



THORNDON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN 2018 - 2036

Village Data

January 2020
Thorndon Parish Council

THORNDON NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN

A Community Appraisal

July 2018



Contents

Thorndon Neighbourhood Plan

Introduction

History of the village

Thorndon today:

Small businesses

Thorndon CEVC Primary School

Thorndon Community Shop

All Saints Church

Thorndon Community Centre

Village play area

Thorndon Bowls Club

Clubs and associations

Village facilities

Environment

Parish Survey Introduction

Housing and Development

Demographics Analysis

Education

Health

Traffic and Highways

Public Services

Rural Crime and Public Safety

Thorndon Neighbourhood Plan

Introduction

History of the village

Thorndon is a village (and Civil Parish) in the District of Mid Suffolk and is located three miles south of the town of Eye. The origin of the name Thorndon traces back to Old English meaning 'Thorn Hill', coming from 'þorn' meaning a hawthorn-tree and 'dūn' meaning a hill.

The village has a strong farming heritage and was first mentioned in the Domesday Book of 1086; it was described as 'hill where thorn trees grow' and had a recorded population of 46 with livestock consisting of 31 pigs, 2 cobs, 15 cattle and 24 sheep.

By 1337 ownership of the village moved to Robert de Ufford who made his mark on the Manor by building All Saints' Church; this became, and remains, a dominating feature in the area (listed as grade II since 1955).

The first school in the village was built in 1833 for infants and was turned into a reformatory in 1856 by Sir Edward Kerrison. The current school was opened in 1873 and is built on the site of the Workhouse.

The earliest records of Thorndon's population date back to 1811, with the total population being 580. In 1851, it reached its highest total population of 725, but then slowly decreased to the last recorded figure of 468 from the 2011 census; this could be due to a number of reasons, such as industrialisation and people moving to urban areas. However, in 1931 it dipped to its lowest population. Thorndon is home to 272 houses; in recent times there has been a drop in population meaning less cramped living conditions compared to the 139 houses when population was at 675 in 1870.

Thorndon Today

Thorndon today is a thriving village of some 650 residents in approximately 280 dwellings; 90% of the population is made up of white British people with the remaining 10% being Black or Asian; this is mainly due to its rural location. There is an ageing population with many being over 60 years old; the Census Report of 2011 also shows that 90% of the population is of very good or good health.

The predominant occupation in Thorndon is agriculture and construction, this is due to the rural nature of the village; other popular occupations include manufacturing and retail.

The village has benefited from the close proximity of the towns of Stowmarket and Diss. These towns have main line rail links to London, major retail outlets and many social and business activities.

Places of interest:

All Saints' Church which offers community activities to take place including the 'T-Plus' project and Café Church. The Lytch Gate in front of the church contains a village war memorial for World War I and II.

The Black Horse is a popular country pub in the heart of Thorndon. Originally it was the Black Horse Inn and was built in the 1600s; it was later converted into a pub.

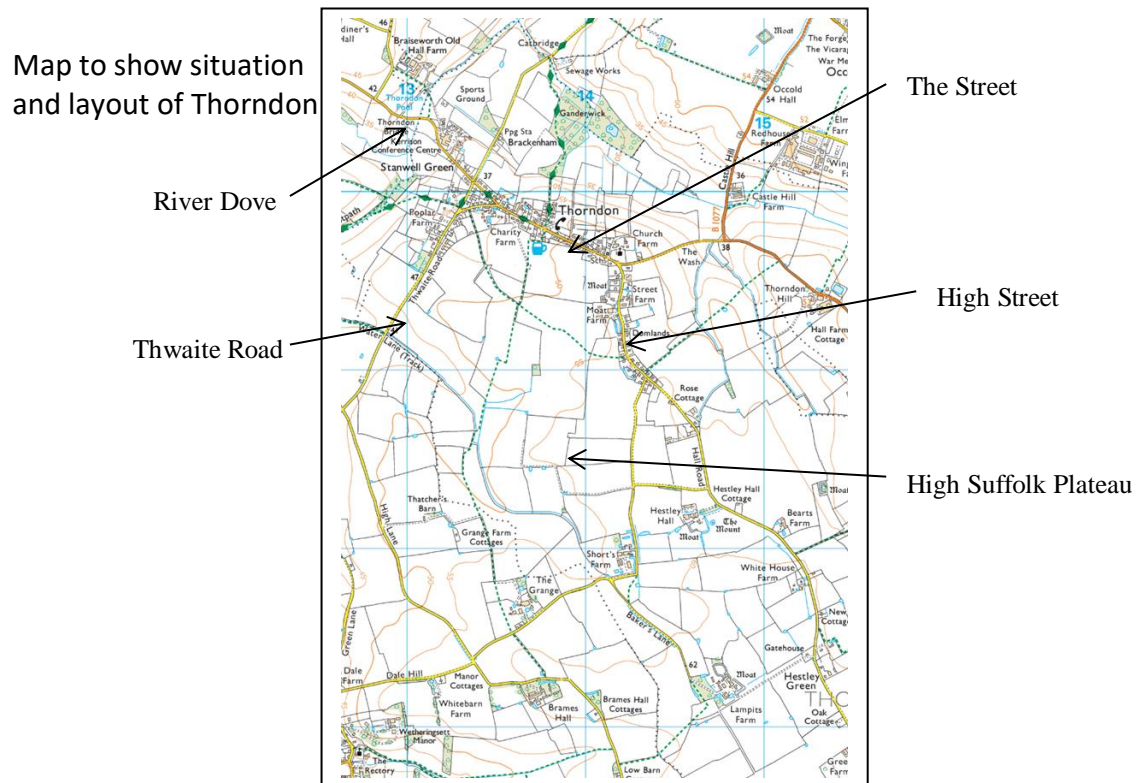
Thorndon CEVC primary school is a Church of England Voluntary controlled school situated in the heart of the countryside. It caters for children from age 4-11 and welcomes any religion; however, being a Church of England school it does associate itself with the church community and participates in church assemblies and the celebration of other Christian events. The school currently has 64 students with up to 12 children per year group.

The Community shop is open 7 days a week serving the community. It was originally owned by the same owners as 'The Black Horse' however it has since then been handed over to the community to run. Local volunteers allow the shop to happen by their hard work, it is also helped along by donations from the parish and local councils.

Environment

Thorndon is situated in 'rural Suffolk' on the valley side of the River Dove extending up to the high and predominantly flat clay High Suffolk plateau. The plateau is incised by numerous small-scale wooded river valleys with 'steeper' slopes that in places are unexpected. The underlying geology is chalk, which forms the principal aquifer, and shallow marine deposits overlain with glacial till, buried river gravels, lake sediments and bands of glacial outwash deposits.

The topography of the area is generally undulating, ranging in height from 33m at Thorndon Bridge on Stoke Road to 62m at Green Farm, Hestley Green.

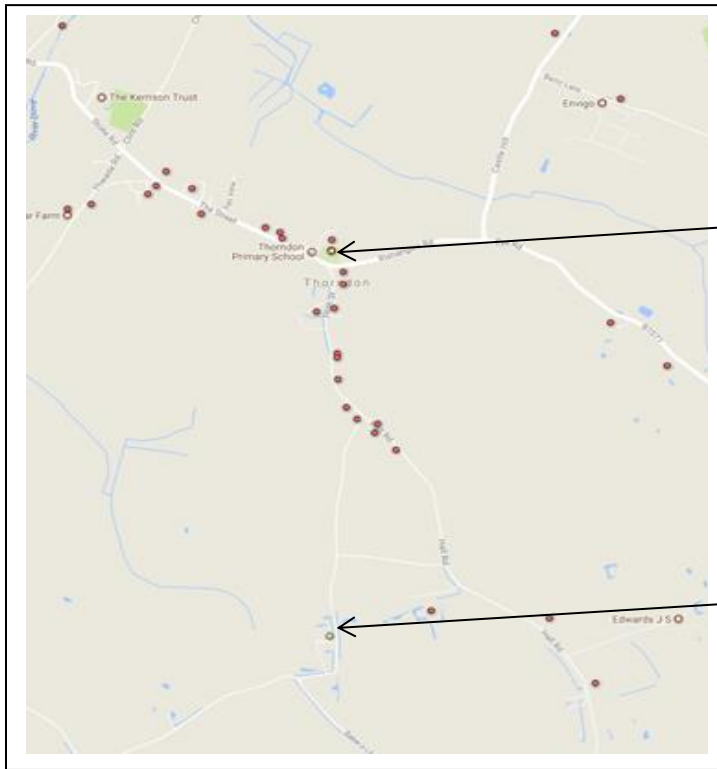


(Map taken from OS online 1:25000.)

The village built up area has developed in a linear shape mainly along three roads, The Street/Stoke Road, High Street and Thwaite Road. Within the settlement boundary the density of housing is relatively high compared to the surrounding area. In recent years 'infill' housing development has taken place. For example, the 1925 OS map of the Thwaite Road/Stanwell Green area shows approximately 31 houses, a similar area on the mid-Suffolk 2017 planning map shows 69 houses.

In many ways the village environment contains the classic elements of a traditional linear English village, The Church, Pub, Village School, Shop and Village Hall. The housing mix within the village is varied in size, age and appearance, clear areas of housing representing the last six decades can be observed together with older 'traditional village' houses and buildings. Whilst housing styles, appearance and building materials vary attention has been given to maintaining a consistency in roof height on recent developments to ensure new developments do not stand out within the village. The majority of recent housing is three, four and five bedroomed family sized houses.

Within the Neighbourhood Plan area there are currently 35 grade two listed buildings. Two, the Church and Short's Farmhouse are 'starred' listings. The listed buildings, ranging from large farmhouses to cottages reflect the history of the village and remain an important part of the environmental heritage.



Distribution of listed buildings within the plan area.

Church

Short's Farm

The predominant land use of the area is arable farmland although significant areas of grassland and woodland can be observed on the satellite photograph.

