

WYMONDHAM TOWN COUNCIL

MINUTES OF A TOWN COUNCIL

MEETING HELD ON TUESDAY 5th September 2023
in the Council Offices at 7.00 pm.

Councillors Present

S Nuri-Nixon	P Barrett	L Nixon
A Perry	L Doheny	T Baker
A Holden	R Frosdick	M Batley
A James	J Fulcher	M Rosen

Member(s) of the Public: 4

South Norfolk Councillors: K Hurn & D Roberts

Town Co-ordinator – C Pharoah

South Norfolk Councillor: K Hurn

Councillor Nuri-Nixon in the Chair

111/23	<u>APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE</u> – Cllr. J Barrett.
112/23	<u>DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST</u> : None.
113/23	<u>MINUTES OF MEETINGS</u> Upon the proposition of Cllr. Fulcher and seconded by Cllr. James the minutes of the meeting held on 1 st August 2023 were unanimously approved as a correct record.
114/23	<u>PROGRESS UPDATES:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• <u>TOWN CENTRE PUBLIC REALM</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Cllr. Holden asked for an update – Ongoing meeting with South Norfolk Council who will arrange an informal briefing for Councillors.• <u>TOWN CO-ORDINATOR REPORT</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Cllr. Holden asked if this was now a public document – Yes as it is being discussed under item 12 of this meeting's agenda.• <u>TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT 2022 -2023</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Cllr. Holden advised list of Councillors in report was incorrect – advised that the report was for the 2022-2023 financial year and that the Councillors listed were in post during this period and the information was correct.• <u>CLIMATE EMERGENCY GROUP</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Cllr. Baker asked for an update – Cllr. P Barrett responded that meetings with interested individuals had been held and a proper constituted group was being formed who would hold a wider meeting in October.• <u>BROWICK ROAD RECREATION GROUND</u><ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Cllr. Holden asked about the consultation results – Advised consultants were preparing report and meeting to discuss is to be arranged.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <u>NEW CEMETERY</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Detailed discussion took place as to the present position re the new proposed site and the delay as the Council are awaiting remedial work in respect of the soil to be carried by the Developer – Lovell Homes. Additional costs incurred through the delay were discussed and the Clerk advised that he felt there are approx. 2 years' worth of burial plots available at the present cemetery. Once the remedial work has been undertaken the Council's partners CDS will prepare a planning application which will be discussed by the Council and once submitted the public will be able to comment. Cllr. Rosen commented that this project will be included in the 4 year future plan being prepared and its financial implications will need to be considered when next year's budget is set.
115/23	<u>FINANCE & GENERAL PURPOSES COMMITTEE</u> minutes of meeting held on 15 th August 2023 were noted and upon the proposition of Cllr. Rosen and seconded by Cllr. Fulcher the recommendations therein were ratified.
116/23	<u>SUNDRY CREDITORS</u> Upon the proposition of Cllr. Nixon and seconded by Cllr. P Barrett it was resolved to pay accounts for August 2023, as per the submitted list in the sum of £90,277.41. In compliance with financial regulations the Clerk tabled a list of salaries paid from the wages account to the sum of £10,610.10
117/23	<u>MAYORS ENGAGEMENT</u> – Noted.
118/23	<u>PUBLIC PARTICIPATION</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr. Roberts read out statement expressing concerns over the play proposals – agenda item 10. • Resident expressed views in respect of the Town-Co-ordinator report and market (s) footfall. • Resident commented on lack of costs for play proposals- agenda item 10 – and that Councillors should work together.
119/23	<u>CEMETERY</u> Councillor Baker introduced his proposals to alter the residential rate fee qualification to be interred in the cemetery. After discussion upon the proposition of Cllr. Baker and seconded by Cllr Rosen the following was proposed. The fees payable will be the resident rate if: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The deceased had lived in Wymondham for one year at the time of their death. 2. The deceased lived in Wymondham for one year immediately prior to leaving the parish due to independent care needs. 3. The deceased lived in Wymondham for a period of 10 years or more at any point in their life and has close family living Wymondham at the time of their death. The Council may also offer a resident rate in exceptional circumstances. <p>For: Cllrs Baker, Rosen, Perry, Doheny and Holden. Against: Cllrs. Nuri-Nixon, Frosdick, Batley, Nixon, James & Fulcher. Abstention: Cllr. Barrett. The motion was lost.</p>

120/23	<p><u>PLAY FACILITIES</u> Cllr. Doheny introduced paper outlining proposals and the rationale for them. After, discussions during which concerns were raised that the Council would be open to taking over play areas run by other organisations and the financial implications the following was proposed by Cllr. Doheny and seconded by Cllr. Baker:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1 A Wymondham Play Strategy be developed by the Council. 2 That all Committees of the Council contribute to the development of plans to be consulted on with Wymondham Residents as part of the Council's budget setting process for 2024 onwards. 3. That immediate action be taken to address the large number of repair and maintenance issues on Council managed land. A written report of action taken to be submitted to each future Town Council meeting until no further issues are outstanding. 4. That where the opportunity exists the Town Council will adopt play facilities provided by other organisations in order to improve the overall offer available to the community." <p>For: Cllrs. Baker, Rosen, Perry, Doheny & Holden Against: Cllrs. Nuri-Nixon, Batley, Nixon, James, Fulcher & Frostdick. Abstention: Cllr. P Barrett. The motion was lost.</p>
121/23	<p><u>STANDING ORDERS</u>. After discussion upon the proposition of Cllr. Rosen and seconded by Cllr. Doheny it was unanimously resolved to amend Standing Order 1b to read 'A motion (including an amendment) shall not be progressed unless it has been moved and seconded, except in the case of a matter referred to a Committee or Working Group by decision of the Town Council when it will be treated as proposed and seconded by virtue of the Town Council decision to refer.</p>
122/23	<p><u>TOWN CO-ORDINATOR</u> - Report was noted and upon the proposition of Cllr. Holden and seconded by Cllr. James it was unanimously resolved to approve the expenditure as requested by the Town Co-ordinator.</p>
123/23	<p><u>REPORTS FROM COUNTY / DISTRICT COUNCILLORS</u></p> <p><u>Norfolk County Council</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr. Hurn on behalf of Cllr. Savage. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ A11 reconstruction work nearly finished, only 3 overnight works left. ○ Park and Ride fees have been reduced as NCC have received funds from Government. ○ Final round of converting NCC streetlights to LED has started. <p><u>South Norfolk Council</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr. Hurn <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Consultation over a Public Spaces Protection Order underway. ○ Solar together initiative restarted. ○ Meeting at Catholic Church on 8/9/23 to consider establishing Residents Associations., • Cllr. Roberts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Meeting to discuss Platform 2 Railway Station access issue to be held on 11/9/23 – private meeting.

124/23	<u>REPORTS FROM REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cllr. Holden – Allotment holders had provided produce for food Bank. • Cllr. Frosdick – Vintage day 17/9/23 – volunteers needed. • Cllr. Perry – North Wymondham Community Centre – 50 plays in 500 minutes.
125/23	<u>EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS & PUBLIC</u> On the proposition of Cllr. Nixon and seconded by Cllr. Fulcher resolution by the Council under the provisions of Section 1 of the Public Bodies (Admissions to meetings) Act 1960 to exclude Press and the Public from the meeting of Wymondham Town Council in order to discuss matters where publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest by reason of the confidential nature of the business to be transacted.
126/23	<u>INSURANCE</u> After discussion upon the resolution of Cllr. Fulcher and seconded by Cllr, Rosen it was unanimously agreed to accept a 3-year contract offered by Zurich Insurance.
127/23	<u>TOWN CO-ORDINATOR</u> - Report on work undertaken to date was discussed and upon the proposition of Cllr. James and seconded by Cllr. Nixon it was unanimously resolved the Wymondham Town Council confirms funding of the Town Co-ordinator role for the 2024/25 financial year at a minimum of 16 hours per week with a possible increase to 20 or 24 hours once costs are established by South Norfolk Council.

[The meeting closed at 21.37 pm]

DATED thisday of2023

SIGNED(Chairman)

Wymondham Town Centre, Marketing & Communications Audit

Prepared for: Wymondham Town Council

Prepared by: Corinna Pharaoh Wymondham Town Coordinator

April 2023

Introduction

Market towns need to adapt to the changing way they are used and to modern communications. They need to think and act like a business and adopt up front promotional tactics as used in the tourism and retail sectors in combination with close, collaborative working between town and district councils, businesses and community groups, to survive, thrive and be seen as regular and relevant destinations for residents and year round visitors.

This is an audit of Wymondham's town centre, marketing and communications to identify areas for improvement and develop an effective communication and marketing strategy that promotes the town to residents and tourists and builds an engaged joined up community.

Audit Summary

1. Town centre audit; retail mix, offer, footfall, demographic observations, heritage attractions
2. Identify the town's communication channels and review the town's communication policies; who is responsible for communicating with the public, how often communication is done, and what types of messages are being communicated
3. Review the town's brand identity, marketing and messaging: is it clear, concise, and consistent across all channels. Check for accuracy, relevancy, and appropriateness of the content
4. Evaluate the effectiveness of communication channels: evaluating their reach, engagement, feedback and competitor analysis. Determine which channels are most effective and which ones need improvement
5. Based on the audit findings, identify areas for improvement in the town's marketing and communication strategy and develop a marketing plan
6. Monitor progress: regularly monitor and evaluate the town's marketing and communication strategy to ensure that it is effective and meeting the needs of residents, businesses, and other stakeholders

1. Town centre audit; retail mix, offer, footfall and demographic observations

Norfolk County Council published a Norfolk Market Town Centre Report June/July 2022 assessing 21 of the larger market towns including Wymondham, relevant excerpts are included here for information and context.

“Typically, a market town is a key settlement which has presently or historically held a regular market, in total there are 29 market towns in Norfolk that meet this criterion. The County of Norfolk covers a wide area, with varied landscapes and 90 miles of coastline. Norfolk market towns are relatively evenly distributed throughout Norfolk, as shown in Figure 1, they act as service centres to large rural populations. Norfolk market towns have a number of different functions, they act as: service centres, employment centres, commuter towns, retirement centres, and shopping destinations. Functions aside, many market towns retain a historic core and the coastal market towns benefit from seasonal tourism.

