

ASKHAM BRYAN PARISH COUNCIL

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

held on Thursday 20th July 2023 at 6:30pm starting at the Pond, moving to the Recreational Area, then to the land near 149 Main Street and ending in the Village Hall.

PRESENT: Jan Bennett (Chair)
Julie Barber
Peter Christopherson
Jo Fell
Lisa Marriott
Kathryn Nolan

In attendance: Steve Bassford (Askham Bryan College) and Keith Langley (Parish Clerk).

1. Apologies for absence.

None.

2. Declarations of interest.

None.

3. Public Participation.

There were no members of the public present.

4. Minutes of the last meeting.

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting of 18th May 2023 be accepted as a true record and it was agreed that Kathryn (who Chaired that meeting) sign the minutes.

5. Pond Area.

The meeting began at the pond. Tree species were identified as follows, alder, ash beech and willow. It was agreed that a working party would meet one Saturday morning to clear the unwanted vegetation. This would be once birds had finished nesting (in the Autumn). alder and ash tree saplings could be transplanted elsewhere in the winter. It was noted that there was lots vegetation which would take up water, and plenty of purple loosestrife and ragwort (which attracts cinnabar moths).

6. Recreational Area.

The meeting then moved to the Recreational Area and considered the trees on the boundary with 25 Askham Fields Lane. There were two Scots pine trees and a silver birch on the corner. A link to an interactive map had been circulated. This showed the reference numbers of the trees by the pond, but didn't do so for the trees in the Recreational Area. Markers had not been used by the tree inspector to indicate those trees which needed to be felled. There was ivy growing up the side up of some of the trees which would have been removed by anyone wanting to inspect the base of these trees. One tree had had all its branches removed reducing it to just a trunk with new growth. Steve's advice was that this tree should be taken down to just a stump and any water shoots be dealt with. He confirmed that the students of the college do do tree work. There were some dead trees at the far end of the Recreational Area due to Dutch Elm disease. The meeting considered the undergrowth beneath these trees, Steve advised against clearing this, as it was a good habitat for wildlife.

7. Land Adjacent to 151/153 Main Street.

The meeting then moved to look at the village green (the land adjacent to 149 Main Street). Steve advised that seed for yellow rattle should be sown as this is semi parasitic on the grass. Various options for native tree species were considered including field maple, cockspur, rowan, native crab-apple (malus), rowan has a lighter canopy. It was felt better to plant a well-established tree which could be purchased for £60-£70 and would fit in someone's car. This would be cheaper in the winter and Steve confirmed that the college had a good relationship with a local supplier and could get this at a discounted price. Steve suggested spreading straw containing a mix of wild flower seeds that can be purchased from the Yorkshire Arboretum.

8. Summary

The meeting ended in the Village Hall dealing with items 1 to 4 above followed by a summary of the on-site discussions.

- **Pond Area**

A working party would tackle this one weekend towards the end of October and bird boxes would be put up. A date would be agreed at the next meeting. Peter would check the deadline of the next newsletter. The ash and alder saplings would be dug up in the winter for possible use elsewhere (but not the willows).

- **Recreational Area**

An approach would be made to City of York Council to ask them to put the tree numbers on their interactive map. The undergrowth would be left as habitat in keeping with the advice of Natural England. The dead wood would be taken away, residents could be offered this as logs. The Chair of the Parish Council would look at the tree. The Committee would seek the support of the College, it was felt that November would be a good time to take advantage of student availability.

- **Village Green**

Lots of seed had already been obtained. Jo would liaise with Steve regarding the tree, one of the three options considered would be chosen. Kathryn would obtain the tree in November and it would be planted in the New Year. Bulbs would be planted in the autumn, narcissi and bluebells could be bought from online specialists. Jo and Kathryn would obtain these by September. The horse chestnut stumps would be left and any shoots growing from the stumps would be cut off.

9. Any Other Business.

None.

10. Date of next meeting.

17th August 2023 at 6:30pm in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 7:40pm.

Signed

Chair
17 August 2023