Satellite Photograph taken from OS Online showing Thorndon Neighbourhood Plan area



Kerrison Set-aside

Kerrison playing field

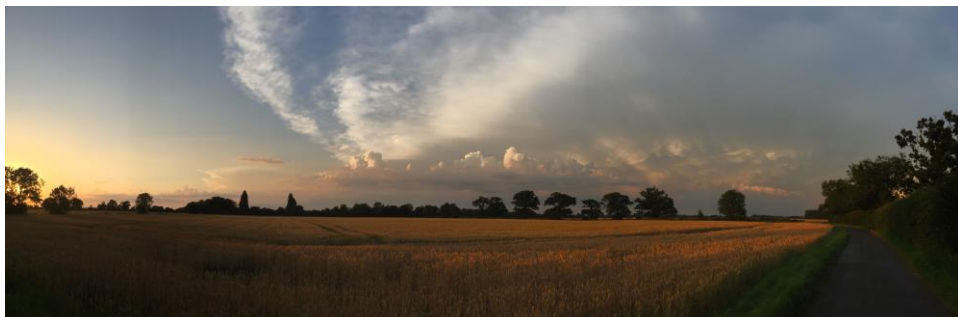
Bowls club

Ganderwick

Fen View play area

The village and surrounds has a number of areas available for public access and recreation. Fen View play area, Kerrison playing field and the bowling green are areas for formal recreation. Areas such as the Kerrison set-aside grassland which links with areas of woodland on Ganderwick and the river Dove provide varied environments which the public can access. Additionally, within the neighbourhood plan area there is a network of linked footpaths and bridleways which provide significant opportunities for walking. The footpaths also link with the long distance mid-Suffolk footpath. The lanes in and around the village are also a resource for walking, horse riding and cycling. The national long distance cycle route 1 section 40 passes through the village.

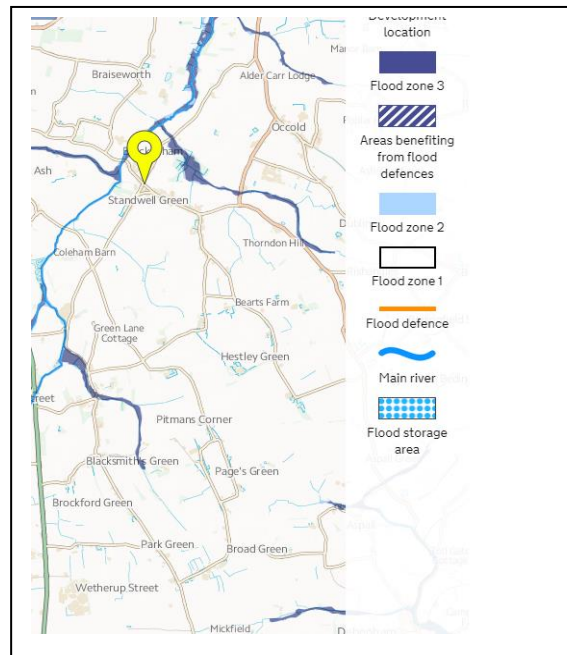
Within the village settlement boundary a substantial number of old and mature trees have been retained adding to the appearance of the rural environment, some of the retained trees are particularly noteworthy such as those surrounding the church. In the neighbourhood plan area areas of woodland along the river Dove and Fen area provide a contrast to more open areas in surrounding agricultural land. From higher areas along Hall Road, Wetheringsett Road and Thwaite road outstanding vistas across the Suffolk countryside can be seen. Retained and managed hedgerows and trees breakup the landscape preventing a prairie like view, visible in other parts of Suffolk from developing.



Wetheringsett Road Thorndon (a number of photographs illustrating the physical and social environment may be found at <http://thorndon.suffolk.cloud/photogallery/>)

The River Dove was an historical access route into the village. Today, it provides a contrasting habitat for wildlife and an environmental resource. It also acts as the main focus of natural drainage. Minor tributaries together with manmade drainage ditches provide a network of channels to move surface and underground water into the Dove and eventually Waveney river catchment. Flood risks occur along the river Dove and in the area from the Wash extending to Thorndon Pool, historically a 'lake' area. Ditch maintenance and clearance is a regular agenda item for Parish Council consideration.

Environment Agency Flood Risk Map of Thorndon Plan area.



The mixed, open arable and grass land, woodland, wetland and domestic garden habitats that exist within the area provide opportunities for the varied wildlife that can be found. These are observed and commented on in the monthly 'Village Life' diary. Wildlife adds to the richness of the rural environment. Hedge maintenance and tree cutting are monitored via the Parish Council.

Other environmental issues regularly considered by the Parish Council are litter and dog fouling. Volunteer litter picks do much to remove accumulated litter much of which appears to be discarded from passing cars. Anecdotally, the village considers itself as having a high proportion in relation to population of dog waste bins at strategic points within the village. Light pollution, from the trend towards individual house outside lighting might also be considered as an environmental factor to be monitored.

Small pockets of derelict agricultural land and buildings exist within the plan area. Some, similar to 'urban brownfield sites' such as the Mill area on the Street have been redeveloped. Some barn conversions within the village are also examples of this type of re-development. Other 'derelict' areas might provide opportunities for future development complementing possible 'greenfield' development.

In short, a rich and varied physical environment with a strong human footprint and heritage.

Sources

Natural England Profile 544
OS Online maps and satellite photography
British Listed Buildings
Environment Agency Flood Map
Sustrans National Cycle Routes
Thorndon Cloud
Parish Council Minutes

Parish Survey Introduction

Thorndon Parish Council (PC), which has lead responsibility for neighbourhood planning, began discussion on the potential and validity of creating a Neighbourhood Plan in November 2015, as a result of these discussions Councillors met with MSDC planning in March 2016 to ascertain what was required, the potential effectiveness of a finished plan and the probable costs.

Nick Ward of MSDC Attended the PC meeting in June 2016 and gave a presentation outlining the various types of Neighbourhood Plan and their probable impact on the planning process. At the July 2016 PC meeting the decision was taken that the community should be invited to complete a survey to ascertain their views on the production of a plan and what were the perceived strengths and weaknesses associated with the future growth of Thorndon.

The survey was developed using an internet based application and the invitation to take part along with the access key was circulated to the community via the Neighbourhood Watch coordinator – three opportunities were provided for the survey to be completed, the initial circulation followed by two reminders. Paper copies were also made available in the village shop. Details of the survey were also published in the July/August and September issues of the Village Life magazine. 110 responses were received from a total of 267 households. The survey responses provided a mandate for the production of a plan.

The plan was initially intended to be a Community Led Plan, but this was altered to a Neighbourhood Plan as a result of changed legislation which gave more legal weight to an adopted plan in planning process.

The views of the community expressed in the survey form the basis of this document.

The survey addressed a wide range of environmental, social and economic questions including, future housing development, perceived infrastructure issues, parking, transport, highways, and health and education service provision. The questions asked are included in appendix ? together with some of the free text responses representing the major themes.

A Planning Committee was formed at the request of the PC and the initial meeting was held on 8th May 2017. Details of this and subsequent meetings can be found on the Thorndon website. *www.Thorndon.Suffolk.cloud*

Housing and Development

Existing Housing

Thorndon is typical of most villages with a variety of housing styles and appearances however most are brick or render with a tiled roof with the occasional traditional render and thatched properties scattered throughout the village. There are two areas of local authority housing, one consisting of six houses and another with 27 houses which includes seven small bungalows. Thorndon also has seven small scale developments where there are between three and five mid to large scale properties. Most other properties within the village have road frontage and are served with their own or shared road access.

Since the late 1980's there has been increased infill and back-fill in the heart of the village which has led to congestion during busy periods and created issues with on street parking. For example, in 1980, between the school and the old shop there were 13 residential properties, a chapel, a garage and a farmyard (inc. Mill). Today - October 2017 - there are 37 residential properties within the same area. The garage, mill, chapel, farmyard and shop have all been developed, representing a residential increase of 185% in that given area. We are also to have 28 further residential properties generated at the Kerrison site. This will make the Kerrison site the largest development area in Thorndon with more than 40 properties in total. Having reviewed current - October 2017 - planning consents there are approximately a further ten existing previously approved but undeveloped dwelling sites within the village and eight currently in development. Thorndon is therefore set to gain eight dwellings with a further 38 dwellings approved within Kerrison and other infill areas throughout the village.

Whilst accepting the need to build more housing to support the housing requirements within the district, any developments should be sympathetic to the rural nature of the 'Hinterland' village, meld with the surrounding properties and, where possible, have minimal impact on the overall social balance of the community. Any large scale construction on the fringes of Thorndon would greatly damage its physical fabric and rural nature and would not be supported by the community as can be seen in the results of the community survey conducted in 2016.

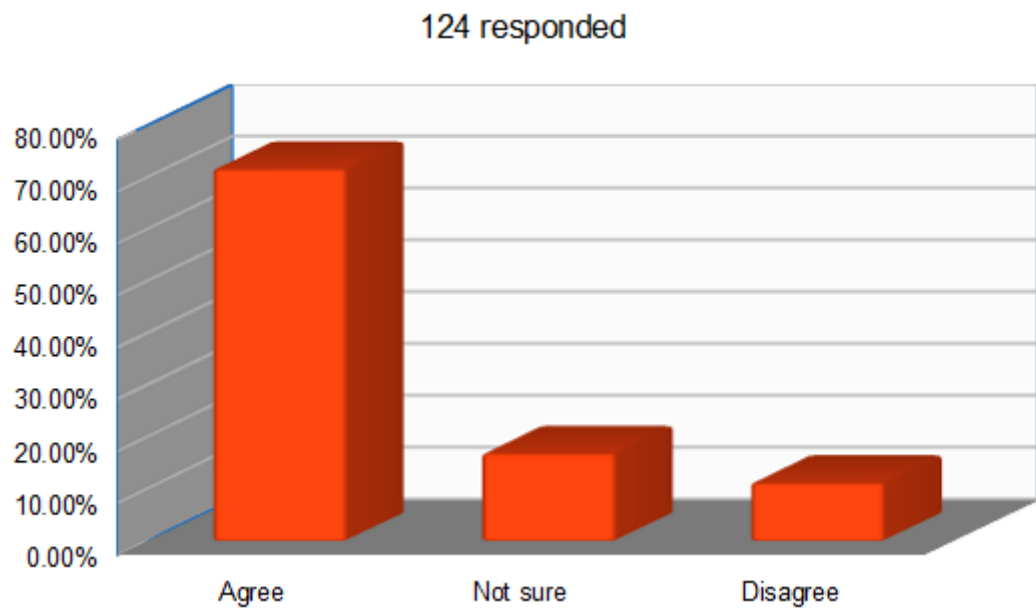
There were 41 planning approvals between 2015 and 2017, this is a significant number and equates to an increase of 14.9% on the number of houses reported in the 2011 census. The increase of traffic and potential increase in the need for primary school places will potentially significantly stretch existing infrastructure. Any additional developments must take account of the load on the infrastructure in a holistic manner rather than viewing each application in isolation. These developments should also take account of the perceived need for housing that is more affordable than the majority of the current housing in the community.