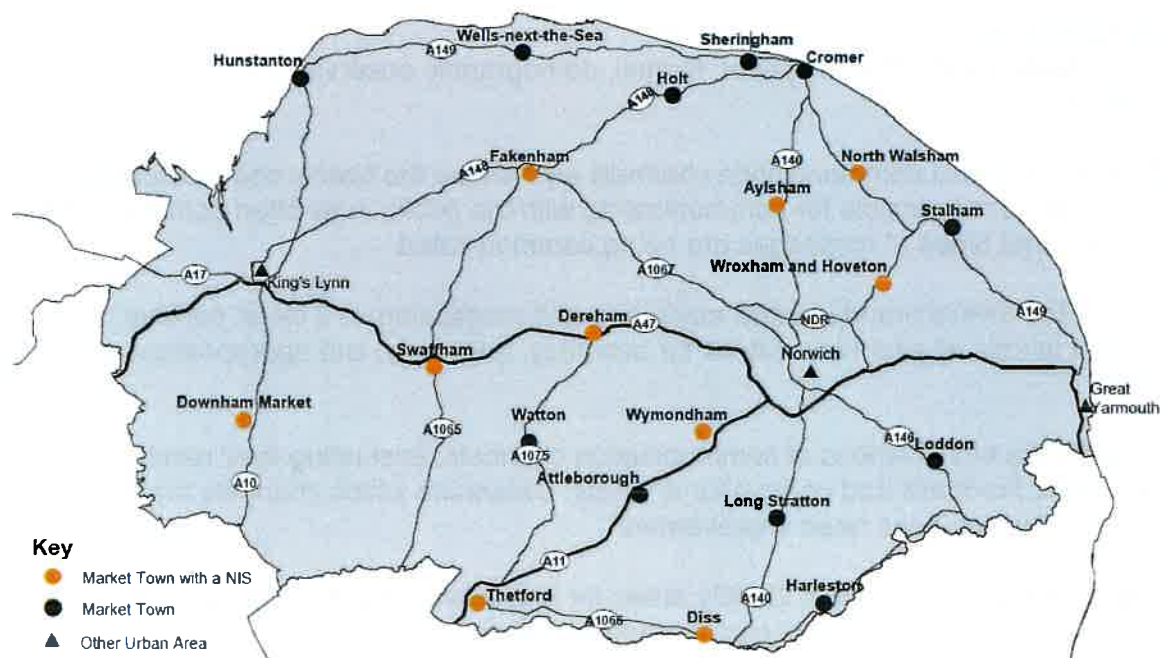


Figure 1 Location of Norfolk Market Towns

Wymondham Profile

Wymondham is located in South Norfolk. The town is well connected via the A11 and the Norwich to Cambridge railway line. There is a variety of locally owned shops and cafés providing amenities to residents and tourists. The town hosts a selection of attractions including; the Wymondham Abbey, the Mid-Norfolk Railway line and the Market Cross, which houses the Tourist Information Centre. A market is held every Friday and a farmers market is also held monthly.

Key Figures

Parish Population (2016) - 15,875

Economically Active Population (2011) – 66%

Main Occupation (2011) - Professional occupations (19%) Estimated number of jobs (2011) 6,707

Parish work day population (2011) - 14,101

Number of town centre business premises (2022) - 129

Town centre business premise vacancy rate (2022) – 6.2% (8 units)

Key Findings from the 2022 Survey

- Financial and business units are concentrated in the centre and south of Market Street.
- Vacant units are mostly located in the centre and north of the market town centre (see Figure 42).
- The majority of units are leisure units at 24%. This is above the Norfolk average.
- Comparison retails units are the second largest proportion of units in the town, which is at 23.3%. This is below the Norfolk average.
- Vacant units remained stable at eight units, since 2021.
- The vacancy rate of 6.2% is less than the Norfolk average.



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4.1 Unit Type Analysis

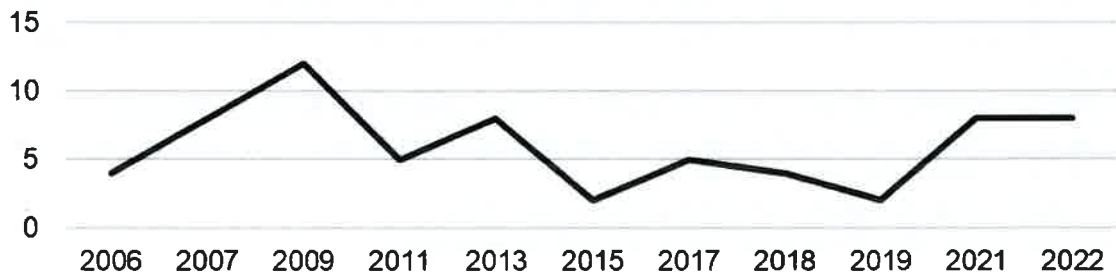
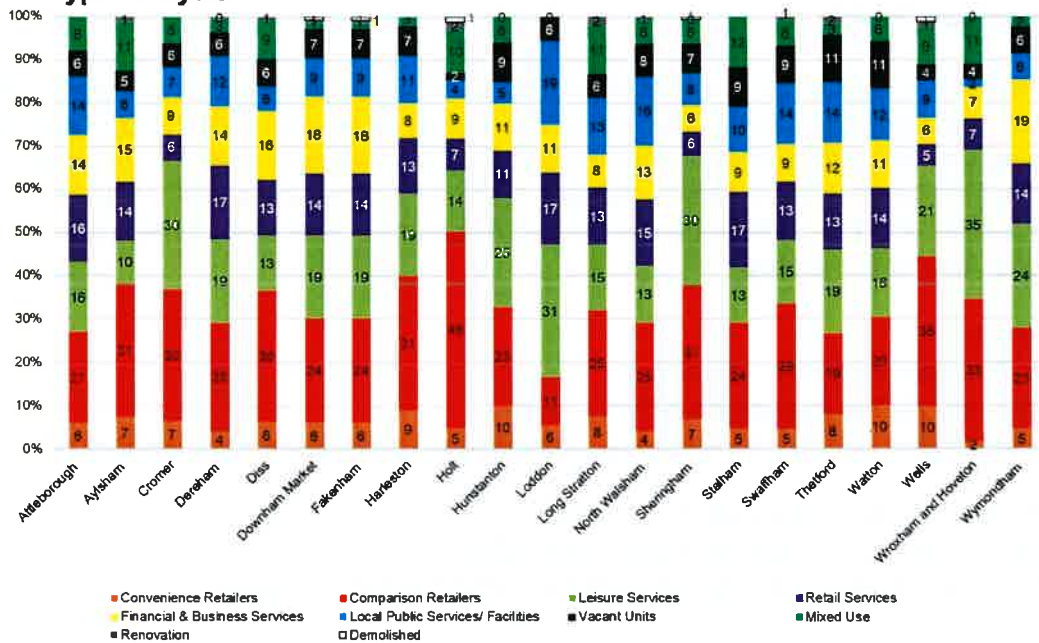


Table 1 2022 Market Town Survey Unit Results

Market town	Convenience Retailer Units	Comparison Retailer Units	Leisure Service Units	Retail Service Units	Financial & Business Service Units	Local Public Services/Facility Units	Vacant Units	Mixed Use	Units Under Renovation	Demolished Units	Total Number of Units
Attleborough	7	24	19	18	16	16	7	9	0	0	116
Aylsham	6	25	8	11	12	5	4	9	1	0	81
Cromer	13	60	59	12	17	14	11	12	0	0	198
Dereham	11	66	51	45	36	31	15	8	1	0	264
Diss	10	47	20	20	25	9	10	14	1	0	156
Downham Market	7	32	27	21	15	10	10	9	0	0	131
Fakenham	9	35	28	21	26	13	10	2	1	1	145
Harleston	9	31	19	13	8	11	7	2	0	0	100
Holt	8	74	23	12	15	7	3	16	3	2	161
Hunstanton	12	27	30	13	13	6	11	7	0	0	119
Loddon	2	4	11	6	4	7	2	0	0	0	36
Long Stratton	4	13	8	7	4	7	3	6	0	0	52
North Walsham	6	36	19	22	18	23	11	8	1	0	144
Sheringham	11	50	48	9	10	12	11	9	0	1	160
Stalham	4	21	11	15	8	9	8	10	0	0	86
Swaffham	7	43	22	20	13	21	13	9	1	0	149
Thetford	16	37	38	26	23	28	22	5	3	0	198
Watton	11	22	17	15	12	13	12	6	0	0	108
Wells	8	28	17	4	5	7	3	7	1	1	80
Wroxham & Hoveton	1	18	19	4	4	1	2	6	0	0	55
Wymondham	6	30	31	18	25	8	8	3	0	0	129
Total	168	723	525	332	309	258	183	157	13	5	2668

•The type of retail unit most affected by vacancies were leisure services units as two units became vacant since 2021.”

High Street

In depth high street business interviews were conducted during January - March across 25 key business categories as recommended by High Streets Task Force, the table below is a summary of key headline information.

TURNOVER	EMPLOYMENT	DAILY FOOTFALL	DEMOGRAPHICS	IS THE WYMONDHAM WELL PROMOTED	AWARE SNBC BUSINESS SUPPORT/ TRAINING
1% stayed the same 31% decreased 68% increased	31% stayed the same 25% decreased 44% increased	average 21 people/day	Full mix	100% no	25%

Businesses and heritage attractions were asked the questions listed below. Their replies have been used to answer the audit questions within this report. In summary the main issues for both are lack of marketing skills across the board from socials, printed promotion to email marketing, unaware of SNBC support/training/grants, unable to access council business support when it's at distance and during the working day.

The businesses that are performing the best are those that use a broad range of marketing tools to reach out and ensure they connect regularly with their customers, regular posting on Facebook, Instagram, interacting on these platforms to build an audience of customers and other businesses for co-promotion, monthly newsletters to their customers to remind and inform, seeking out and engaging with external support, ensuring they get accreditations ie awards or nominations, regularly sharing customer reviews as social proof, proactive and ready to try new ideas i.e. opening hours, reaching out to accommodation providers, complementary businesses with information and flyers or to do collaborations etc.

Business interviews questions:

- What's Wymondham uniqueness?
- Reasons to visit?
- Is the town well promoted?
- Town centre attractiveness, accessibility, parking, quality of events?
- Are you aware Wymondham logo and tagline "a market town apart"?
- What's your aspirations/vision for Wymondham?
- What communications/support had they received from WTC or Wymondham Business group?
- Feedback on WTC website, Facebook, noticeboards, TIC, Wym Trail, Mini Guide?
- Typical opening hours?
- Did they have click and collect?

- Did they have a loyalty/reward scheme?
- Did they open in the evenings for workshops/events outside of their normal opening hours?
- Were they aware of town centre events, dates, organisers?
- Did they know about the Wymondham Business Group/Town Team, have they attended?
- Did they know about the Bright Future Group, have they attended?
- Did they know about SNBC business support, enewsletter, training, grants, business breakfast, awards?
- Social media use: type, frequency, groups, adverts?
- Mobile/online connectivity?
- What support/training did they require?
- Would they support/pay for a Visit Wymondham website entry?

Summary of feedback received from in depth interviews about Wymondham include:

"We can't access training during the daytime"

"new businesses don't know who to contact or how"

"need socials training, email marketing"

"events food and drink traders, not good for business"

"events and advertising naff"

"events need to be more professional, better advertised"

"lack communications with high street businesses"

"hard to know what's on"

"disabled access into shops a problem"

"market cross lack of seating"

"free one hour parking means people are in and out, don't stay for a coffee or browse"

"human nature choose the free parking option"

"Aylsham have free 2 hours parking"

"we need events that celebrate Norfolk"

"need someone to come and own the town, lack of consistency, civic pride"

"few cafes/shops open on a Sunday when Mid Norfolk Railway tourists expect things to be open"

"noticeboards tired, old, dirty and inconsistent"

"lacks aesthetics, bunting, better planting, less bedding more natural, pollinator friendly, better posters...all too ad hoc, lack of seating"

"market cross underused for evening events, music, continental style"

"needs encouragement new model to attract interesting businesses/shops"

"Dis-connection don't know who's running what, why hold events like the Jubilee at Kett's Park?"

