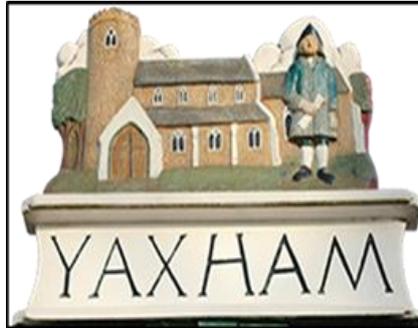


SCAN ME FOR MORE DETAILS



VILLAGE NEWSLETTER



Grab a Chair!

WEDNESDAY 22nd

April 2026 The
Annual Parish
Meeting starts at
6.30pm, in the
Myhill Room at
Yaxham Village
Hall

For more information: visit <https://www.breckland.gov.uk/neighbourhood> - planning/yaxham/referendum

NOTICE OF REFERENDUM

Referendum on the making (adoption) of the Neighbourhood Plan for Yaxham

1. A Referendum will be held on **Thursday, 19 March 2026** to decide on the question below:

"Do you want Breckland Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Yaxham to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"

2. Applications to register to vote must reach the Electoral Registration Officer before **midnight on Tuesday 3 March 2026**. Applications can be made online: <https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote>.
3. New applications to vote by post can be made online: [Apply for a postal vote - GOV.UK \(www.gov.uk\)](https://www.gov.uk/apply-for-a-postal-vote) or amendments or cancellations of postal votes must reach the Electoral Registration Officer at BRECKLAND COUNCIL, ELIZABETH HOUSE, WALPOLE LOKE DEREHAM, NORFOLK, NR19 1EE by **5pm, Wednesday 4 March 2026**.
4. New applications to vote by proxy can be made online: <https://www.gov.uk/apply-proxy-vote> and must reach the Electoral Registration Officer at the above address by **5pm, Wednesday 11 March 2026**
5. Applications to vote by proxy at this Referendum applied for on the grounds of physical incapacity, or because of a work reason that occurred after **5pm, Wednesday 11 March 2026** must reach the Electoral Registration Officer at BRECKLAND COUNCIL, ELIZABETH HOUSE, WALPOLE LOKE, DEREHAM, NORFOLK, NR19 1EE by **5pm, Thursday 19 March 2026**

Dear Resident,

As Chairman of the Yaxham Neighbourhood Plan Working Group, I am writing to provide a final update on the progress of our Plan Review. Following the successful completion of the Regulation 14 and 16 consultations and the independent examination, the final stage is now a community referendum.

The Referendum will take place on Thursday, 19 March 2026. You will be asked: *"Do you want Breckland Council to use the Neighbourhood Plan for Yaxham to help it decide planning applications in the neighbourhood area?"*

Why your participation matters. Our current Neighbourhood Plan is now over five years old. Under national planning rules, when a local authority (like Breckland) cannot show a 5-year housing land supply, the "tilted balance" is applied to planning decisions. This means the Council is often required to grant permission for new housing unless the harm significantly outweighs the benefits.

National policy provides a "safety net" for communities with a Neighbourhood Plan that is five years old or less and contains housing allocations. In these cases, the Council can continue to refuse developments that conflict with the local plan, even during a housing land shortage.

The result of this referendum will determine whether our updated plan—which includes the latest local design and infrastructure policies—becomes part of the statutory development plan for Yaxham.

Voting Information If you are registered to vote, you will receive a poll card shortly

Location, date & time to vote

Yaxham Village Hall, Thursday, 19 March 2026. 7am - 10pm

Thank you for your continued engagement throughout the review process. Below is a helpful FAQ document and the "Notice of Referendum".

Further details can be found on both Breckland's and Yaxham Parish Council website, or scan the QR code on the front page.

Many thanks, Gary Osborn, Chairman, Yaxham Neighbourhood Plan2 Working Group.

Yaxham Neighbourhood Plan Review: Frequently Asked Questions

What is a "Made" Neighbourhood Plan? A "Made" plan is a formal planning document that has been approved by the community in a referendum and adopted by Breckland Council. It becomes a legal part of the Development Plan, meaning the Council must use its policies when deciding whether to approve or refuse planning applications in Yaxham.

What is the "5-Year Housing Land Supply" and why does it matter? The government requires local councils to always have enough land ready for five years' worth of new housing. Currently, Breckland Council only has a 2.8-year supply. When this supply falls below five years, national rules (the "tilted balance") normally make it much easier for developers to get permission for sites that aren't in the local plan.

How does our Neighbourhood Plan protect us from this "Tilted Balance"? National policy (NPPF Paragraph 14) provides a "safety net" for communities. If a Neighbourhood Plan meets two specific conditions, it can still be used to refuse unplanned developments, even when the District Council has a housing shortage:

1. The plan must be 5 years old or less.
2. The plan must contain policies and allocations to meet its own housing requirements.

Why are we having a referendum now? Our original plan was made in July 2017, making it over eight years old. Because it is older than five years, it no longer triggers that specific "safety net" protection. While the plan is still a legal document, the weight it carries in planning decisions is currently "reduced" while Breckland has a land shortage.

A successful referendum on 19 March 2026 would bring the plan back under that five-year window of high protection.

Does an updated plan mean we are just "resisting change"? No. New national guidance (December 2025) encourages neighbourhood Plans to be "positive delivery tools". The updated Yaxham plan focuses on making sure any new development is well-designed, supports local infrastructure, and protects our environmental improvements.

What happens if the vote is "No"? The 2017 Neighbourhood Plan would remain in place. However, because it is more than five years old, it would continue to have "reduced weight" in planning decisions until Breckland Council completes its own new Local Plan (expected late 2026).

How do I vote? If you are registered to vote, you will receive a poll card shortly. If you are not yet registered, or wish to vote by post or proxy, please see the front page for the deadlines below:

Where & when? Yaxham Village Hall, Thursday, 19 March 2026. 7am - 10pm