

ASKHAM BRYAN PARISH COUNCIL

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

held on Thursday 22 May 2025 at 6pm in the Village Hall.

PRESENT: Jan Bennett (Chair) Jo Fell Kathryn Nolan
Julie Barber
Peter Christoperson

In Attendance: One resident and the Clerk.

1. Apologies for absence: Steve Bassford.

2. Declarations of interest: None.

3. Public Participation

One resident was in attendance who was considering joining the Committee.

4. Minutes of the meeting of the Natural Environment Committee held on 20th March 2025.

It was **resolved** that the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 20th March 2025 (50-51) having been circulated, be approved and that the Chair be authorised to sign. There were no matters arising.

5. Recreational Area.

The Committee was waiting to hear from the college regarding suitable locations for the bat boxes. David Hartley was proposing to plant along the woodland side. He agreed with the list provided by Steve. The plants would be sourced from the College for planting in the autumn. It was suggested that he be invited to attend the next meeting or arrangements could be made to meet him on site. Kathryn had brought an "Arundel" bat box with her which was suitable for pipistrel bats (this was passed round the meeting). There was talk of a bat detector and the Committee wondered whether college might have one. Jan agreed to contact Steve for advice about installation.

6. Pond Area.

The water level was going down but the pond was nevertheless looking good with irises. The ducklings were thriving. No moorhen chicks had been seen, but there had been sightings of the adult birds. There had also been a heron. Clearance of the purple loosestrife would be done in October (a big clear out needed to be done every other year). It was decided to monitor the situation and make a decision when appropriate.

7. Village Green.

The tree was thriving. The bulbs had been and gone. The grass had been cut early, those cutting the grass (City of York Council contractors) had mowed round the daffodils but the bluebells had been cut down. A small sign was needed. The fritillaries had spread. It was agreed to plant in drifts in future. The grass had not grown as much as usual due to the dry weather. More bulbs would be considered in the autumn time, native species of daffodils would be majored for any expansion. It was noted that the neighbouring property had still not sold.

8. Land at junction of Main Street and Saint Nicholas' Croft.

Those who live nearby seem pleased with the work that had been carried out. One bush, a choisya, has come back. Earlier that day, Peter had cut back some of the brambles, one of which had grown to a length of ten feet, this was the second occasion that Peter had cut back brambles since the work had been carried out. A couple of local residents were cutting the grass from time to time. It was

suggested that people put any cuttings into their own personal green bins just prior to the bin collection day.

9. Plans for next year.

There was discussion about plans for the future work of the Committee. One suggestion was to have a stall at the spring fair to educate people about environmentally friendly plants, pollinators and other matters. The first or second week in May was suggested so that the College could support this (noting the date of the College plant fair). Steve would be asked about the Askham Bryan plant fair. It was noted that Cllr. Wiseman keeps bees and he could speak about pollinators. It was also suggested the NEC could have a representative on the College Garden Club Committee. Part of the Committee's remit was to champion the natural environment. There could be a seasonal article in the newsletter – Kathryn agreed to look into the dates that the newsletter was published, and Peter agreed to circulate the dates. Kathryn was happy to do the research. Steve had still got the bird boxes. Julie would ask someone she knew (Jennifer) regarding flowers. Another avenue which could be explored was to develop links with course tutors or with Brian Sweeney (gamekeeping/conservation). Laura agreed to explore links with York University. It was noted also that David was involved with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust (Jan was also a member).

10. Any Other Business.

Peter raised a query about planning applications to City of York Council regarding works to trees and the consultation process with the Parish Council.

11. Date of next meetings.

24th July, 18th September and 20th November.

The meeting closed at 7:05pm.

Signed

Chair
24 July 2025