"lack event planning ie coffee stall in front of coffee shop"

"signage doesn't signpost to Middleton Street shops and cafes, it all points to town centre"

"lack signage historical buildings"

"shop front investment needed"

"need to attract young mums and kids"

"liked the Dickensian evenings, having a shopping theme..."

"need events that promote the town and its' businesses not imported food and drink"

"country town with the friendliness of a village"

New Business

There are new businesses due to open in empty units this year, they include a bakery/ cafe, collection of independent Norfolk makers sharing a space, whole food and eco products with a cafe and a restaurant.

Wymondham's Heritage Attractions

Embracing heritage creates a desirable town centre experience. Historic England in its' report on the changing face of the High Street state creating a greater sense of 'destination' gives town centres a competitive edge. The heritage assets/attractions in a town need to be able to stand out, actively market themselves, co-promote each other and if not able be supported/helped with their promotions and marketing, below is a summary of the status of each:

Wymondham Heritage Museum

Volunteer run museum set up by Wymondham Heritage Society to keep the history of Wymondham and its people alive. It is a registered charity. It is packed full of exhibits and displays that tell the story of the people of Wymondham and the surrounding area. The eclectic collection is housed in The Bridewell, a nationally important building that redefined how prisoners should be incarcerated. Visitors can also step into a recreated dungeon in the basement to see what life was like for a prisoner 200 years ago. The exhibits are displayed in the rooms once occupied by the prison, courthouse and police station. They are regularly changed to ensure each visit as interesting and insightful as the first.

Visitor footfall is low, averaging c2,077 visitors a year with an older demographic. There is a good website, but more could be done to promote awareness of family activities, the Friends of the Museum scheme and promote a more rounded offer to wider range of audiences. There is a Facebook Page, and Twitter, but no other socials. Good DL leaflet, but limited distribution via Arts Roundup which has now ceased trading, former staff and customers continue to maintain a number of the leaflet distribution locations. No posters, flyers or newsletter. Old noticeboard outside, no modern feather flags etc to highlight when open. Old fashioned tea room. Not listed on Norfolk Museums website as independent. Not recently applied for grant funding to support adding to displays, new noticeboard, marketing materials, upgrading tea room etc.

Wymondham Abbey

Wymondham Abbey is one of East Anglia's finest ecclesiastical buildings. It has a fascinating history stretching back to its foundation in 1107 as a Benedictine Priory. It was later converted to an independent monastery. Today it is a magnificent parish church, complete with its famous and distinctive twin towers and new extension with multi-use spaces and modern amenities. The Wymondham Abbey Preservation Trust responsible for the upkeep of the fabric of the Abbey is a registered charity. There are guided tours pre-bookable by email, a shop selling Norfolk products and local groups use the multi use spaces to meet.

After a recent prolonged closure due to management issues it has re-opened, but having to start from basics. Visitor footfall is improving. There is a good website and a Facebook Page, but no other socials. No DL leaflet, no posters, flyers or newsletter. Wymondham Tourist Information currently photocopy an out of date leaflet. Excellent guided tours can be booked via email, but are not promoted well.

Becket's Chapel

Grade 1 listed building, the earliest parts of which date from the 12th century. It is one of Wymondham's most important heritage assets but is in a poor state of repair and is on Historic England's Heritage at Risk register. It is owned by Norfolk Historic Buildings Trust, (NHBT) a registered charity, who are currently undertaking the repair of this historic building with the aim of making the chapel a multifunctional community facility throughout the year, including use by Wymondham Arts Centre. It will be available to hire for meetings, receptions and other activities. There are plans that the chapel will also house a Visitor Information Point, which will actively promote Wymondham as a heritage destination, encouraging more tourists to the town. There has been discussion that Wymondham Tourist Information Centre will be re-located to the Chapel.

The second and final phase of the repair and repurposing of Becket's Chapel include incorporating ground or air source heating and solar panels into a proposed modern extension to achieve sustainable year-round use of the whole building. It will also include an upgrade of the annex with accessible facilities, storage and when combined with the new extension, room for a café and welcome desk/Visitor Information Point, designed to attract visitors to the town centre.

It is currently closed, but due to re-open this summer. Wymondham Art Centre have a website, but no socials. Norfolk Historic Buildings Trust have a website, Facebook, Twitter and Instagram.

Mid Norfolk Railway

The Mid-Norfolk Railway is the longest standard-gauge heritage railway in East Anglia and runs through the Heart of Norfolk. The railway has its' headquarters in Dereham and runs south to Wymondham Abbey Halt station. Currently the line is also being restored north towards North Elmham and will run to the railway's County School Station. The Mid-Norfolk Railway is owned and run by the registered charity, The Mid-Norfolk Railway Preservation Trust. The Trust is owned by the railway's members, some of whom volunteer their time and skills to the railway.

Footfall is excellent, the Christmas Polar Express accounts for 43,000 tickets alone, but this does not bring visitors to Wymondham. There is a good website and a Facebook Page, Instagram and Twitter, A new DL leaflet is in production, no posters, flyers or enewsletter. Currently the line is not running to Wymondham due to essential bridge and track repairs, there is an emergency appeal on their website to raise the £95,000 required to run to Wymondham. The new marketing working group are keen to develop new initiatives/events with Wymondham for next year.

Market Cross

Iconic timber-framed octagonal building erected in 1617-1618 with carvings of the town's former industry and supported over an open ground floor by eight timber buttress-like posts and a pyramidal roof. Current home of Wymondham Tourist Information Centre, (WTIC) Only open to new viewed when the WTIC is open; summer opening hours from Friday 31st March 2023 to October: Monday, Wednesday & Friday 10.00am to 2.30pm, Saturday and Bank Holidays 10.00 – 1.30pm November to Easter: Friday & Saturday 10.30am to 12.30pm. If the WTIC relocated to Becket's Chapel it could be used a highly promotable heritage asset only viewable as part of a bookable guided walking tour, which would increase take up.

Kett's Country Long Distance Path

100% funded by the Infrastructure Investment Fund has established a new 18 mile historic walking trail linking Wymondham and Norwich and is the newest addition to the Norfolk Trails network. The route starts in Wymondham where the story of Kett's Rebellion began in July 1549. It finishes in Eaton, just past Cringleford's historic twin-arched bridge. This is where Robert Kett crossed with his followers on his journey to Norwich to seek a fairer society. The trail weaves along the picturesque South Norfolk Claylands countryside, an important area for nature. There are also 5 way-marked circular paths along its route one of which is in Wymondham, the others are Wreningham, Mulbarton, Swardeston and Cringleford. There were not any printed leaflets available when requested.



<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/-/media/norfolk/downloads/out-and-about/norfolk-trails/ketts-country/ketts-country-trail-map.pdf>

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/-/media/norfolk/downloads/out-and-about/norfolk-trails/ketts-country/wymondhams-abbey-trail.pdf>

Wym Trail

Augmented reality app featuring two trails around Wymondham. Cannot be easily downloaded when in town due to mobile data issues and has mobile phone compatibility issues so many interviewees who had tried to use it were unsuccessful. WTC and other tourist websites information that feature it are out of date as the VR headsets are now located in Museum of Norwich in Bridewell Alley, Norwich. Older users reported it was hard to read on a mobile phone screen on busy high street and this was compounded if it was a sunny/bright day.



Moot Hill

Large earthwork to the north east of the town centre which is a scheduled ancient monument.

Residents

Partial survey of new housing developments, requires more time investment to complete and provide a comprehensive report.

Summary: generally visits into the town centre were bi-monthly and more at weekends. Residents often unaware/missed general Wymondham news, high street/local business information and news, groups and events advertised on social media. They would like more Wymondham news, the Wymondham magazine is the only source of local news delivered to households bi-monthly at present, so it's easy to miss an event, activity etc.

Wymondham has multiple Facebook groups, but this makes for very busy feeds, so it's hard to see what is being posted/advertised. Few event organisers are using free platforms like Eventbrite or Visit Norfolk /Visit East of England to advertise their events/workshops/activities and there is not a comprehensive, well promoted online source of information ie 'what's on' website for Wymondham, they would like to be able to have a resource/website that not only has events, things to do, but market details, community groups and general town information.

Visitors

Owing to the time of year, too few visitors to be surveyed accurately.

2. Identify the town's communication channels and review the town's communication policies; who is responsible for communicating with the public, how often communication is done, and what types of messages are being communicated

Wymondham Town Council

- Website: Wymondham Town Council, (WTC), website includes some information for residents and visitors on the town's facilities, but is mainly text with some website links with limited information some of which requires updating. It does not link to the WTC Facebook page or main heritage attractions websites. There is a news/events tab with sub-categories for news, WTC, Civic Awards and events, some events are listed. It does not have an email sign up form or pop up on the home page. There is a low level of awareness that community events can be emailed to WTC for submission and both the business survey and the initial residents survey indicate neither the website or Facebook Page are used as primary 'go to' sources of information. No accreditations or memberships of business organisations such as Chambers of Commerce or Buy Local Norfolk. Managed by WTC staff.
- Social Media: WTC has a Facebook Page with a low following of 775 followers, it does not follow any local businesses or organisations and posts mostly statutory information with a monthly post about the Farmers Market which generally uses the same market image and sometimes lists the traders, but does not tag them, so they are not aware of the post and readers cannot follow the link to view the trader attending the market. WTC has no Twitter, Instagram or other socials accounts. Managed by WTC staff.
- Wymondham Farmers Market has a Facebook Page currently managed by an active local resident, with a following half that of other successful Norfolk markets and very low engagement. The posts do not showcase traders with attractive images, video or prose or promote and tag other businesses or activities to enjoy/visit whilst shopping at the market. The email and telephone number are WTC and the website is a defunct link <https://norfolkparishes.gov.uk/wp-signup.php?new=wymondhamtc> Low cost stalls. Traders feedback footfall is ok, it used to be much busier with both visitors and stalls, no support to promote/grow the market ie other highly successful markets they attend such as Creake Abbey, Holt, Black Barn Farm or Bury St Edmunds have proactively built large socials followings, regular socials posting schedules averaging every two days and email stallholders with posters and leaflets to advertise the market.

These markets have authenticity and quality with the emphasis on East Anglian products, and products that need to be seen, touched, and where you meet the maker, many traders that attend are located in South Norfolk. Their strategy is to move away from what is

happening online, they have a curator and are supported by their local business groups. They curate the mix each month to ensure that visitors have a good experience. They promote a great weekend day out/destination for those living and visiting the town shopping experience and by encouraging makers/independents to come into town, trade well at the market...they encourage them to set up in the town as part of a collective shop or pop up. According to a recent report on eating out in town centres by Springboard and the NPD Group, improved performance of high streets is being driven by a booming and inventive food and drink sector, such as street food or markets.

There is no local weekend 'destination' market in the area, Wymondham could capitalise on this.

