?	Volunteers	
	Continue 30mph limit to the edge of the village and install new signage		Parish Council Suffolk CC	Funding	

2.4.3 Children & Young People /Play Equipment

Issue	Action	Priority	Lead Organisation & Partners	Resources Required	Update/Progress Report Due By When?
Lack of adequate play area and equipment for children and young people	PC to decide whether to improve what is there or start over	1	Parish Council Land owner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding e.g. Tesco Grant Funding • BDC Small Grants Team • SCC External Funding Team • Funding 4 Suffolk • Consultation report 	
	Form a sub committee – Advertise at village hall for volunteers		Parish Council Private School Private Special Needs Group Suffolk CC	Volunteers	
	Consultation with young people/residents		Sub Group	Funding Volunteers Survey	
	Install & maintain play equipment		Parish Council Sub group	Funding Volunteers	
Accessing Play Area due to poorly maintained pavements	Maintain footpaths	3	Parish Council	Volunteers Funding	
Lack of Youth Clubs	Investigate if surrounding villages are interested in holding a youth club – take turns in each	2	Parish Council Suffolk CC	Volunteers	
Lack of multi use sports area for young people and adults	Investigate need	4	Parish Council Sub group	Funding Volunteers to raise funding for maintenance	

2.4.4 Broadband

Issue	Action	Priority	Lead Orgs & Partners	Resources required	Progress report due by when?
We need to know plan and timetable	http://www.betterbroadbandsuffolk.com/LineCheck.aspx Regular updates to be provided but programme is in fact ahead of schedule with now a 2019 completion date	1	Cllr Jenny Antill	None	Ready for Parish council meeting 10 November and future newsletters
We need to know alternative options to broadband	Investigate alternative options e.g. satellite and radio masts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some residents have a satellite dish installed – Contract can be cancelled as soon as broadband is a “reasonable speed” (County council subsidiary scheme available) 	2	Parish council Sub group?	Volunteers, maybe sub group	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There have been negotiations relating to radio mast in Buxhall and Finborough. Note planning permission required 		Parish Council Sub group?	Volunteers	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Edward (living in house close to church) has just taken out contract for installation of VDSL on 17 		Edward	None	

	<p>Nov. He will share this info via newsletter and website and update on progress</p> <p>Edward to provide text and info to Emma for newsletter</p>				
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Investigate how the local schools get good broadband : opportunities to self dig? Or different exchange? 		Parish Council Sub group?	Volunteers	
<p>We have written to the MP – What is the criteria for prioritisation? Who can influence the prioritisation of areas? (BT say it's the council that prioritises- Council say not)</p>	<p>The criteria focuses upon density of population. Brettenham is in the 8th most division in Suffolk.</p> <p>Clarify and resolve mixed messages</p>	3	Cllr Jenny Antill Parish Council Subgroup?	Volunteers	Ready for Parish council meeting 10 November

3. Suggested Next Steps

It is suggested that the Parish Council fully review this report and look at the priorities in the action plans and set realistic target times for achieving each one. IT may be one of more of the actions requires breaking down into smaller tasks before it is attempted. Support and resources may also be required in terms of volunteers, support for external organisations or funding. Below is a list of contacts which may be useful.

3.1 Contacts and Resources

County Councillor:

Jenny Antill - 01787 378310 jenny.antill@suffolk.gov.uk

District Councillor:

Michael Creffield – 01449 744250 michael.creffield@babergh.gov.uk

Suffolk County Council Officers

Rachael Metson – (Locality Officer Mid Suffolk & Babergh)

01473 260687 / 07885 205589 rachael.metson@suffolk.gov.uk

Sally Watson – (Building Community Capacity Officer South Suffolk)

01787 315910 / 07738977003 sally.watson@suffolk.gov.uk

Local Officer Babergh DC:

Stephanie Osborne – (Communities Officer) 01449 724645
stephanie.osborne@baberghmidsuffolk.gov.uk

Community Action Suffolk:

General – 01473 345400 info@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk

General Community Development:

Jon Eaton (VCSE Locality Officer) – 07775 907828
jon.eaton@communityactionsuffolk.org.uk

Community Action Suffolk Oil Buying Scheme www.communitybuying.org.uk

Funding 4 Suffolk

A free to use website to help find potential funding for a range of activities and projects.

4. Summary

This consultation exercise and report provide a focus for the parish. There are many subjects which remain key issues to the community and the resulting discussions have lead to the action plans above.

Overall there is good communication between the Parish Council and the residents and a real community spirit with a sense of pride in the village as a place to live. Many comments were received about the positives of Brettenham including an approachable Parish Council and great village hall.

There are many actions for the next steps and several people volunteered to play a part in these actions. The Parish Council should follow up with those who volunteered to help with various activities to ensure they are not lost.

The issues of Broadband, mobile phone signal, children & young people/play equipment and roads/traffic are 4 key areas that residents prioritised and feel passionate about. An action plan for each is provided for the next steps.