The existing housing stock in Thorndon is larger than the national average with the number of rooms per property at 7.1 against the national average of 5.4 and 5.7 in Suffolk. This clearly shows a distribution skewed towards larger, probably expensive, properties and this should be taken into account when considering future

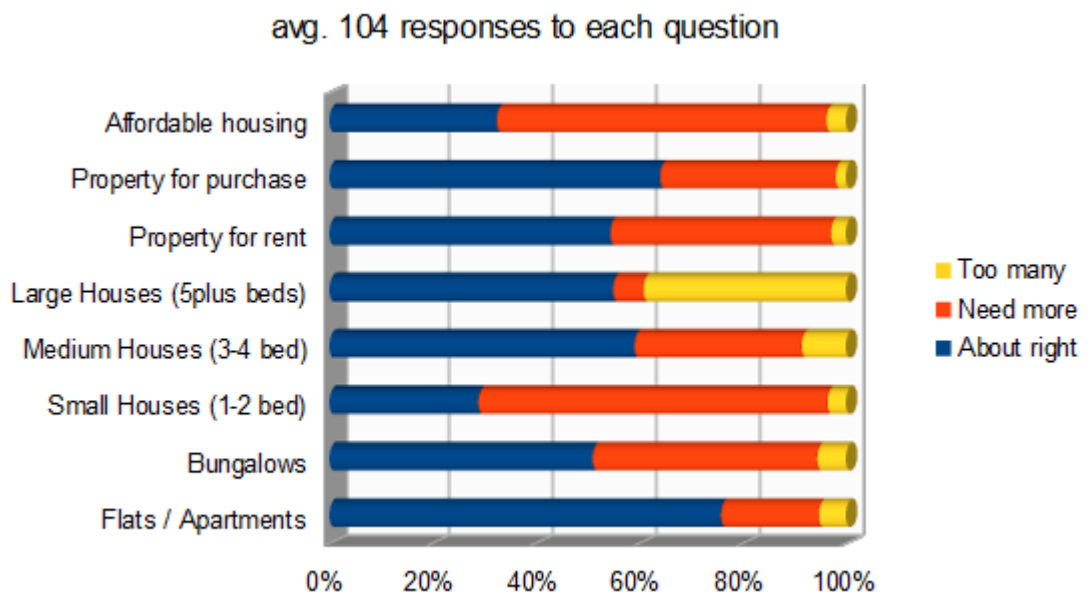
developments. The 2014 Suffolk Housing survey reported that 42.7% of houses have 4 or more bedrooms.

Thorndon Parish Council conducted a community survey in the Autumn of 2016, the following responses were received with regard to future development and housing:

- Thorndon Parish will strive to celebrate its proud heritage whilst keeping the village a thriving rural community in a living, working countryside which is dependent on retaining our local services and community facilities such as schools, local shops, public houses and places of worship. Affordable and accessible rural housing is essential to ensure viable use of these local facilities. We will welcome appropriate housing development to ensure that our community continues to thrive.

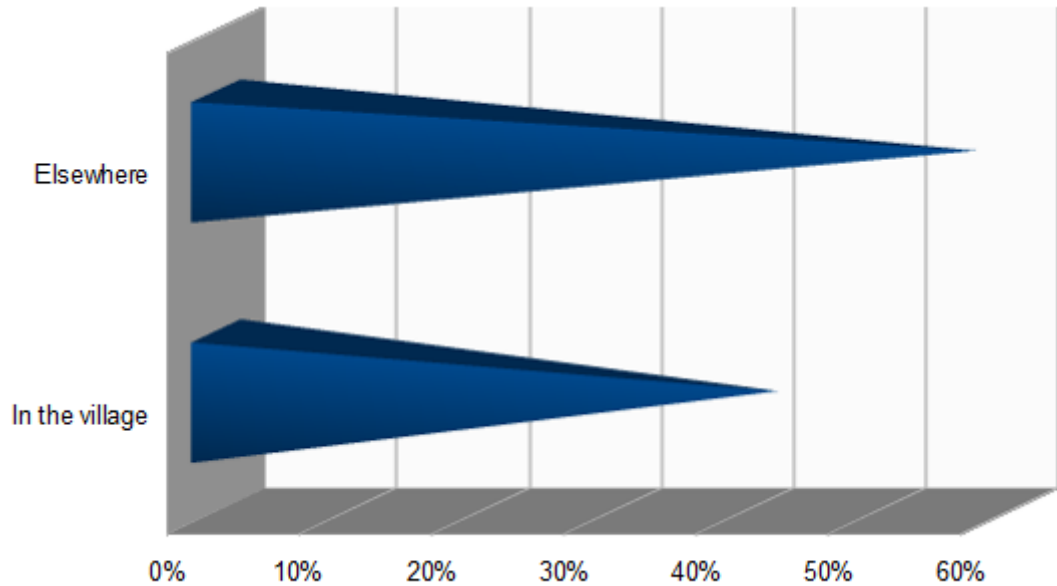


- What do you think about the number and type of existing housing in the village?

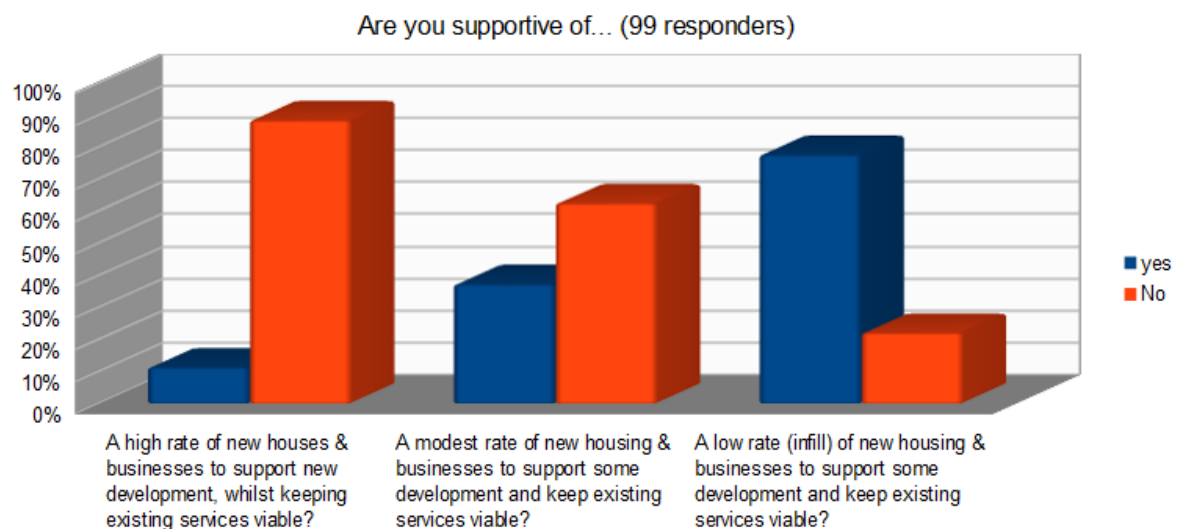


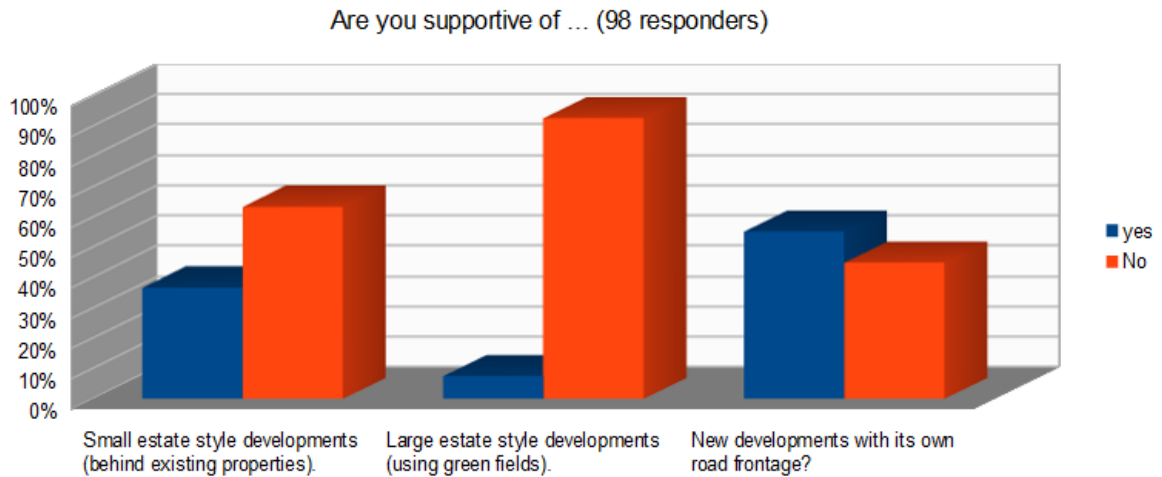
- Who needs housing? Are any of your household looking to move into their own accommodation over the next three years?

From 115 responses 23 households (20%) confirmed that members of their household would be looking to move to their own accommodation in the next three years.