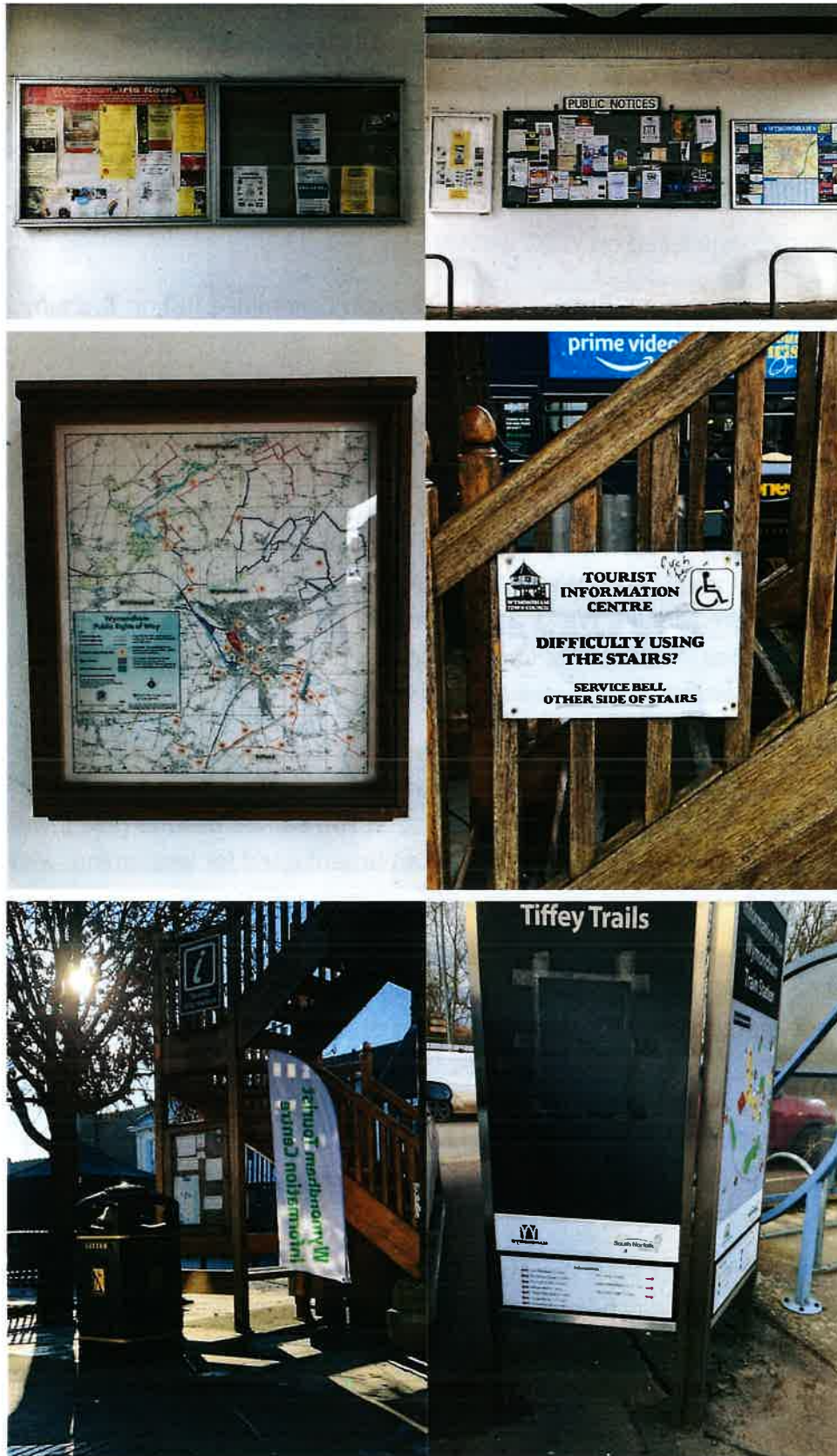


- Email: no email newsletter.
- Welcome to Wymondham Mini Guide DL leaflet 25,000 published every 2 years' designed by local designer, it does not use the Wymondham logo or tagline, but the town council logo and the tagline 'Wymondham a town not to be missed', it has a dated look, no QR code and very limited distribution outside of the town, currently copies are delivered to Wymondham Tourist Information Centre, Mid Norfolk Railway, library, Wymondham Heritage Museum, Wymondham Abbey and Wymondham Tourist Information Centre who also post a handful to other tourist information centres.
- Newsletter: no printed newsletter. Historically there was an 'ABOUT WYMONDHAM' publication printed 3 or 4 times per year and delivered to all the residents of Wymondham. It's aim:

"to keep residents informed of developments within the Town, to promote forthcoming community events and when necessary to gather views through surveys. Residents are encouraged to participate and any potential contributors should contact the Town Clerk on 01953 603302 or visit the Council offices at Wymondham Town Council." Wymondham Town Council website

- Wymondham Official Town Guide: designed and published on behalf of WTC every 2 years by One Press Publications and is delivered to 9,900 Wymondham households. It has a good range of information, but is incomplete with long established businesses and community groups missing from the directory section. No QR code
 - Press Releases: from mainly South Norfolk Council are published on WTC website and shared to WTC Facebook
 - Public Meetings: agendas for WTC committee which the public can attend are posted on the town council website and posted in the main entrance window of the WTC offices.
 - Communication Policy: none listed on WTC website
 - WTC have a Leisure, Environment, Enterprise and Tourism Committee but no Tourism Policy listed on WTC website
 - Wymondham Tourist Information Centre is housed in the historic Market Cross, records show visitor footfall is decreasing, in line with other tourist centres with the wealth of online information, many visitors also visit to see the building itself, an iconic timber-framed octagonal building erected in 1617-1618 with carvings of the town's former industry and supported over an open ground floor by eight timber buttress-like posts and a pyramidal roof. Local information on Wymondham Abbey, Tiffey Trails, Wymondham Nature Walks, Wymondham Circular Walks are all photocopies which the staff painstakingly staple updates to in contrast to other Norfolk areas with modern up to date shopping, food and drink, walks, guided walks leaflets etc.
 - Signage: Historic England in its' report on the changing face of the high street at a time when people are increasingly looking for a leisure experience rather than simply a range of shops to visit, investing in the public realm and streetscape can be used to give town centres a potentially competitive advantage; there is an urgent need for welcoming, well maintained Wymondham streetscape that shows and promotes civic pride.
- A. WTC Noticeboards/signs are in poor repair and display out of date posters/information; sites are Market Cross, Mainline Railway Station, under the Fire Station arch and Becketswell Meadow entrance, there is no promotion of heritage attractions, farmers market with eye catching posters with QR codes for further details. There is no history of Wymondham/heritage attractions sign at the Market Cross or nature trail noticeboards in any of the green spaces. Some of the signage at the mainline railway station and under the fire station arch is owned by local tourist attractions or community groups and these could also be improved.
 - B. WTC/SNC town shoppers map signs are out of date, have no website links or QR codes and at the mainline railway have missing 'Tiffey Trails' map/information. These would be cost effective to update with new vinyl overlays.

Wymondham High Street Noticeboards/Signage



Wymondham Railway Station Noticeboards/Signage



C. Town Entrance Signage: 4 sites, B1172 from Hethersett, B1135 from Hingham, Silfield Road and London Road from the Attleborough direction. Three have the Market Cross logo. Only one promotes the markets, no sense of arrival with planters etc. or celebrating Wymondham's heritage/pedigree or using the tagline. The means by which town centres are accessed give rise to a variety of experiences. There is some sense of arrival off the A11 with a standard brown tourist sign, but after coming off A11 it is unclear as to when the heart of the town centre has been reached.



D. Mid Norfolk Railway/Becketswell Meadow Entrance

Visitors arriving in Wymondham by the Mid Norfolk tourist train have no sense of arrival, no signage to direct them to Wymondham Abbey or the town or inform them of distances, what's in the town ie. heritage attractions, independent shops, cafes, pubs, restaurants etc. Anecdotally they have arrived and thought the town was not even within walking distance, so have not visited.

Mid Norfolk Railway/Becketswell Meadow Entrance Views/Signage



Bright Future Working Group

Its' purpose is to establish a link between WTC, high street traders, community groups, South Norfolk Council and residents. It is attended by some councillors, some businesses, and community groups. Communications outcomes of this group are WTC to create a list of email addresses of high street traders, the appointment of Wymondham Town Coordinator and WTC agreement to match funding SNBC Wymondham public realm improvement project.

Wymondham Business Group

Wymondham Business Group was formed in 2013/4 to promote independent trade in South Norfolk Council and work with South Norfolk Council on the Market Towns Initiative which included developing a new town logo and tagline, as well as working on improvements including dementia friendly signage and shoppers maps in car parks, putting on events to improve footfall and take the town forward. It is a private company limited by guarantee without share capital with Directors made up of local businesses. At present the monthly meetings are mainly held on Zoom and it lacks both commercial and communications strategies; ie no website, no socials, no welcoming/introduction/helping new traders in town, no liaison with landlords on empty shops, a limited database of businesses, no enewsletter, no reporting to WTC, no social media, no editorial in local or national press or magazines.

Wymondham Town Team

"is a group of dedicated and talented volunteers who strive to improve community life for all - from residents, business, tourists and the wider community, by supporting a wide range of activities throughout the year, and stage events each year such as the popular Wynterfest in December, Community Picnic in June, Wymondham in Bloom and Vintage Day. Our membership is wide reaching with many different individuals but all with one aim: to have fun whilst reaching out across our community." Wymondham Town Team website

They are the volunteer arm of the Wymondham Business Group. They have website with a 'contact us' button, but no newsletter sign-up.

Initially set up by the Wymondham Business Group with funding from South Norfolk District Council's Market Towns Initiative. The funding stream has ended, Wymondham Town Team have been able to use the initial seed money to continue running events and Wymondham Business Group has funds of £20,000+. There is a group of volunteers, but currently no lead organiser.

Community Organisations

A social media survey has identified over 70 Wymondham community groups, clubs and organisations, the WTC website lists 15 and the Official Wymondham Town Guide circa 30.

Main Events

- Vintage Day in September - Wymondham Town Team and Wymondham Business Group
- Jazz Picnic in July - Wymondham Rotary
- Abbey Fairs at Easter, in August and in December - Clear Co CIC in partnership with Wymondham Abbey
- Abbey Duck Race at Easter - Wymondham Abbey
- Wymondham in Bloom spring/summer - Wymondham Town Team and Wymondham Business Group
- Food and Drink Festival in June - Wymondham Rotary Satellite Group
- Wynterfest in December - Wymondham Town Team and Wymondham Business Group

Events bring significant footfall into the town, and they are organised and run by dedicated volunteers, but there are issues with communication and event programming; WTC, businesses and community groups are not always aware they are planned and they do not always complement/provide benefits for local businesses, celebrate local culture/heritage to give them a unique selling point, but compete ie pop up coffee traders outside coffee shops, food traders near food outlets. According to the LGA's new report on markets, evidence of wider benefits include additional purchases and raising the profile of places by attracting new visitors, but customers expect **authenticity** in events and well designed programmes. Support is required across all event management planning areas.

