

ASKHAM BRYAN PARISH COUNCIL

MINUTES of a meeting of the NATURAL ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE (NEC)

held on Thursday 16th March 2023 at 6:30pm in the Village Hall

PRESENT: Jan Bennett (Chair)
Cllr. Julie Barber Peter Christopherson Kathryn Nolan
Jo Fell

In attendance: Keith Langley (Parish Clerk).

1. Appointment of Chair and Committee Membership.

It was noted that Lisa Marriott felt unable to continue as Chair due to other commitments (but was happy to continue as a member of the Committee). It was **resolved** that Jan Bennett be elected as the new Chair. It was **resolved** that Peter Christopherson be co-opted onto the Committee. It was **resolved** that Kathryn Nolan be the vice-Chair if Jan was unable to attend the meeting.

2. Apologies for absence.

Lisa Marriott.

3. Declarations of interest.

None.

4. Public Participation.

There were no members of the public present.

5. Minutes of the last meeting.

There was a correction to bullet point 7 of the January meeting. It was **resolved** that subject to this correction, the minutes of the meeting of 19th January 2023 be accepted as a true record and it was agreed that the Chair sign the minutes and that matters arising be dealt with under the appropriate agenda item headings.

6. Recreational Area

The nest boxes shown to the Committee at the previous meeting had been fitted at the end of January and there had been an article in the newsletter about this. Three more nest boxes of the birch type had been bought and these were in Kathryn's garage. The Committee had been asked by the Parish Council to consider the tri-annual tree inspection report and to produce a strategy. It was felt that the tree inspection report set out the strategy as it listed the tree works according to a scale of priorities and these priorities determined the course of action needed. The approach of the bird nesting season was a factor in deciding when works would be completed. A pine on the corner had been cut and a torn branch had been taken down, two stumps were still there. The tree opposite had definitely been hard pruned. The Committee needed confirmation that the tree work identified as urgent and priority one was fully completed. There was confusion caused by a sign warning users of the Recreational Area of the danger of the tree and this sign suggested that the danger was still not fully resolved and clarification was needed as to whether the sign was now no longer necessary. There would be an agenda item in the summer to consider the next phase of tree works to be done in the autumn or winter. A pile of tree trunks had been left in the Recreational Area.

7. Land Adjacent to 149 Main Street

An application for tree works had been submitted to the local planning authority (City of York Council) and this was due to be determined on 28th March 2023. There had been two objections to the felling of these trees, both from addresses in Cambridgeshire. The on-site meeting to tidy up the area at 10am on 1st April would still go ahead but there would no longer be a request for volunteers to help.

There was a query about who was responsible for the boundary with the adjacent property, this would be in the deeds of that property.

8. Pond Area

There was discussion about having a management plan. A clean up would be scheduled later in the year and bird boxes would be reinstalled then (probably in the summer when it would be dryer). Jan had been taking pictures to track the water level and she would put these in order when the Committee came to do a plan. It was noted that further tree work was needed, a willow by the pond needed pollarding.

9. Any Other Business

Following an email from the previous Chair, there was discussion about having trees from the Woodland Trust to be planted along a hundred yard stretch of fence at the entrance to the Recreational Area. Different packs were available and the Committee considered packs sufficient for an eight metre hedge. The pack allowed for double-row hedging. Jan confirmed that none of the species were harmful to animals (e.g. there were no oaks as acorns are poisonous to some animals). The copse pack contained Rowan and wild cherry trees. It was estimated that 375 trees would be needed. The deadline for applications for these trees was August subject to availability. Consideration would be given to the nearby properties to ensure that there was no adverse effect on their view.

10. Date of next meeting

18th May 2023 in the Village Hall. This would be at **6pm** due to the Annual Parish Meeting following and business would be done within 45 minutes.

The meeting closed at 7:13pm.

Signed

Chair
18 May 2023