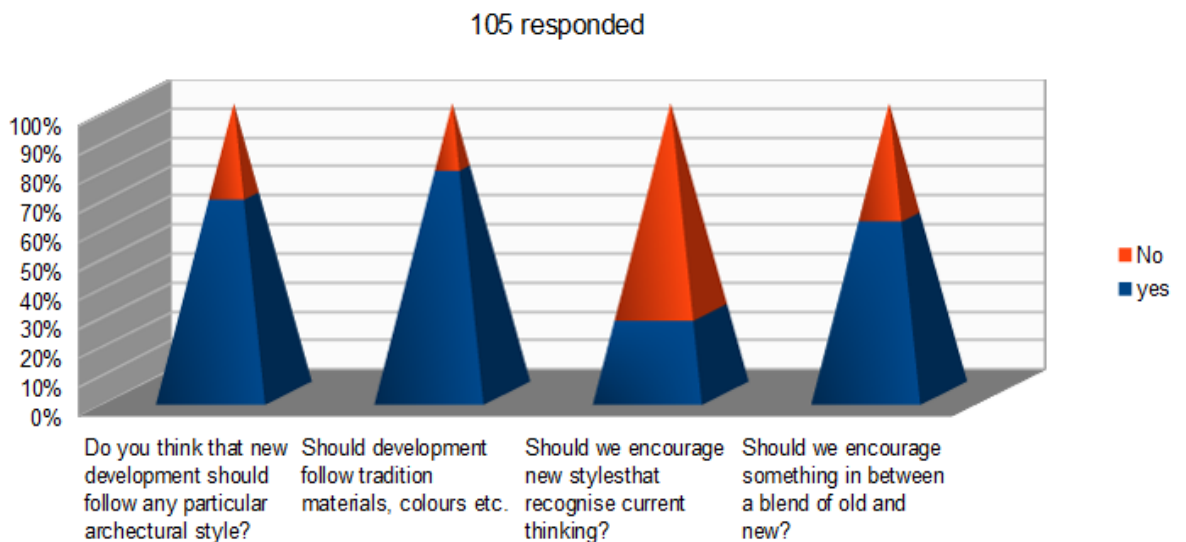


- Accepting the probability that housing development will occur, please answer yes or no to the following:





- Do you think that new development should follow any particular architectural style?



In conclusion, the people of the village were supportive of a low rate of infill for new, affordable and accessible housing, with the primary emphasis on smaller more affordable dwellings. Bungalows and properties to rent also featured highly with large estates being almost completely unfavoured. The style of buildings deemed to be acceptable were those designed to be in keeping with the traditional look and feel which is typical to the village.

Currently Planned and Approved Developments

Approved developments which have still to be delivered are largely for 1, 2 or 3 properties and are either infill or linear developments extending the length rather than the breadth of the village. There are few which will be situated behind existing properties. There are some exceptions, the major of these being the development of the Kerrison Centre.

Kerrison Development

In 2015 approval was given for the conversion of Kelly House into residential use (application 3701/15). When this conversion is completed it will deliver 20 self contained units of varying size, 1,2 and 3 bed roomed. These apartments are expected to be less expensive than other properties in the village and go some way to delivering the perceived need for additional more affordable housing.

However, it is likely that the predominant eventual residents of the properties will be younger families with school age children. The original number of Primary aged children expected to emanate from the development, as stated by Boyer Planning Ltd on behalf of Suffolk County Council in the 'Developer Contributions Requirements' letter of 17/12/2015, was 7. This number was reduced to 6 in a later revised letter of 16/3/2016. It is felt that this is a significant underestimate and that the number could be as high as 20+. An increase of this magnitude would, almost certainly, pose significant capacity problems for Thorndon CEVP School. In addition to the conversion of Kelly House, the chapel is to be converted to residential use and 7 new build properties are approved for the rear of the site. These are all to be 3 bed roomed properties.

Future Developments

Any future developments must take account of the views of the community as expressed in the community survey of 2016.

To the initial question:

Thorndon Parish will strive to celebrate its proud heritage whilst keeping the village a thriving rural community in a living, working countryside which is dependent on retaining our local services and community facilities such as schools, local shops, public houses and places of worship. Affordable and accessible rural housing is essential to ensure viable use of these local facilities. We will welcome appropriate housing development to ensure that our community continues to thrive.

124 persons responded with 72% approval, there were however many written comments around over development, incorrect housing mix, e.g.

- The size and mix of the houses should support the continued progress of the community as outlined in the above statement with housing providing the opportunity for young people to remain in the village.
- The style, design and materials used must be sympathetic to the adjacent existing properties although modern representations of traditional designs are

acceptable. 1.5 storey houses are preferable to 2 storey as these are generally more in keeping with the existing properties and visually less imposing.

- The price of single building plots precludes the development of what might generally be considered 'affordable' housing by small building companies, where a developer is build for sale then smaller, multiple houses should be considered on sites that traditionally would have had a single property. Many applications of this type of multiple house development have been refused planning permission because of a perceived density issue, perhaps this view needs to be reviewed where the situation of the site is appropriate.
- Due to the high land prices self building projects are becoming more and more popular, however these are often the 'dream house' and, by definition, are likely to be large and expensive.
- New developments should not focus on any type of specific size of property but should deliver a balance of all types, the constant media focus on 'affordable' housing should not take precedence over the existing nature of the village.

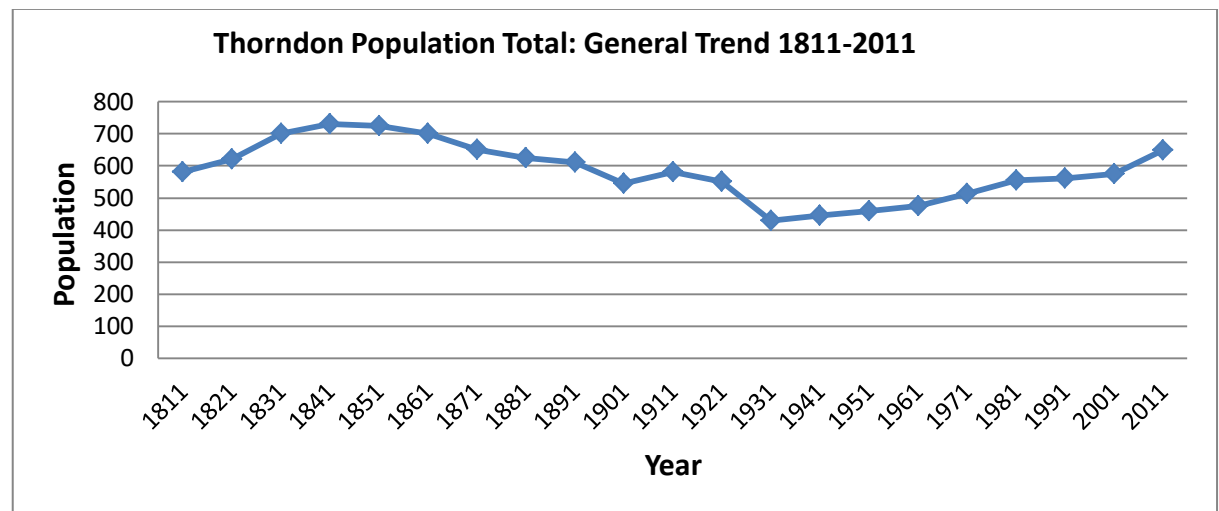
Land Allocation

A number of potential building plots have been identified which should deliver the necessary number of houses to support the development requirements for a Hinterland village to support the Babergh/Mid Suffolk Joint Local Plan. The land owners of these plots have been approached and have agreed to their land being used for future development.

Demographics analysis

Historical Context

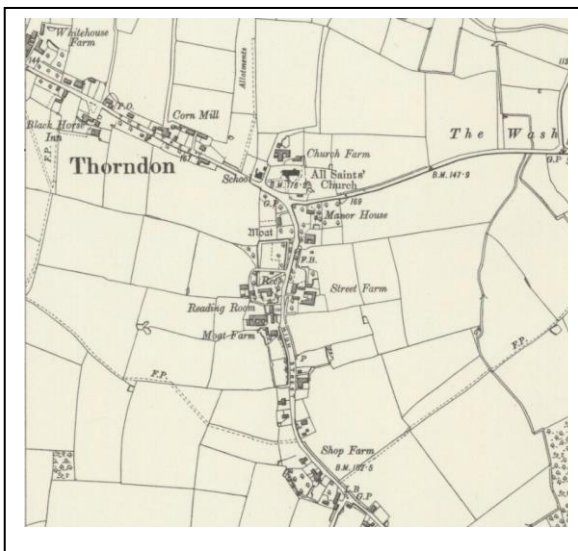
The population of Thorndon reached a maximum of 725 in the mid-19th century and then gradually declined until the 1930s this coincided with changes in agriculture reducing the numbers required to work on the land and the attraction of towns and cities with growing employment opportunities and often a better social infrastructure. Since the 1950s a steady growth in population number can be observed which has accelerated since 2001. Between 2001 and 2011 the population grew by over 12%, the fastest rate of growth since the early 19th century from 575 to 648 usual residents as shown by the 2001 and 2011 census.



Growth 1951- 2011

The post-war growth in population of over 40% is the result of migration into the village this is reflected in the changing number of houses/households in the village as can be seen from the village maps of the 1920s, 1950s and 2017.

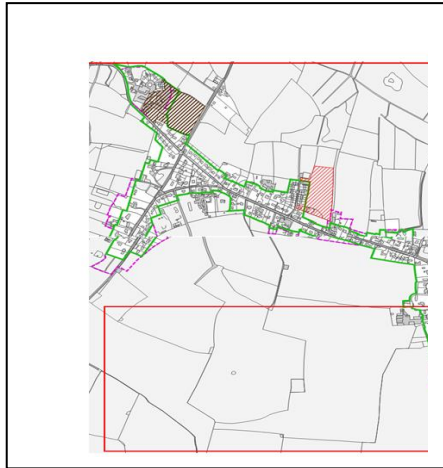
High Street and Part of The Street in Thorndon 1920s (OS 1925 survey)



Standwell Green Area 1950s (OS 1950 Survey)



Thorndon 2017 (BaberghMidsuffolk Consultation Map)



The recent total growth hides significant differences in population growth dependent upon age group. This is clearly shown by analysis of the two most recent national census data sets 2001 and 2011. When analysing and interpreting the data some care is needed in allowing for differences in data collection between the two census points and the fact that the census age groupings are uneven. Equally, small numbers in some groups has a significant impact on percentage changes between years. For this reason average numbers in each year in each census age group have been calculated.