Local Press

The Wymondham and Attleborough Mercury part of Newsquest's local newspaper network is no longer printed, it only has an online presence, but reporters do regularly post links to local news to Wymondham's Facebook groups.

Wymondham Magazine is a free monthly online magazine which is printed every 2 months and delivered to 8,700, but the owners are looking to become an online only publication. It is the only commercial town magazine, and has 1500 email subscribers to the digital E-

edition. A Facebook page with over 4000 followers and browsable website which receives 6000 visits per month and 11,000 page views. It was used by WTC for a limited period to publish WTC news, but the relationship broke down. As the only regular town communication this is a missed opportunity.

Wymondham online

The majority of online tourism sites have limited information, older images and few hyperlinks on Wymondham and do not appear to have been updated for some time.

Google Search

The historic market town of Wymondham was been named one of the best places to live in Britain by the Sunday Times. Judges said a range of factors were considered, including jobs, schools and broadband speed to culture, community spirit and local shops.

Trip Advisor top attractions to visit in Wymondham according to Tripadvisor travellers are:

[Wymondham Abbey](#)
[Kimberley Hall](#)
[Wymondham Heritage Museum](#)
[Wymondham Market Cross](#)
[Wymondham Arts Centre](#)

Trip Advisor most popular things to do in Wymondham with children are:

[Wymondham Abbey](#)
[Cavick House Farm Egg Shop & Cafe](#)
[Wymondham Heritage Museum](#)

Visit Norfolk and Visit East of England websites:

Visit Norfolk and Visit East of England website 'Wymondham' search lists only Mid Norfolk Railway, Leisure Centre, Abbey, Heritage Museum and Wades Pit, but do not have a listing for Becket's Chapel. The Green Dragon has an entry, but doesn't appear on the search as 'Wymondham' does not appear in the title or description.

Visit Norfolk Wymondham listing

"Wymondham (pronounced Win-dum), on the Norwich to Cambridge railway line, is full of ancient buildings including the Market Cross and the ruins of the 900 year old Benedictine Abbey in the Tiffey Valley. Just outside the town is Kett's Oak, named after landowner Robert Kett who led a peasants' revolt against enclosures of common land in Norwich in 1549. After giving the Kings' men a bloody nose he was eventually captured and executed at Norwich Castle with his brother William. The Wymondham Heritage Museum has an exhibit on Kett's Rebellion. The town is also the eastern terminus of the Mid-Norfolk Railway to Dereham. A very different form of transport also finds its home close to Wymondham – the sports car manufacturer Lotus."

Visit East of England Wymondham listing

“Historic market town – which has more listed buildings than any similar-sized town in Norfolk, including the 17th C. octagonal market cross. In Norman times, a priory was established – the great twin-towered Abbey Church remaining today. Birthplace of Robert Kett, who in 1549 led a rebellion against the enclosure of common land.”

www.visiteastofengland.com offers free listings for businesses and events to promote/ showcase what's on etc and Visit East of England also manages Visit Norfolk www.visitnorfolk.co.uk and Visit Suffolk www.visitsuffolk.com, with all three sites sharing the same system. So, by adding a listing to Visit East of England it will also be listed on either Visit Norfolk or Visit Suffolk too with no double entering needed.

<https://benorfolk.co.uk> The BeNorfolk platform has been created by EXPERIENCE, a €24.5 million project co-financed by the European Regional Development Fund (€16.9 million) through the Interreg France (Channel) England Programme. It is designed to develop the experiential off-season economy in a sustainable way. The project runs from September 2019 to June 2023 and involves 14 partners in France and England. It is managed by Norfolk County Council, which is piloting sustainable approaches to tourism. EXPERIENCE aims to capitalise on the emerging global trend for local tourism and engagement with the great outdoors, heritage, and culture.

Be Norfolk states that it recommends hundreds of unforgettable new Norfolk experiences, all handpicked by locals with ready-made itineraries, linking passions and interests or use the filters to search and save your own Norfolk activities. Some are paid for, many are free with the emphasis on sustainable, accessible things to do, making the most of low season travel. You can download a bespoke itinerary to a calendar and share with friends.

A search of Wymondham only finds 3 activities, Guided Historic Walking Tours, wooden spoon making in nearby Wicklewood and the 200 mile Rebellion Way Cycle route, this is the guided walk information:

“For a great day out in South Norfolk, visit the beautiful medieval market town of Wymondham. Just under 10 miles from Norwich, it's been a community since the time of Norfolk's earliest human settlements and is mentioned in the Domesday Book. The centre of town still looks much as it would have done in the 17th century and there's no better way to explore than on a history walk. Locals and visitors will enjoy the company of expert tour guide Georgette Vale, as she shares intriguing insights into the town's fascinating past. Find out more about the iconic Market Cross, the Great Fire and the twin-towered Benedictine abbey whose atmospheric ruins stand in the river meadows. Discover the heritage industries of brush-making and wood-turning. And, with the Right to Roam movement growing ever stronger, find out what really happened in 1549 when Robert Kett led a rebellion protesting the enclosure of common land. Georgette has great experience delivering talks to people with disabilities. She can adapt the tour to Level 2 BSL and offer audio description and touch tours for visually impaired people. The route can be adapted for wheelchair use and guided 'sits' may also be available for those unable to walk far, or in times of nasty weather. Tours for clubs and groups can be arranged in evenings and weekends. And Georgette is fully bi-lingual in French and English so une visite guidée en français est aussi possible. Téléphoner Georgette pour les renseignements.”

Other sites include:

<https://www.explorenorfolkuk.co.uk/wymondham-uk.html>

<http://www.tournorfolk.co.uk/wymondham.html>

<https://www.britainexpress.com/attractions.htm?attraction=2991>

South Norfolk and Broadland Council website Wymondham information only links to car park information:

"Just ten miles South West of Norwich, sits the bustling market town of Wymondham on the Norwich to Cambridge train line. With its iconic 17th century Market Cross still standing majestically in the centre of town, Wymondham is also home to the 900 year old Wymondham Abbey, 15th century inn, heritage museum and the popular Wymondham music festival. This charming Norfolk town has a lot to offer in the 21st century. Every Friday is market day from 9am until 2:30pm, and on the third Saturday of each month, Wymondham Farmers' Market offers a wide range of beautiful local produce and mouth-watering treats available from 9am until 1pm. If you're planning to visit Norwich make sure you take the short detour along the A11 to Wymondham to experience its' lively atmosphere and bags of character. Find out more information on [where to park in Wymondham](#)."

Muddy Stilettos online news and media website with 275k subscribers, 80,000 social followers and a 1.2 million reach in total highly targeted audience of ABC1 affluent women frequently publishes editorial and advertising to direct visitors to the best places to eat, drink, stay, shop and play whilst visiting East Anglia. In November 2022 they published top 250 places to live in England with Wymondham coming 3rd in Norfolk <https://norfolk.muddystilettos.co.uk/best-places-to-live/norfolk/wymondham/> this was promoted across their socials and enewsletter, but not capitalised on by WTC or local business.

Socials

On Facebook and Instagram there is a significant Wymondham user generated content, it is a very photogenic town, this includes reviews, photography, video etc posted by influencers, Wymondham organisations, residents and visitors that is not being capitalised on.

3. Wymondham brand identity, marketing, town's messaging: is it clear, concise, and consistent across all channels, what is its' accuracy, relevancy, and appropriateness of the content

Background: in 2013 as part of the Market Towns Initiative a new town logo representing the Wymondham Abbey arches and tagline 'A Market Town Apart' were launched. The logo and tagline are not widely known or recognised with residents largely unaware of it and only a couple of businesses able to identify the logo and tagline, despite it being on the town's Shoppers Map Signs in car parks and on the high street and in the Pay & Display Car Park signs.

2015 Area Action Plan out forward and appealing vision for Wymondham of establishing a 'Kett's Country' pastoral landscape of grassland, woodland, farmland, hedgerow and wetland habitats.

Wymondham Neighbourhood Plan August 2022 published Wymondham's vision statement

"One Wymondham: a traditional and vibrant market town in the Norfolk countryside with an inclusive community that values its; heritage and green-spaces whilst embracing the future"

The logo has stood the test of time and still looks modern and distinctive, but apart from on the Shoppers Map Signs is not used by WTC or as a 'stamp of approval' by businesses on their communications. The vision outlined is not translated into any positive communications/platforms about Wymondham.

Evaluate the effectiveness of communication channels: evaluating their reach, engagement, and feedback. Determine which channels are most effective and which ones need improvement

WTC currently has very limited communication with no newsletter and its' main Facebook Page and Farmer's Market Pages have relatively low followings and low engagement. More/better quality ie images/video need to be used, increased frequency of posting, tagged content, followers cultivated or an alternative strategy ie leave the main Facebook to be run by WTC staff and put together a new socials strategy for the Farmer's Market Facebook Page and take this over from the local resident who has indicated they are in agreement to hand over posting responsibility. Communication with business, residents and community groups could be via a monthly newsletter and socials linked to a new dedicated residents and visitors website and a monthly article in the Wymondham Magazine.

Competitor Analysis

All areas of Norfolk apart from South Norfolk have Destination Management Organisations (DMO) that take a lead role in managing and developing tourism in their respective areas to support and promote their areas visitor economy, they are:

- Visit North Norfolk '*Home to the deep history coast*'
- Visit Norwich '*City of Stories*'
- Visit the Broads - no tagline
- Visit Great Yarmouth - no tagline
- Visit West Norfolk '*Freedom to explore, truly special place of unspoilt charm and natural beauty*'
- Visit Breckland '*Explore Breckland*'

They have visitor websites and active socials and work with Visit Norfolk managed by Visit East Anglia Ltd, trading as Visit East of England, who is responsible for promoting the county's tourism offering, primarily through the Visit Norfolk website and developing promotional initiatives and working with the Norfolk DMO's to grow the county's visitor economy which supports some 69,266 jobs, 19.5% of all employment in Norfolk (2019 Volume and Value figures). The visitor economy is the largest industry sector in the county, worth £3.423 billion in 2019.

Visit Norfolk within the national context with its partner organisations, regional and national bodies to promote the county. The national tourism structure is:

Visit Britain: Britain's national tourism agency, responsible for marketing Britain overseas, working with thousands of organisations in the UK and overseas. Visit Britain promotes Britain in 35 markets around the world via a range of campaigns, and also promotes the tourism industry within the UK itself. Their consumer facing website is www.visitbritain.com.

Visit England: The strategic leadership body representing the public and private sector stakeholders of English Tourism. Visit England works in partnership with Visit Britain, local and regional DMOs, and the private sector, creating a national tourism strategy, optimising marketing investment, and developing the visitor experience across England.

Visit East of England: A business-led, not-for-profit organisation to promote tourism across the region. VEE is also the visitor economy sector group of New Anglia Local Enterprise Partnership. Visit East of England works closely with Greater Anglia, the East Anglian rail franchise operator, and has established links with London Stansted Airport and other gateways.

These DMO's are working hard for their areas and ensuring their visitor attractions are seen on socials and promoted by Visit Norfolk.

