

Terms of Reference of the Natural Environment Committee (NEC)

1) Role

The NEC was established in 2021, as a [sub-committee](#) of Askham Bryan Parish Council (PC) to champion the nature, quality, diversity and conservation of the natural environment within the Parish, in particular but not limited to;

- the Village Pond
- the trees within the Recreation Area
- other trees and land owned by the Parish Council at [the](#) junction of Main Street and St Nicholas Croft, land near to 149 Main Street.

The primary objective of the [NECC](#) is to promote biodiversity and support wildlife while ensuring that these areas are maintained to the highest standards (without detrimentally affecting the natural environment and wildlife).

2) Responsibilities

2.1 Parish Owned Trees; to oversee the management of all Parish Council owned trees.

Note; the PCC is responsible for commissioning and acting upon the tri-annual arboreal assessment.

<https://www.york.gov.uk/downloads/file/2450/arbicultural-policy-for-york-november-2017>

2.2 Village Pond; to oversee the management of the village pond;

- a. to maintain and upkeep in an appropriate manner the village pond and the surrounding area.
- b. to ensure the village pond, seating areas and banks are clean, litter free and maintained to a high standard for the benefit of all villagers, visitors and wildlife
- c. to ensure malignant weeds and similar are removed from the banked areas of the pond.
- d. to ensure that planning permission is gained, and expertise sought prior to cutting and pruning bushes, trees and plants within the pond area. Particular attention will be required at nesting times for all species that live in or use the pond and pond banks.
- e. to use committee members expertise in flora to ensure that specific flowers and plants are added to the pond to attract insects that are a vital part of the pollination and development of a healthy pond and grassland.
- f. to ensure that [residents](#) and visitors are aware that the pond albeit a delightful area to spend time, is primarily a wildlife area and that respect for the wildlife is maintained so that both can co-exist harmoniously.

2.3 Communication; to communicate activities of the NEC,

- a. to improve the local community's understanding and knowledge of work undertaken to maintain and improve the natural environment of the Village.
- b. to encourage volunteers to assist with practical activities. (The Newsletter and the Parish Council website comprise just two of the media that will be utilised.)

2.4 Finance; in addition to the allocated budget the committee may fund raise and/or use other funding avenues (e.g. grant funding) to enable work to be undertaken.

3) **Committee Membership**

The Committee shall consist of:

- Not more than 8 voting members, including one member of the Parish Council
- The Committee will elect from amongst its number a willing Chair.

4) **Meetings**

- The committee shall meet on alternate months, and shall be open to the public
- Meetings will be held at the village hall (the cost will be covered by PC)
- Members are required to attend at least half the scheduled meetings. Apologies for inability to attend should be notified to the clerk in advance of the meeting.
- A quorum comprises of 50% of voting members and not less than three.
- In the event of an equality of votes, whether he or she has exercised an original vote the Chair elected by the Committee shall have a second and casting vote.
- The Committee shall adopt the Code of Conduct of the Parish Council
- The meeting will be administered by the clerk to the Parish Council

5) **Budget**

£800.00 per annum

6) **Amendment to Terms of Reference**

Committee will set Terms of Reference (reviewed annually) which will be subject to PC approval.

The PC should formally contact the Chair and the Clerk should they wish to change the TOR in the interim period

7) **Review**

The TOR will be reviewed annually

May 2022

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