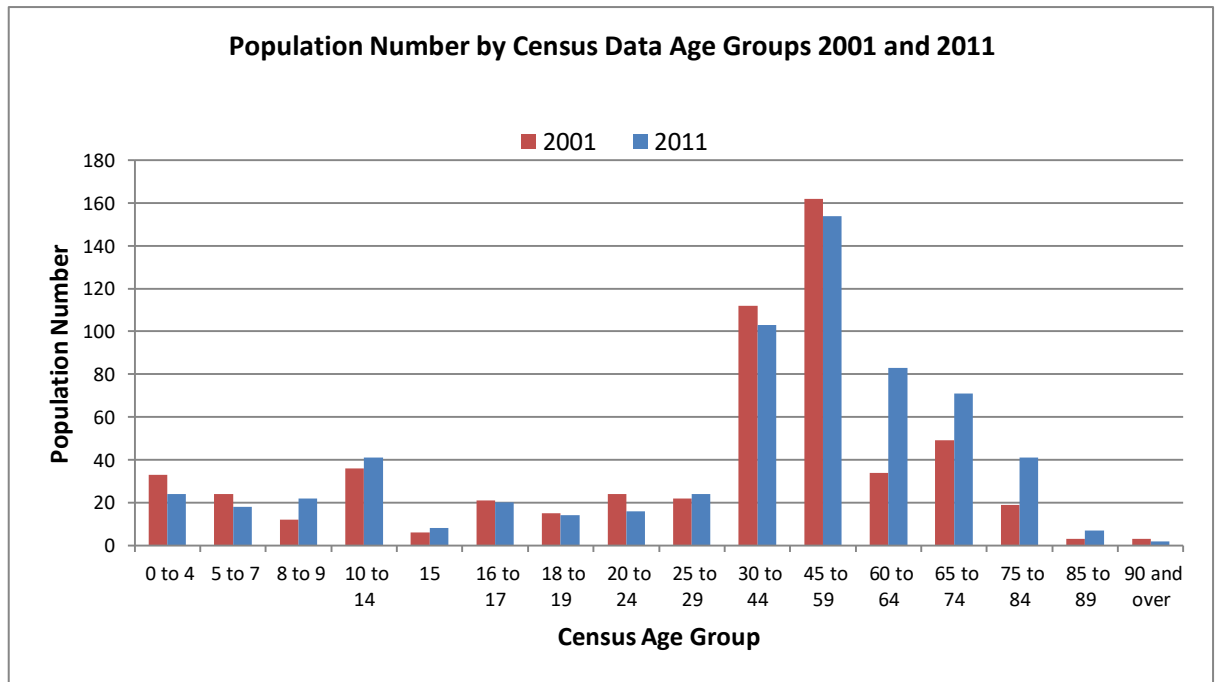
Table 1 Base Data for Population Change 2001-2011

Area name	E04009261 : Thorndon						
Age	2011	%	Average number in each year in each age group	2001	%	Average number in each year in each age group	% Change in each group 2001-2011
All usual residents	648			575			12.70
0 to 4	24	3.70	4.80	33	5.74	6.60	-27.27
5 to 7	18	2.78	6.00	24	4.17	8.00	-25.00
8 to 9	22	3.40	11.00	12	2.09	6.00	83.33
10 to 14	41	6.33	8.20	36	6.26	7.20	13.89
15	8	1.23	8.00	6	1.04	6.00	33.33
16 to 17	20	3.09	10.00	21	3.65	10.50	-4.76
18 to 19	14	2.16	7.00	15	2.61	7.50	-6.67
20 to 24	16	2.47	3.20	24	4.17	4.80	-33.33
25 to 29	24	3.70	4.80	22	3.83	4.40	9.09
30 to 44	103	15.90	6.87	112	19.48	7.47	-8.04
45 to 59	154	23.77	10.27	162	28.17	10.80	-4.94
60 to 64	83	12.81	16.60	34	5.91	6.80	144.12
65 to 74	71	10.96	7.10	49	8.52	4.90	44.90
75 to 84	41	6.33	4.10	19	3.30	1.90	115.79
85 to 89	7	1.08	1.40	3	0.52	0.60	133.33
90 and over	2	0.31	2.00	3	0.52	3.00	-33.33
Mean Age	44	100		39	100		
Median Age	49			45			

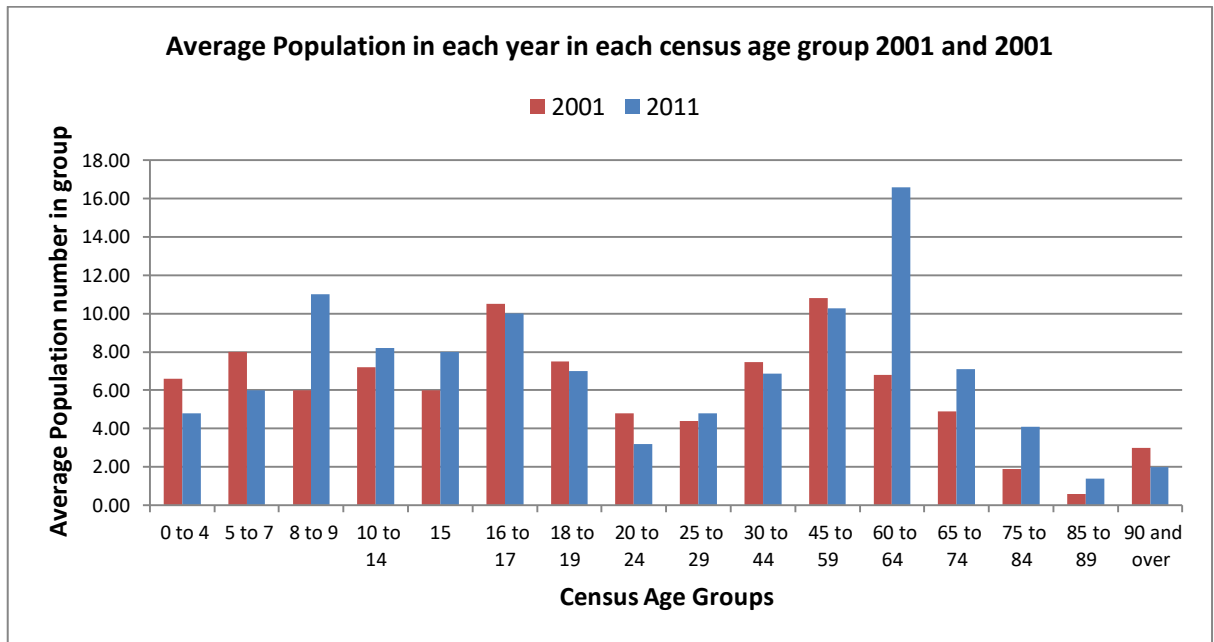
Under 16	113	17.4		111	19.3	101.8
16-64	414	63.9		390	67.8	106.2
65+	121	18.7		74	12.9	163.5

The mean and median ages of the total population have increased over the intercensal period. The most significant growth has taken place in the 65+ age group.

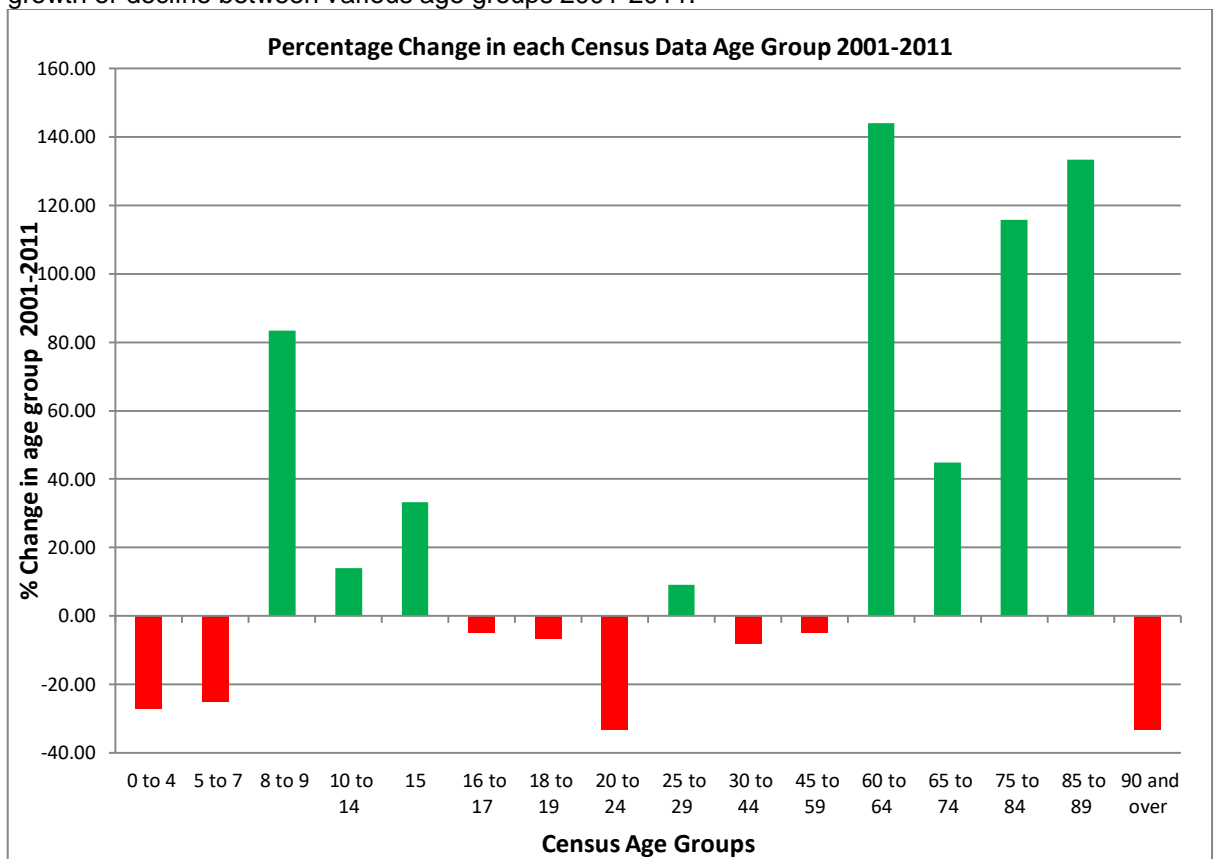
The following graph compares the population in census age groups 2001 to 2011



A general pattern of decline in numbers in 0-7 year olds, some growth in 8-15 year olds and growth in numbers age 60+ can be discerned. This is shown more clearly if the distortion created by uneven age groupings is 'smoothed' by averaging the numbers in each census age group year.



The percentage change in census age groups 2001-2011 further highlights the differences in growth or decline between various age groups 2001-2011.



Forecasting future demographic change is difficult. Numbers in the 0-15 age group will depend upon net numbers migrating into the village aged 25-45. Numbers aged 60+ are likely to continue to increase given increasing life expectancy in the general population. However, possible outmigration of older age groups should not be discounted for reasons such as downsizing and accessibility to age related services.