As an example since 1 January 2023 Visit Norfolk the percentage of Instagram posts about each area have been:

38% West Norfolk
38% North Norfolk
6.5% Broads
6.5% Norwich
6.5% Great Yarmouth
3% South Norfolk

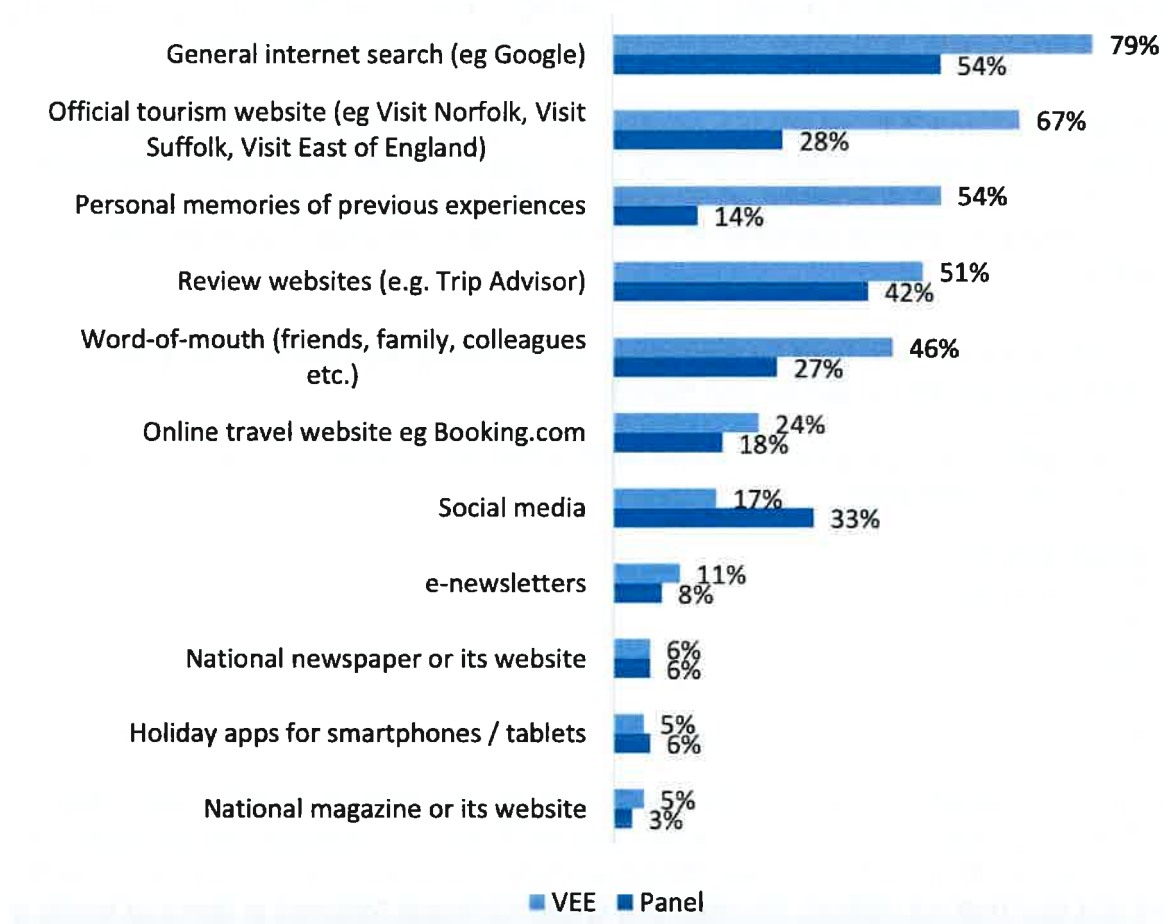
Visit East of England Consumer Sentiment Survey January 2022 dataset of respondents, North Norfolk (including Cromer and Wells-next-the-Sea) was the most popular area of the East of England. Almost three in five (58%) had visited the areas and a further 21% were aware of it (but had not visited). Norwich and Great Yarmouth followed in terms of levels of visitation (49% and 46% respectively). However, more respondents were aware of East Suffolk and West Norfolk (but not visited) when compared to Great Yarmouth. **At the other end of the scale, Ipswich and the Shotley Peninsula, South Norfolk and Babergh / Mid Suffolk and Constable County achieved the lowest levels of awareness.** Just over half (52%) of visitor groups from the VEE sample were couples and under a quarter (23%) were family units. Family units accounted for two in five (41%) visitor groups when looking at the the panel dataset. This proportion increased to 54% when intergenerational families (with grandparents) and extended families (with relatives) were included.

How visitors source for information and communication is important as it underlines what the focus and spend should be and the importance of linking local promotional activity to official East Anglian tourist websites and ensuring websites and socials are search engine optimised. Respondents were asked to identify the top three attributes they associate with the East of England.

VEE respondents selected maritime attributes such as beaches, coastline and seaside resorts, followed by Historical/Heritage/Country Estates and walking and cycling activities.

Panel respondents also identified the coastline, beaches and seaside resorts as key attributes but, as seen previously, they also see the region as being family friendly, with many family visitor attractions. They also highlight events, festivals and outdoor activities as well as shopping. Finally, they associate the region with offering luxury and being touristy.

Information sourcing and communication



Individual market towns in Norfolk have also raised their game by establishing resident/visitor websites, socials, monthly enewsletters and monthly business enewsletters, developing their internal networks and external communications and PR to showcase their towns and offering resident discount schemes. Good examples of this are Holt and further afield Bury St Edmunds

Also DMO's and towns that have marketing and communications strategies are increasing their social interaction with visitors using User Generated Content (the UGC trend) by influencers and the general public to more effectively capture authentic visitor interest in their areas.

South Norfolk has numerous high profile influencers living near Wymondham and there is considerable unused Wymondham UGC already on socials.

Socials Comparison

Organisation	Facebook Followers	Instagram Followers
Visit North Norfolk (in partnership with North Norfolk District Council)	24000	16200
Official Tourism Visit Norwich	21428	21400
Official Tourism Visit Norfolk	21000	4016
Visit the Broads (Broads Authority)	16000	1767
Official Tourism East of England	8500	12200
Visit Great Yarmouth (Greater Yarmouth Tourism Business Improvement District)	8200	322
Love Holt (Holt Chamber of Trade & Commerce)	3100	5186
Holt Market	2900	3994
Creake Abbey Market	2800	5938
Black Barn Salhouse Market	2200	2016
Visit West Norfolk (Borough Kings Lynn & West Norfolk Council)	n/a	1074
Aylsham Town Council	1926	n/a
Diss Town Council	1900	1042
Aylsham Market & Country Market	1700	277
Wymondham Farmers Market	1500	n/a
Attleborough Town Council	1200	
Redenhall with Harleston Town Council	949	143
Wymondham Town Council	755	n/a
Visit Breckland	593	44
Attleborough Market/Makers Market	569	n/a
Harleston Business Forum	568	213
Diss Farmers Market	223	n/a
Aylsham Business and Enterprise Forum	197	1

Heritage Trails

Thetford, Holt, Fakenham and many other Norfolk towns have physical heritage trails. The Holt Owl Trail <https://www.holtowltrail.co.uk> provides a circular walk following a series of numbered pavement plaques around the town centre, free accompanying booklet and information boards displayed in car parks and public places advertising the trail to visitors. Cley based wildlife artist Robert Gillmor designed the logo for the bronze plaques, which feature the town's owl mascot. A total of 24 locations in the town centre, with looped trails revealing other points of interest including Holt's historic yards.

Trails and routes with free booklets are increasingly commonplace tourism products utilised to increase visitors' and local communities' appreciation and active engagement with places.



Public Art

Public art boosts tourism in communities, but whilst there are schemes underway in Norfolk, Wymondham has not been included:

“Supporting innovative public art to build the visitor economy. A vital part of the EXPERIENCE strategy for the visitor economy is to support new placemaking tourism infrastructure ensuring that neglected or off-the-beaten-track locations are given prominence by being associated with new ‘must see’ artwork or tourism products. The Norfolk Way Art Trail is a new long-distance walking and cycling route designed to pass through locations off the beaten track. The four artist concepts selected are Studio Squash’s Plain Sight installation for Boal Quay, Kings Lynn; the Iron Reef viewing platform by design studio Maetherea for the Reedham Ferry Inn site; toyStudio’s Flock sculpture for Diss Mere and Studio Sabine Marcelis’s Honing Passage for Honing Station. At Boal Quay, the Plain Sight concept will enable people to reengage with their senses and the world around them. The Flock concept at Diss Mere is inspired by the

flocking behaviour of birds in flight, schools of fish and the swarms of eels which are synonymous with the Mere. At Reedham Ferry Inn, the Iron Reef viewing platform is an amphibious structure resilient to and shaped by the ebbs and flows of winter tides. Honing Passage embraces the beauty of the local landscape along the Weaver's Way at Honing Station."

<https://www.norfolk.gov.uk/-/media/norfolk/downloads/business/norfolk-economic-intelligence-reports/norfolk-economic-intelligence-report-april-to-june-2022.pdf>

Pop up shops scheme

No Wymondham scheme such as ie The Cactus club in Woodbridge or Make Holt <https://www.makeholt.com> "Skilfully curated work by quality makers from Norfolk and nearby:

"The Shirehall a Georgian, Grade II listed, former courthouse in the centre of the market town of Holt. We have peeled back the layers on the inside of the building to create a unique and welcoming space, with a tactile mixture of soft red brick, flint, stone, and ancient wood contrasted with clean, contemporary display areas. An inspiring place for makers to sell their work to you, the discerning customer who appreciates the highest quality handmade goods for your home. We are passionate about celebrating the skills of our makers, selected for their diverse creative skills. At Make Holt we offer them a unique opportunity to connect with buyers through our retail space, offering them the chance to tell the story of their work in store and online."



Wymondham Strength, Weaknesses, Opportunities & Threats Analysis

SWOT	
Strengths	Weaknesses
Low high street vacancy rate	Draw of Norwich on both the day-time and evening economy
Rich in heritage assets compared to other market towns	Limited marketing budget and staff resource
Local peoples sense of community, engagement, spirit and pride in the town, high level of community activity	No dedicated marketing platform/socials for district or town
Variety of retail offer and passionate and committed independent shops	1 hour free parking acts as deterrent to locals dwell time/ limited capacity for event car parking
Medium level of economic activity	Under-developed tourism offer
Excellent visitor feedback and reviews online and TripAdvisor	No marketing strategy or tourism policy
Green spaces, walks	Farmer's Market in decline
Countryside location	Limited evening economy
Easy access off A11, mainline railway and historic railway	Concern over significant number of charity shops
Opportunities	Threats
Improve relationships and collaborative working with partners and local stakeholder organisations	No South Norfolk Destination Management Organisation to support a Wymondham marketing initiative
Capitalise on the trend for staycations and UK population holidaying at home and make more of the heritage tourism offer	Concerns that population growth on top of limited infrastructure (notably car parking and transport infrastructure) will result in the town centre becoming congested
Improve green credentials/promote green Wymondham	
Promote and help develop the evening economy to encourage residents to stay local as oppose to visiting nearby Norwich and also serve to encourage extended visitor stays	Concern that Wymondham's positive outlook is propped up by a strong commuter population and that local spend is limited
Promote overnight trips as well as day trips by link selling local accommodation offers	Mixed interpretations regarding the impact that the large scale housing development North and South of Wymondham will have on the town, its' community feel and economic future
Develop Farmers Market as the South Norfolk weekend shopping destination linking to Wymondham's independent shops, heritage attractions, antique centre and walks	Lack of secure and sustainable funding to support long term marketing/coordination role
Large scale housing development could bring footfall into the town	Lack of skills and capacity at Wymondham Town Council to fulfil marketing need
Improve/join up businesses, stakeholder and community communications to ensure participation and support of towns activities continues	
Establish Wymondham as a place to do business and expand the business community collaboration/create a pop up offer	
Create better links and use of areas through improved signage/development of town heritage and nature trails	
Public realm improvements	

5. Based on the audit findings, identify areas for improvement in the town's marketing and communication strategy and develop a marketing plan

Marketing Plan

Wymondham appears to have not been too negatively impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic, as the average vacancy rate 6.2% is below the Norfolk average and UK average town centre vacancy rate of 13.9% (LDC, 2022).