Trends and possible implications

The numbers in age groups 0-7 has particular significance for the sustainability of the Primary School. The school is a popular, good and improving school (Ofsted 2015) and has a published admission number of 12 per year (currently working to 14 per year). In 2011 there was an average of 4-6 children in each primary age year group living within the village. To maintain numbers the school will be dependent upon parental preferences from outside of the village unless there is population growth in primary age groups within the village. Equally, Thorndon residents have access to outstanding, oversubscribed High Schools which impacts upon movements into the School catchment areas for families with or approaching High School aged children. This has the potential to affect numbers across the 0-16 age range. However, opportunities for migration into the village will be dependent upon the availability and affordability of housing and the availability and accessibility of employment in addition to other factors which affect migration such as the social and physical attractiveness of a rural environment.

The trend for a decline in numbers of 16-24 year olds mirrors national trends in rural areas, sometimes expressed as the 'bright lights' attraction of urban areas for this age group. This oversimplifies more complex reasons for movement. High levels of educational outcomes attained in High Suffolk High Schools, combined with high parental expectations encourages migration of 16-24 year olds. Hartismere High School in Eye is the catchment High School for Thorndon. Post-16, 95% of students remain in education and training, 79% of Sixth Formers move onto Higher and Further Education (DfE Performance tables 2016). A relatively small percentage, 4% move into what are likely to be more local apprenticeships. The availability of and changing attitudes towards apprenticeships as an alternative to further and higher education may impact on this in the future. The potential employment opportunities for young people created by participating in further and higher education and suitable and affordable housing availability are further pushes away from rural areas for young people. A National Housing Federation report (2017) claims 'When five or six houses provide homes for young families it can make all the difference to keeping the local school open. Providing new affordable homes for young people starting out on their careers can be the driver for maintaining the community hubs such as the local pub and shops. These services provide the pillars of rural communities and by delivering high quality, affordable homes for people to live and work in the local area, these services can remain viable and successful'The report further claims that poor broadband 'drives the young out of rural England'. Another significant factor for young people is access to transport. The current public transport system between Ipswich and Diss serving Thorndon operates during the 'working/college day' is not well integrated with other public transport. Additionally it has little provision for young people to use for social activities. Additionally, Thorndon Parish Council minutes, July 2017 highlighted 'there are no facilities in the village for youngsters' further reducing the potential attractiveness of the village for this age group.

Local and wider employment opportunities and employment patterns for 24-64 year olds may change. Local employment growth in centres such as Occold, Eye and Diss particularly in science, technology and logistics combined with the economic growth along the A11 corridor towards Norwich, the A14 corridor towards Cambridge and the A140 has the potential to impact on population growth in the area. Equally, the upgrade of the London to Norwich rail route and links to new routes like 'Crossrail'

have the potential to increase commuting patterns in north Suffolk. Similarly, improved broadband speeds increase the attractiveness of an area to industry and extend the possibilities of homeworking all of which have the capacity to impact upon population growth in the area.

Employment by occupation (Jul 2016-Jun 2017)				
	Mid Suffolk (Numbers)	Mid Suffolk (%)	East (%)	Great Britain (%)
Soc 2010 Major Group 1-3	25,300	52.0	46.5	45.5
1 Managers, Directors And Senior Officials	7,400	15.1	11.7	10.7
2 Professional Occupations	11,500	23.4	20.0	20.3
3 Associate Professional & Technical	6,400	13.1	14.6	14.3
Soc 2010 Major Group 4-5	8,800	18.1	20.8	20.7
4 Administrative & Secretarial	5,500	11.3	10.7	10.3
5 Skilled Trades Occupations	#	#	10.0	10.3
Soc 2010 Major Group 6-7	6,600	13.6	16.7	16.8
6 Caring, Leisure And Other Service Occupations	#	#	9.4	9.2
7 Sales And Customer Service Occupations	3,700	7.6	7.2	7.5
Soc 2010 Major Group 8-9	7,900	16.3	16.0	17.0
8 Process Plant & Machine Operatives	#	#	6.1	6.3
9 Elementary Occupations	4,800	9.7	9.9	10.6

(Nomis Labour Market estimates 2017)

The table above indicates how Mid Suffolk already has a higher proportion of employment in Professional and Technical occupations than the East and Country as a whole. This is likely to maintain the demand for higher than average priced housing in the area.

The proportion of population aged 65+ is likely to continue to grow. The general health of residents is good or very good (ONS 2011), life expectancy is increasing. This has implications for housing and the social and economic infrastructure required in the area. The proportion of housing within the village with under-occupied bedrooms is high, 88.4% (ONS 2011). Anticipating how demand for different types of housing available in the village may change is difficult. As the proportion of population aged 65+ increases would there be an increased demand for smaller housing units or plots? Alternatively, will a pattern of out-migration develop in an ageing population?

Provision of age related services will become an increasing consideration for an ageing population. For some residents improved broadband will enable access to health and social services to be maintained. Equally, access to other services such as banking and retail and social media contact may result in less pressure on movement to points where physical access to these services is easier. Other residents, who have not had the opportunity or desire to acquire access to modern forms of communication, may feel the need to move to access services.

Summary

Forecasting potential demographic change is difficult. The 2011 census figures may not reflect current (2017) patterns in the village particularly in those age group sets where numbers are small. The proportion of population aged 60+ is likely to continue to increase given the current age profile of population living in the village. Attracting growth in the independent 16-64 year old age group with a consequent likely increase in the dependent 0-15 year old age group will be required to maintain the existing age profile of the village population as a whole as well as possibly maintaining the sustainability of social and economic services within the village.

Sources

- suffolkobservatory.info
- <http://maps.nls.uk/>
- <https://www.ons.gov.uk/>
- <http://mycommunity.org.uk/resources/sources-of-data-and-statistics/>
- <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011>
- <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/home/census2001.asp>
- Thorndon: A Clayland Village – Book by Irene Theobald
- <https://www.compare-school-performance.service.gov.uk/> DfE Performance Tables
- <https://reports.ofsted.gov.uk> Ofsted
- <http://www.housing.org.uk/blog/affordable-homes-keep-rural-communities-alive/>
National Housing Federation
- Thorndon Parish Council Minutes July 2017

Education

Educational Services

The main educational facility in the village is Thorndon CEVC Primary School which is a Church of England Voluntary Controlled school that caters for children from the ages of 4-11 and welcomes any religion whilst having values rooted in the Christian faith.

Jungle Cubs & Jungle Giants, a child care facility providing nursery, pre- school, out-of-school and holiday care for children aged 5-11years operates from part of the Kerrison facility.

The village hall also runs a regular playgroup for preschool children.

The nearest secondary school for the children of Thorndon is Hartismere Academy; however, some children opt to attend Debenham or Stradbroke High school instead.

Thorndon CEVC School

The school is owned by the local authority but the land it is situated on is owned by the church.

After previous expansion the school now has to pay rent for a field behind the building so the children have a small area to play and currently they are very pushed for space with no hall or gym area and no resources to outsource for these.

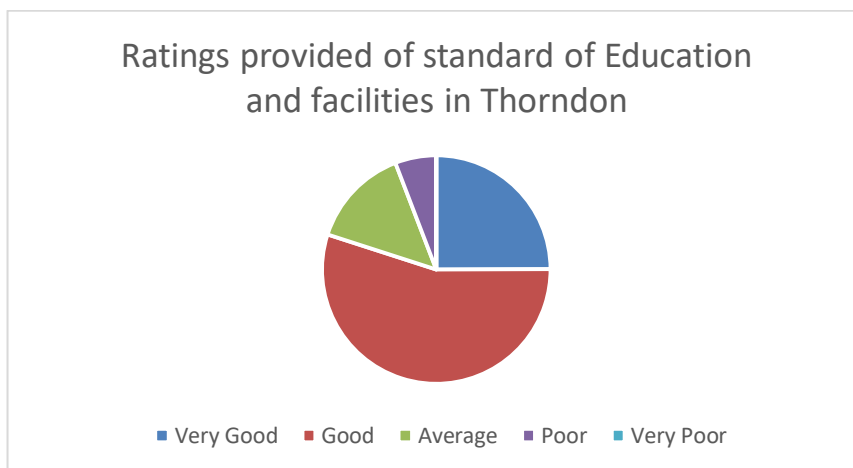
Lunches have to be eaten in classrooms and a breakfast club cannot be provided due to lack of space.

The children and staff of the Thorndon CEVC School are actively involved in the community and the school regularly arranges and hosts activities for parents and villagers.

In May 2015 the school received a 'Good' grading from Ofsted and the executive Head and her team aim to continue to improve upon this grading wherever possible.

Feedback from the village survey

The villagers of Thorndon were asked to rate the standard of education provided in the village in the 2016 survey, the results of which are illustrated in the pie chart below:



With villagers rating: very good 24.94%, 55.02% good, 14.2% average, 5.83% poor & 0% very poor this illustrates that the majority of respondents were happy with the standard of Education currently provided by the school.

Current Capacity & Potential Impact of village Expansion

Currently the school has capacity to cater for 84 children and is currently operating with 82 children on roll. The catchment area for the school includes the surrounding villages of Stoke Ash, Thornham, Wickham Skeith, Thwaite and a few other smaller hamlets.

The Executive head reports that of years 3 and 4 approximately 75% of the children are from the catchment area but that for years 5 and 6 this figure is only approximately 50%. It is thought that this is because some children were encouraged to attend other nearby schools after a previously disappointing Ofsted report. Despite this some children travel from outside the catchment area to take advantage of the smaller class sizes and the children to staff ratio and in recent years the school have actively taken on roll more children with Special Educational Needs (SEN).

The school is currently operating only just under capacity and during a recent meeting with the Executive Head she expressed her concerns at being able to cope with the potential demand for places just from the Kerrison housing development, not to mention the effects that larger future developments than may have.

The school have already built on all available land meaning that there is little playground left and there is no available funding for expansion of the school to accommodate a greater number than 84 on roll. There is currently a demand for places from outside the catchment area and this would need to be reconsidered in the future so that the school could cope with demand just from this village alone.

The possibility of letting the school have the field adjacent to the church has been discussed but even if this was secured it looks like the lack of funding and resources would be the greater and more prominent problem.

The Executive Head did report that despite the links with the church she would not be against the possibility of moving the school, but this would also present an alternative issue of where it would then be better placed.

Parking at the school is already very limited, with the expansion of the church car park this may elevate some of the issues with current traffic at peak periods, however if the school did expand this would again not be suitable to meet the level of demand.

Evaluation

Currently the Primary School is only just managing to cater for the current children on role. In order to meet the increased demand for places following future developments in the village the school would need to look to extend the building so that it can accommodate a greater number of children.

The Head Teacher of the school has confirmed that they would be happy to either relocate or consider different options for expansion to accommodate a rise in numbers of pupils due to future housing developments in Thorndon.

The most promising idea for expansion near the current school site would be the land beside the church, the area known as the Guildhall Pightle. This area is currently owned by the Thorndon Town Trust.

Sources

Village survey 2016

Thorndon CEVC School

<https://thorndon.suffolk.sch.uk/suffolk/primary/thorndon/site/pages>

Ofsted

<https://thorndon.suffolk.sch.uk/suffolk/primary/thorndon/arenas/websitecontent/web/thorndon-ofsted.pdf?modified=1477922365288>

Health

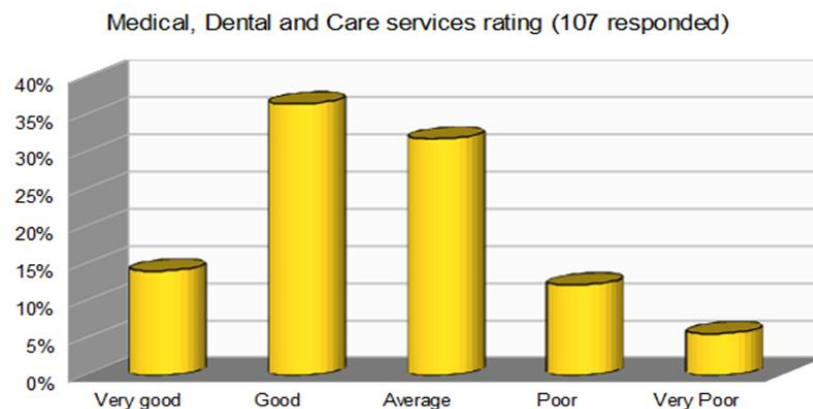
Whilst there are no specific facilities for Medical, Dental or Care services in Thorndon, Eye, Debenham and Mendlesham can supply most if not all of these services. Diss is also able to provide further extended services such as opticians and osteo/chiro/physio practices.

For residents in Thorndon, there is a distance of 3-5 kilometres to travel in order to reach any of the local healthcare facilities; therefore transport is a necessity although there are regular bus service routes which include Eye, Debenham, Mendlesham and Diss. A number of elderly or incapacitated residents utilise private and funded home help and health care assistants as required.

Thorndon benefits from a geographical position which is central to the three local healthcare centres (Eye, Debenham and Mendlesham) and beyond that, in symmetry, three major hospitals (Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds and Norwich) which are all within ~30-40km.



In the village survey the villagers of Thorndon rated the local services supporting general Health as follows, within their supporting commentary they voiced concerns as to the capacity and service currently available and furthermore their concern around the service which may be offered in future following continued development:



These surrounding services are already stretched to and beyond capacity, especially during periods of increased activity caused by seasonal influences.

Any development will have an impact further on the availability of these services as they require increased funding in order to provide availability to meet the growing dependencies. It is not only Thorndon who are set to increase the demand, but also many other surrounding villages of these Health centres who are also under pressure to meet the demands MSDC have placed upon villages who will have to contribute to the local housing supply requirements.

As shown in the demographics section of this village plan, Thorndon is gaining an ageing population, whilst this is inevitable with improved medicines and care this will create additional pressure on existing healthcare facilities. It is therefore imperative to the life blood of the village, and the strength of the community as a whole, that a balance of population demographics is supported by any development that should be proposed and thereafter considered by MSDC.

Sources

Village Survey 2016

Bus Services:

<https://www.suffolkonboard.com/buses/timetables/?text=113>

Transport & Highways

Transport Options

Car

Most villagers own a car in order to travel to and from their required destination. Thorndon is a rural village with good road access although most roads have limited width and passing places. Situated just off the A140 it is relatively easy to access nearby towns and cities such as: Ipswich, Bury St Edmunds & Norwich.

Bus

There are 3 local bus routes which serve Thorndon these are currently operated by Galloways and are the 113, 114 and number 2 service operated by High Suffolk Community Transport. Bus stops are located outside the Black Horse Pub, at the Church and on Wash Hill.

The 113 service operates between Ipswich and Diss via Mendlesham and Eye. The 114 between Ipswich and Diss via Debenham and Eye The number 2 operates between Southolt and Bury St Edmunds calling at many villages. With changes at Diss bus station passengers can also access Norwich with ease.

Train

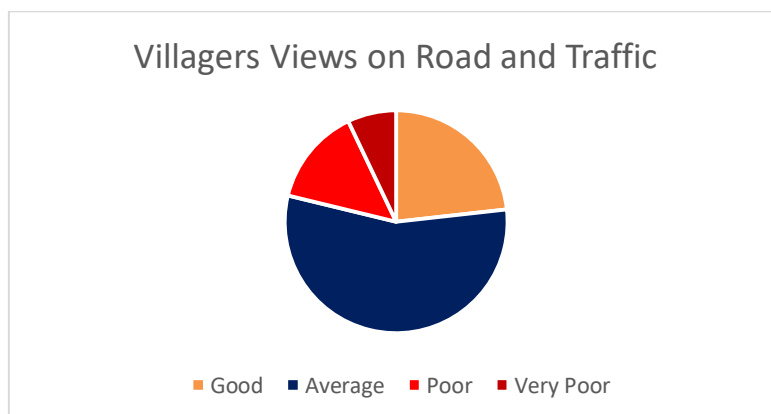
Those villagers who wish to access the train can do so at either Diss or Stowmarket, both of which are no more than a 20 minute drive away. This means that those in the village who require a daily train commute to areas such as London are reasonably well served.

Highways

Roads & Pavements

The village of Thorndon is served by minor country roads, in the survey villagers commented that the condition of the roads and access were good to average. However, the state of some areas of road, namely the main access road into and out of Thorndon which joins the A140 has declined following the bad weather conditions of 2017/18 winter.

This caused the appearance of several large potholes which have caused damage to several vehicles when commuting in and out of the village. Some of these potholes have now been filled. This pothole blight is likely to continue to be a problem area into the future due to the apparent general lack of funding, an expected increased volume of traffic and the natural wear and tear of on the roads with the day to day traffic moving in and out of the village.



There is only one small section of highway that has pavement and this is the stretch between the village Pub and the local school and which continues down to the bottom of Fen View. Many of the minor roads would be too narrow to add additional pavements as the village increases in size in the future. However, with further increase in traffic due to village expansion further pavements maybe required to ensure pedestrians can remain safe.

Traffic volume and movement within Thorndon

The village survey illustrated that a significant proportion of respondents had concerns about vehicles travelling at excessive speeds through the village. VAS equipment was purchased by the Parish Council and the use was implemented on 12th July 2016. Monitored results for the first 2 years of operation are summarised below:

2016 to 2017

Number of recorded movements	453462
Number exceeding 30 mph	281491
Percentage movements over 30 mph	62%
Number entering the village	227258
Number exceeding 30 when entering the village	135046
Percentage entering the village over 30 mph	59%
Maximum speed entering the village 80mph at	21.09pm
Maximum speed exiting the village 81mph at	8.24am
Movements traveling at less than 10mph	22146

2017 to 2018

Number of recorded movements	443338
Number exceeding 30 mph	274317
Percentage movements over 30 mph	61%
Number entering the village	212810
Number exceeding 30 when entering the village	122835
Percentage entering the village over 30 mph	57%
Maximum speed entering the village 81mph at	6.21am
Maximum speed exiting the village 84mph at	15.02pm
Movements traveling at less than 10mph	26242

The results for the 2 years are surprisingly similar and illustrate that speeds and volumes remain disappointingly high. The deployment of the VAS equipment appears to have had little impact.

Parking

Not all houses in Thorndon possess off road parking which means that some areas such as Fen View and The Street are congested with vehicles having to park on the

road. With already narrow roads in some places this is likely to cause issues with access particularly in the case of emergency services vehicles.

There is also a particular issue with traffic and inappropriate parking/congestion outside the primary school during the peak times. However, more recently the Church carpark has been extended and many parents use this to park in when collecting their children.

Current and future volume of traffic

Thorndon operates a 7.5 tonne weight restriction to reduce the number of heavy loads accessing the village, however, due the agricultural areas in and surrounding the village, there are a number of larger tractors and farm vehicles regularly accessing/passing through the village, which can be problematic on the narrower roads.

Respondents to the survey felt that there has been a dramatic increase in the volumes of traffic travelling through Thorndon over the last decade. With the future expansion of the village this is likely to increase further. Due to this it is highly likely that highways will need to be modified to better cope with this increase in demand and load.

Localised flooding

Many ditches and verges have been lost to property infill, hard landscaping and ditch infill.

Surface water drainage is a problem at the lower end of the village, the other side of Thwaite Road. This is largely caused by the lack of maintenance of the ditches which run towards the River Dove. The Parish Council is actively working with land owners and the County Council in an attempt to get ditches cleared and to reduce this problem.

Evaluation

The current state of the roads in Thorndon have deteriorated with the increase volume of traffic over the last 10 years and recently, even more so, due to severe weather conditions. The state and suitability of the highways, passing places and pavements will need to be carefully considered in order to meet the increase demands that what will result from the further expansion of the village.. Many of the villagers enjoy living in Thorndon due to the quaint rural nature of the village. Any road alterations and improvements must ensure that their appearance is, where possible, in keeping with tradition.

The positive effects of changes could also be negated if they increase the attraction of Thorndon as a 'Rat Run' between the A140 and B1077.