Generally, the increase in online shopping has continued across Great Britain, as online shopping now accounts for 26.2% of goods purchased, (data August 2021, Statista, 2021), this has increased from 19.4% in August 2019. In the last two years online retail purchases soared to 37% in January 2021 - a record high. Since lockdowns have eased the percentage of online retail purchases has declined.

There are new businesses due to open on the high street and others looking for units.

Wymondham has all the assets to be a thriving town, but it requires sustained marketing of its sense of place, vibrancy, destination and unique selling points through a residents tourism website, monthly newsletter, social media, film/video and new projects that generate civic pride and visitor interest/draw in footfall and spend. It needs to market itself to both its residents, Norfolk and further afield visitors, communicating with a clear distinctive brand and positioning on a frequent basis to build and nurture long term relationships and sustained footfall.

It also needs to recognise and adapt to meet the changing needs of the consumer and how they digest information; hyper localisation is likely to continue as some companies look to adopt agile or permanent home-working models. This means that there will be a larger percentage of the population staying at home who may be more likely to shop on their local high street more often and during the week, weekend as opposed to weekday shoppers, new housing estate residents and visitors.

This all requires the collaborative working of the town council, district council, businesses, other stakeholders, community organisations in new partnerships, joined up thinking, capacity management, leadership, marketing and communication strategy.

Short term, medium actions and projects:

Short Term

1.Brand Identity: update brand identity to differentiate Wymondham and make it memorable, engender pride; logo, colour palette, and a tagline that reflects the town's personality and vision that's consistent across all marketing channels ie brochures, websites, advertising and social media.

Whilst it would be ideal to create a fresh brand identity, the recommendation in the short term is to use the existing Market Towns logo, colours and tagline, as they are not widely known or recognised, look modern and would enable communications especially on social media to be up and running almost immediately.

Use Wymondham logo as stamp of approval in all communications and make available to businesses/organisations as part of new Business Toolkit. Research shows that when

consumers know that a business is part of a town organisation they are more likely to think favourably of it.

Develop Wymondham hashtags to use across all media:

#visitwymondham #amarkettownapart #visitsouthnorfolk #wymondhamfarmersmarket

Cost: £0 Wymondham Coordinator Time tbc

2 Website: Create a 'Visit Wymondham' website for visitors/residents alike to provide information on town's heritage attractions, shopping, activities, events, accommodation etc. linked socials feeds; it should also be easy to navigate, visually appealing, and optimised for search engines with a home page enewsletter sign up.

In doing so, this would highlight to consumers what the town has to offer and to other service providers possible gaps in the market, which may help to encourage new investment. It would need to be linked to/communicated to Visit Norfolk to utilise the town centre as linked trips relating to tourism. Could be linked to free wi-fi (see below), the website could be the landing page for town centre visitors accessing the free wi-fi.

The Visit Wymondham website and socials should also be used to coordinate community activity and keep the sense of community engagement, bringing together the various clubs and groups that are active locally which are regarded as a real asset in the town and valuable potential Wymondham champions.

Promotion of the new website could be done around the town using signage similar to the new bus timetable signage with QR codes as well as posters, flyers, magazine advertorials and on new socials.



Cost Initial Design & Build Outlay £1,500 Maintenance £240 Hosting £60 Annual On Costs £300

Wymondham Coordinator Time: set up time as required plus maintenance; content updates, monthly blog which can in turn be used for email marketing and broken down into three socials posts three times a week, regular checking for broken links, monthly check and reporting of analytics: 16 hours per month

3 Visit Wymondham Social Media: Set up Visit Wymondham social media platforms initially Facebook and Instagram and build following to promote Wymondham to a wide audience; encouraging new housing estate residents to make the town part of their weekly

activities and potential visitors their next destination, showcasing the town's unique features, sharing photos and videos of local events and attractions, and promoting special deals and offers:

Create a content calendar that highlights what the town has to offer that appeals to broad range of audiences, interests and preferences.

Highlight the town's amenities, sharing pictures and information about the food and drink offers, shopping, heritage attractions, parks, community organisations, schools, showing how these amenities make the town a desirable place to live/visit.

Showcase local businesses to show new residents/visitors what they can expect from the local high street etc.

Share information about upcoming events in the town such as festivals, concerts, and community events. This will help new residents feel like part of the community.

Partner with local influencers to promote the town in order to reach a wider audience and add credibility to your message.

Monitor and respond to comments, questions or concerns. promptly and professionally.

Regularly evaluate the success of your social media plan by tracking metrics such as engagement, reach, and follower growth.

Cost £ tbc Wymondham Coordinator Time: 8 hours per month to create content calendar and content, measure and report

4 Events: Town centre businesses crave footfall and festivals and events have the potential to deliver this. Wymondham has a good programme of events, but there is a need to ensure event organisers are better supported with marketing and programme planning to ensure events complement the existing high street, they engage and involve businesses more effectively to enable them to get more out of the events and they have a unique draw ie reflecting Wymondham's history using local wooden spoon carvers, spinners etc. or theming an event ie Dickensian etc or the county council running a series of events, as is done in Bury St Edmunds and was rolled out across 10 Leicestershire Towns: Leicestershire by the Sea, followed by Jurassic Leicestershire then in the final year Pirates of Leicestershire. These all involved putting giant sandpits into the town centre and carrying out associated activities. Some events were one day others lasted a week. Leicestershire County Council purchased the initial infrastructure of sandpits, deckchairs, safety mats, buckets and spades etc. Utilising Highway Department within LCC this then moved around the towns and it was then up to each town if they carried out street trails, window dressing competitions or associated activities. By sharing infrastructure costs, risk assessments etc. and carrying out joint marketing activities, this substantially reduced costs. The infrastructure was then passed to one of the towns to co-ordinate once the funding ran out and the sandpits still exist today.

Create a simple event toolkit for event organisers within local organisations and provide WTC support, guidance and funding.

Wymondham Coordinator Time: tbc

5. Business & Heritage Attractions Support: create a business/heritage health-check, marketing toolkit and accessible local training offer.

Enable businesses and heritage attractions to be digitally literate/using social media across key platforms ie Facebook and Instagram, and able to engage with potential customers and interact with Visit Wymondham socials, build customer databases and communicate via enewsletters.

Ensure cross promotion at heritage sites/shops etc with leaflets and they are using leaflet distribution options such as <https://www.best4promotions.co.uk> who have over 140 floor standing racks sited in high profile venues throughout Norfolk, Suffolk and beyond.



Work with local business/heritage attractions to offer special deals or packages ie local restaurants, hotels, and attractions to encourage visitors to stay longer.

Review with businesses promotional options ie Norfolk Passport: free-to-join membership programme giving members exclusive perks across leading Norfolk experiences, representing some of Norfolk's leading brands, offering 10% off, special perks such as 50% savings at new locations or private menu tastings, weekly email to members 'Norfolk Top 5' postcard or town gift card - see 17. Loyalty Schemes.

Review of business practices ie opening hours; consumers want convenience and retailers/service providers need to respond accordingly.

Continue to offer SNBC Business Builder Grant when available

Wymondham Coordinator Time: tbc

6. Print Materials & Distribution: create DL leaflets, flyers to promote the town and Visit Wymondham website to residents and visitors. Distribute to residents, local accommodation, other high-traffic areas and use tourist leaflet distribution service ie <https://www.best4promotions.co.uk> who have over 140 floor standing

racks sited in high profile venues throughout Norfolk, Suffolk and beyond.

Visit Wymondham website adverts on the backs of buses.

Create poster campaign as they have at other historic centres, see Ely example below with evocative images of Wymondham's heritage attractions for the mainline railway station, under the fire arch, at either Becketswell Meadow entrance and or Mid Norfolk Wymondham and Dereham stations. These assets can also be used on socials and for a PR campaign.



Create new visitor printed guides on Wymondham Guided Walks, Nature Walks etc for Tourist Information Centre. Leaflets would also be digital and linked to the Visit Wymondham website and Visit Norfolk, Be Norfolk and listed on Eventbrite as free activities.

Input into relaunched "Discover South Norfolk Guide" https://issuu.com/onepresspublishing/docs/sng_web tbc.

Cost £ tbc Wymondham Coordinator Time: tbc

7 Farmers Market revitalisation of the Saturday market making it and Wymondham a weekend shopping, food and drink, heritage destination.

Create a stand alone brand with a new logo, printed materials ie flyers for distribution to residents, use the existing Facebook page, add an Instagram page and add to new Visit Wymondham website, curate the stalls, invite hand picked traders to grow the interest and footfall, email stallholders with socials assets and printable posters and leaflets to advertise the market.

Other ideas longer term:

"Teenage Market support package. The Teenage Market license, and advice on how to run the market, was provided to 6 local authorities. As we moved into Q4 and the summer period, these local authorities were able to run their first markets. Again, the feedback received was overwhelmingly positive, with most of the local authorities indicating their intention to run further events. Given the importance of engaging younger people in our high streets, this product is invaluable as means of offering young people a stake in their high street, whilst at the same time helping to activate it, increasing vitality to the benefit of all." High /Street Task Force

Logo, Posters, Flyers Design Cost £1,200 + VAT Print cost tbc Wymondham Coordinator Time: 8 hours per month to create content calendar and content, measure and report

8. Network bring together all the separate organisations.

Support Wymondham Business Group to be more inclusive, so open to not just businesses but the whole Wymondham community; organisations, clubs, societies and residents and develop a commercial strategy that is supported by Wymondham Town Coordinator who will provide the Visit Wymondham website, socials, monthly newsletter, PR campaign etc

Suggest reviewing its' structure since as a limited company not likely to be eligible for as many sources of funding as Community Interest Companies and eligible for far less than charities:

Support WBG to develop own commercial strategy which could include:

- Develop welcome pack for new traders and be contactable help and support
- Continue to support and develop events with Wymondham Town Team and WTC
- Help campaign/apply for grants
- Help promote empty shops
- Help promote Pop up scheme
- Quarterly KPI report to WTC on health of town
- Comparison rent/rates per square footage and parking income to other South \Norfolk market towns and destination towns Southwold, Holt etc
- Provide support to businesses already located in Wymondham

Wymondham Coordinator Time: 2-4 hours monthly meeting

9. Heritage Trail create a physical Heritage Trail linking Wymondham from end to end to include the town's heritage assets Wymondham Abbey, the Mid-Norfolk Railway, Becket's Chapel, Wymondham Heritage Museum, the Market Cross, Town Green and green spaces encouraging exploration of the whole town, footfall, visitor spend and overnight stays.