Sources

Village Survey 2016

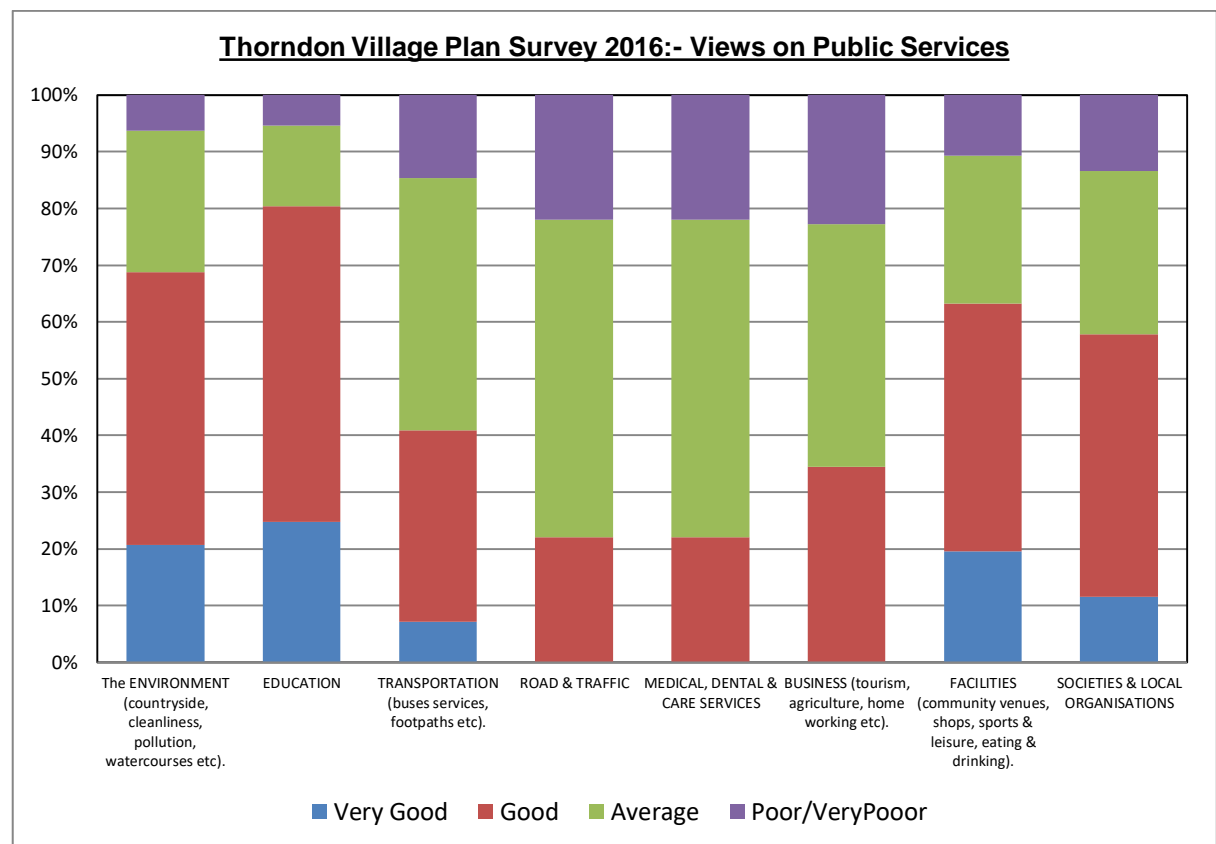
<https://www.suffolkonboard.com/buses/timetables>

Thorndon Parish Council

VAS data

Public Services

The Thorndon Village Plan Survey 2016 identified the following views on Public Services



A general trend is for those services offered and organized within the village and environs to have a higher rating than those offered externally to the village.

Additionally, the following Public Services are available within the village.

Core Utility Services

BT

BT distributes the telephone line network through the village mainly via overhead cabling. A number of landline providers are available via this network etc. Recent works are increasingly placing cables underground.

Broadband

Broadband is available throughout the village at varying speeds. 'Western' areas have been able to receive faster broadband via FTTC since 2017. The 'Eastern' area has been enabled for FTTC since May 2018.

Electricity

Electricity is distributed through the village by UK Power networks via overhead power cables which can lead to some power outage during bad weather. A number of electricity suppliers are available for villagers to use.

Emergency Planning

This is dealt with by MSDC.

Foul/Surface Water Drainage

Surface drainage and foul water is managed by Anglian water. Most houses have access to mains sewerage services occasional issues do arise with the water treatment works on Clint Road. Surface water that does not enter the main drainage system is dealt with by a variety of ditches and surface drains. Issues that arise with these systems are regularly monitored by the Parish Council and followed up with land owners. Responsibility for drainage at a particular point is sometimes difficult to identify and can delay rectification of a problem.

Gas

Mains gas is not available in the village. Some houses have LPG tanks; some villagers use bottled gas for some household appliances.

Mobile Phone

Mobile phone coverage is available from the main providers but there is a lack of consistency in signal throughout the village, 3G coverage is intermittent, signal strength often appears stronger in surrounding lanes and fields. Surprisingly, according to the main providers 4G coverage is more available than 3G

Oil

Many houses use oil for their main source of heating. Whilst oil is an efficient heat source it is subject to greater short term fluctuations in price than gas or electricity. (New houses have been built with air or ground source heating systems)

Refuse Collection

Household waste refuse collection is organized by MSDC on a fortnightly basis alternating refuse and recycling. MSDC also offer an additional fortnightly garden waste collection service. The closest Council Household Waste recycling centre is at Stowmarket. Household waste can also be taken to the Brome Community Recycling Centre at Eye which has a different charging structure for waste disposal.

Public Services

Libraries

The closest Public Library is located in Eye, a mobile library service from SCC operates monthly in the village

Post Office

Following the closure of the village Post Office a mobile post office service was organized for the village. The service offered is frequently not as advertised or is completely unavailable, the Post Office are seeking a new provider for the mobile service. The nearest Post Office services are now available in Stoke Ash and Eye

Recycling

A bottle bank is available at the village hall, further bottle banks and clothing banks are available in Eye.

The Town Estate

The Estate has a small income from agricultural rents. This is divided between individual poverty, community poverty and educational needs for the residents of Thorndon. Charity number 238531

Thorndon Community Shop

Established in 2011, the Community Shop run by volunteers is open 7 days a week providing a wide range of goods and services. It offers local produce wherever possible and a further social focal point within the village. It has further potential for development offering a wider range of services.

Village Hall

Originally built in the 1920s it has been updated and modernised and offers a further popular meeting and social point for village activities. It can accommodate up to 150 people and is also available for private hire.

Village Life

A village magazine which provides a monthly calendar of events and activities occurring in and around the village together with news and updates on items of interest. It also provides an advertising opportunity for local businesses.

Village Pub

The Black Horse is a focal social and meeting point within the village supporting many village initiatives and events. It has been central in offering support, space and premises for the Community Shop. It has very positive online reviews.

Sources

Village Survey 2016

MSDC

Thorndon Village website <http://thorndon.suffolk.cloud/>

Rural Crime & Public Safety

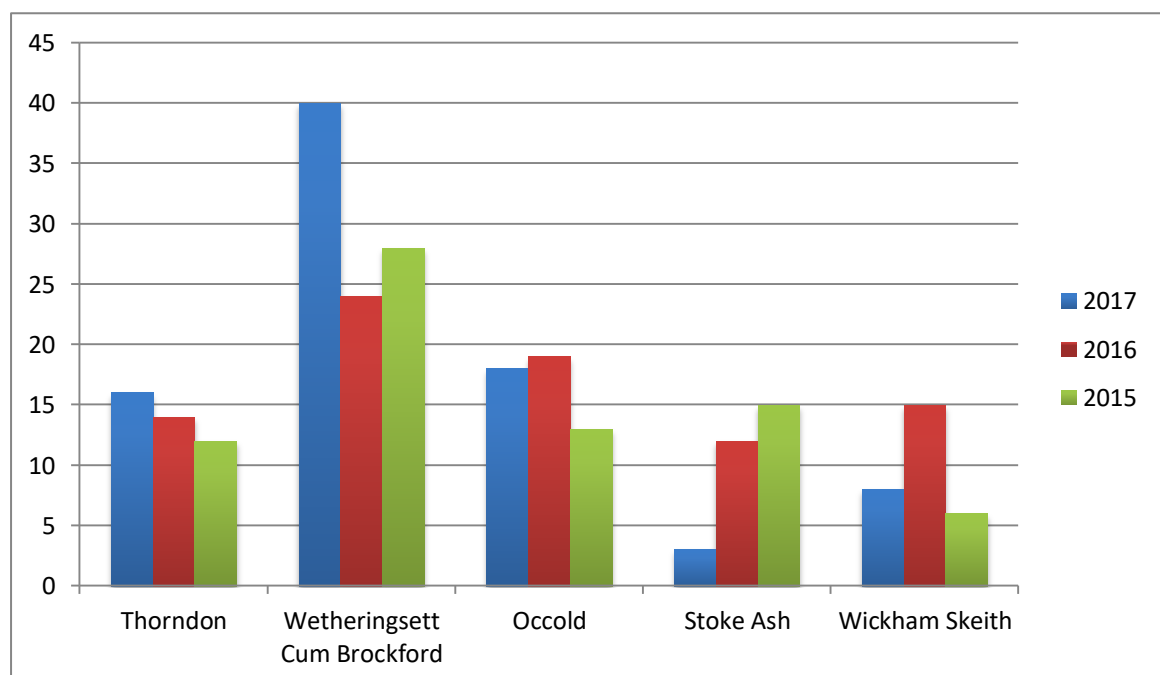
Thorndon has a very proactive Neighbourhood Watch Co-ordinator (Claude Brand) who acts as a liaison between the Police and local residents and disseminates information to villagers via the monthly Village Life Magazine and individual e-mails to residents when the need arises. He also attends Parish Council meetings at which he gives a regular update. Mr. Brand notes that the frequency of contact with the Police is not as regular as it used to be as they stopped holding Neighbourhood Watch meetings in Suffolk.

The Safer Neighbourhood team currently allocated to Thorndon are Sgt. Mark Beresford, PC Dan Peck and PCSO Kane Martin, based at Eye. Current local policing priorities are:

- (i) to work with partner agencies to address mental health and vulnerable people, including individuals excluded from mainstream society
- (ii) anti-social behaviour and crime reduction, including working with the licensing agencies and local businesses
- (iii) domestic violence.

Speeding in the village has been an ongoing issue and in addition to the speed monitoring/warning signs erected by the Parish Council, the Police periodically come to the village and operate hand held speed cameras to deter those motorists exceeding the speed limit.

Thorndon is a low crime rate area although reported figures are increasing. In 2017 there were 16 reported crimes in Thorndon (2 burglaries, 5 criminal damage/arson, 1 "other", 4 violence/sexual offences, 2 public order and 2 thefts). NB: These figures work on a 60 day delay and do not include non-notifiable crimes such as hare coursing, littering and other lower level crime. Below is a chart of comparative figures for Wetheringsett cum Brockford, Occold, Stoke Ash and Wickham Skeith.



Sources

Police www.police.uk. NB: this website does not show exact village boundaries.