Wymondham Heritage Society have all the information and most of the images required to produce a booklet in their "A walk around old Wymondham" book and have indicated they would like to collaborate on this project.

There could be either plaques on buildings which there are already a few of, or short term vinyl stickers on pavements to get the trail up and running quickly and wall plaques/or pavement plaques at a later date, information signs in car parks and public places advertising the trail to visitors and a free trail booklet available at key points.



There could also be trails that combine visits to several towns. This could exploit common themes (such as food and drink or heritage) or highlight proximity. Journey times between some towns are relatively short and whereas they might regard themselves as competitors, there may well be scope to develop complementary offers.

Other longer term ideas could be Nature and Water Trails with stamps/brass rubbing activity point for children as seen at Roarr Dinosaur Adventure, temporary 'painted' walking routes leading people to particular attractions.



32 page Full Colour DL Booklet x 20k Print Cost £3,822 Wymondham Coordinator Time: tbc

10 Database Launch and grow Wymondham database of residents, visitors, businesses, community groups and email monthly 'Things to do in Wymondham this month' Partnership with schools databases of parents of pupils, local parents of ex pupils, ex pupils living locally, staff, Mid Norfolk Railway database Polar Express (sold 43,000 tickets Christmas 2022) etc. large local business, build database using town wifi data if installed.

Wymondham Coordinator Time: tbc

11 PR campaign and editorial in local and national press and magazines as applicable promoting Wymondham's success, its' wealth of heritage attractions, high street and attractiveness as a place to visit, live and work. This should have at least two strands, emphasising both the rich and diverse tourism offer, but also the attractiveness of Wymondham as a place to establish and grow a business, serve to develop a Wymondham identity for tourists and businesses, as well as improving local communication. Crucially, this should be a multi-medium/channel approach on social media and the website too.

Wymondham should be promoted as the town at the heart of South Norfolk/Kett's Country could serve as an emotive branding message for the town and its' tourism offer and one that would capitalise on its central and strategic location in South Norfolk/Tiffey Valley served by a good road and rail network. Linking Wymondham and its' surrounding tourist attractions; zoo, gardens, vineyards, brewery tours, experiences, high quality Airbnb's, award winning glamping sites as a base for a longer trip open all year round.

Showcase local products/producers; give recognition to the making heritage of Wymondham and help bring forward a new generation of producers/designers/makers and use this as the basis for collective marketing.

Use local muddy van artist Ruddy Muddy <https://www.ruddymuddyart.com> to create 'secret' Banksy-esque art around Wymondham to create a PR story and add contemporary art to the Wymondham street scene.

Wymondham Coordinator Time: 7 hours per month

12. Online information Update official Visit Norfolk and Visit East of England websites and other main tourist sites with someone info and images

Wymondham Coordinator Time: as required

Medium Term

14. Film: create a Wymondham film for Visit Wymondham website and Visit Norfolk website and film main events for website and socials assets.

Cost tbc

15. Public Art Whether permanent or temporary, public art can play an important role in helping to convey the image of a town and attract visitors. Public art trails have been used to good effect to attract and retain visitors and can be a good way of involving Community Groups in the Town Centre via the design of the art as a means of giving people

interesting things to look at and/or which can form a pleasant backdrop to shopping/leisure experiences.

Appropriate and well considered investment in public art has been shown to generate visitor interest, leading to greater expenditure and thereby supporting employment. For example, the economic impact assessment of The Angel of the North demonstrated the value to the local economy in terms of its role as a visitor attraction and as a symbol of regeneration, helping to attract further public and private sector investment. Benefits ranged from a nearby pub becoming a hotel and investing in the development of a new accommodation block to businesses reporting that levels of recognition had increased markedly through association with a local landmark that has become famous internationally.

Explore creating own installations in collaboration with heritage attractions and businesses.

Cost tbc

17. Loyalty Scheme localised marketing campaign introduce limited-edition reusable cups featuring the artwork of popular illustrator, or “I ❤️ Wym” and encourage consumers to take pictures and post on social media using the hashtag #ilovewym.

Create Visit Wymondham Loyalty Card/Club.



Cost tbc

18 WiFi Provision of free WiFi within the town centre to complement the app-based heritage trail and town centre information Wym Trail developing a platform, such as an

electronic Digital Noticeboard which can be used to inform residents, businesses and key stakeholders of projects and plans in the town.

Background

Consumer expectations are that WiFi access is regarded as a 'must have'.

Evidence

In the UK 60%+ people now use a mobile device to access the internet, with trends showing that those numbers will increase further. For example Hinckley's BID website (www.hinckleybid.co.uk) attracts in excess of 5,000 visits a month, around 70% of access is via mobile devices.

The public access WiFi in Hinckley provides free public on-line access throughout public spaces to all visitors within the core town centre, to allow them to access the internet. It also enables the BID to gather the basic data of those using the WiFi, allowing it to monitor visitor profiles, frequency of visits etc. This data can then be used by the system to allow the BID team to send messages to visitors via social media, email or SMS (text).

Rationale

The connected customer requires content that is engaging and most importantly continually refreshed. It is not enough to just install WiFi, apps or set up social media accounts influencers are required to make best use of the digital tool box to sell the place and well as showing SME's how they can contribute to creating the sense of place.

Basis of Project

Users would be required to register for free WiFi, enabling Wymondham to build up a database of contacts to whom electronic messages could be sent in a targeted and low cost fashion. The landing page for free WiFi could be Visit Wymondham website which in turn could be used to identify places of interest to consumers in order to maximise their spending and provide them with a more satisfying visitor experience.

Timescale and Resources

Initial costs to install the Wi-Fi in the case of Hinckley was £30,000 and then £7000 per annum running costs. Installation costs are obviously dependant on the number of transmitters required to cover the town centre.

There is evidence that the private sector is willing to invest in free WiFi – Leicester City centre recently put out a tender for a provider and BT are fulfilling this.

Potential Deliverables

In the first 12 months free Wi-fi in Hinckley town centre attracted more than 4,000 registered users all of which can now be contacted through the portal and many of these users have also signed up to follow the BID on its social media platforms, doubling its social media following.

Cost tbc

19. Parking

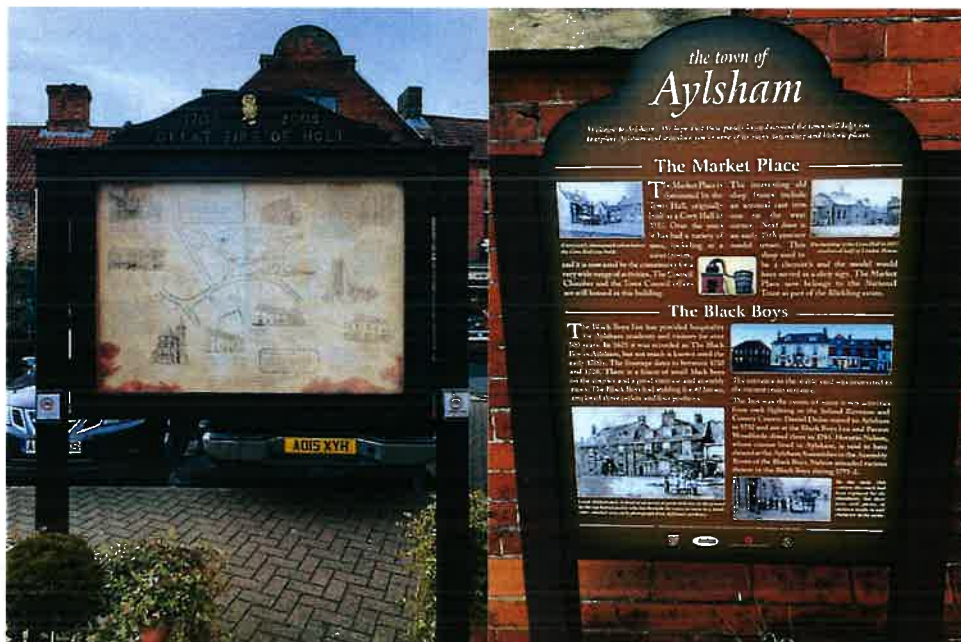
Improving the town's car parking 'how to use' information/signage and promotion on WTC, SNBC and future Visit Wymondham website and socials, creating weekend parking options for events using underutilised space, such as school playgrounds.

Also “Promoting a better public transport system (61%), more electric vehicle recharging points (49%) and a better provision for Active Travel (cycling, walking etc.) are seen as the most important area of activity to drive sustainable tourism development across the region. A local green tourism certification is seen favourably as a good marketing tool and to highlight the work that’s already being done by many businesses in the region” Visit East of England – Business Survey August 2022

Cost tbc

20. Signage install attractive signage:

- Farmers Market on all town entrances
- History of Wymondham sign on the Market Cross incorporating heritage attractions
- Add Town Green to existing high street signage
- Becketswell Meadow signage to Abbey and town and History of Wymondham sign incorporating heritage attractions to visit
- Lamp post banners for events/heritage attractions
- Town Courtyards: improved signage linking to traders and courts so that visitors are less likely to walk past the many shops/cafes which are hidden from view in the town's courts as successfully seen in Holt.
- Town Heritage Trail Signs
- Town centre interactive screen





Town Gateways Consistent with the development of a brand and creation of a sense of place, there is scope to repeat the market signage and to also enhance the visitor experience with planting at the Wymondham sign entrances.

Cost tbc

21. Seating increased use of local public spaces such as the Market Place and Priory Gardens by adding moveable/fixed as appropriate to the space ie picnic tables as in Harleston. Such areas could be used during market as outside social spaces for cafe customers and as an outdoor venue to hold an increased programme of events, summer activities and leisure opportunities.



Cost tbc

1. **Pop Up Shops** work with landlords to make use of vacant shops as temporary pop up shops with signage advertising 'use of a day, a week, a month" etc. There may also be scope for partnerships with local colleges to provide a pop up shop/market stall opportunities to students in fashion, crafts jewellery etc., use empty properties as Art Galleries etc.
2. **Derelict buildings/sites:** notable and longstanding derelict buildings/sites which are blighting the townscape as well as representing unrealised assets for the town. More promotion of local opportunities to potential investors and new businesses, the development of a business marketing campaign and supporting investor prospectus may be worthwhile to establish a greater business culture and create diversity of local employment opportunities, beyond just tourism.
3. **Engage with visitors/residents:** it's essential to engage with visitors and residents and gather feedback to continue to improve the town's marketing efforts. Conducting surveys or collecting reviews to learn more about what visitors/residents like and how you can improve their experience will be important going forward.

Monitor progress: Regularly monitor and evaluate the town's communication strategy to ensure that it is effective and meeting the needs of residents, businesses, and other stakeholders tbc

References/resources

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