

ASKHAM BRYAN PARISH COUNCIL

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

held on Thursday 19 March 2026 at 6:30pm in the Village Hall.

PRESENT: Jo Fell (Chair)
Julie Barber Steve Bassford

In Attendance: The Clerk.

1. **Apologies for absence:** Jan Bennett, Laura Hardie, Kathryn Nolan and Peter Christopherson. In the absence of the Chair, it was agreed that Jo Fell chair the meeting.

2. **Declarations of interest:** None.

3. Public Participation

There were no members of the public in attendance.

4. Minutes of the meeting of the Natural Environment Committee held on 15th January 2026.

A revised version of the draft minutes had been circulated incorporating suggested changes. It was **resolved** that this version of the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 15th January 2026 (60-61) having been circulated, be approved and that the acting Chair be authorised to sign.

5. Recreational Area.

A report was given on the activities of the working party which met at the Recreational Area on 7th March 2026. A bug hotel had been built, and Jo had been back subsequently to put a sign on. David had worked in the tree area and ivy had been taken off the trees near the pond. Areas which did not need mowing had been marked out and agreed with David and the grass had now been cut. David had suggested that Sallow trees (small, native willow) were considered but Steve advised that these are prone to structural weakness and therefore not good to plant near a children's play area. It was noted that bulbs were coming up.

Actions:

- Steve to suggest alternatives for the Sallow tree idea.
- The next report for the newsletter would include details of the bug hotel.

6. Pond Area.

Steve had spoken to staff at the College, and they were happy to survey it after Easter. A couple of the students want to come to a future Committee meeting to present their findings.

7. Village Green.

Julie confirmed that the person doing the grass cutting was willing to continue to do so. The Committee felt that it looked better this year, the snowdrops were doing better, and it was felt that there was no need to plant further bulbs.

Actions:

- Julie would suggest when to start cutting again.

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

There were no outstanding actions except that the hedgehog house agreed previously was still outstanding. Steve had got the necessary timber for this. There was a concern about cats but it was noted that cats and hedgehogs co-exist peacefully.

9. Plans for 2026.

- a. Jo agreed had produced a calendar of jobs as agreed at the previous meeting. She circulated this to the meeting for comment. Everyone was happy with what she had produced.
- b. Budget. There was £106 left in the budget which would be used for a trail camera with rechargeable batteries for the Recreational Area. Steve would ask a colleague what they use.
- c. The Committee would have a presence at the Spring Fair on 16th May 2026 which runs from 10am to 1pm. Peter had agreed that the Committee could have an outdoor table free of charge. The loan of a gazebo would be good. A couple of people would be needed to run the stall. Jo has spoken to The Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and will pick up a selection of relevant leaflets next week; she would ask them about cameras. Suggestions for the fair were a map of the Village showing the areas the Committee are responsible for and a tour taking people round. Young people would be encouraged to become involved. Steve had sunflower seeds. The Fair would be too early to be advertised in the next newsletter, however, a report for the newsletter would be written as though the fair had already happened.

Actions:

- Steve to speak to the college regarding the trail camera.
- Jo to speak to the YWT regarding trail camera.
- Jo to write a report for the newsletter – next deadline is Friday 15th May.

10. Dates of meetings for 2026.

21st May (6pm), 16th July, 17th September and 19th November 2026 all at 6:30pm (unless stated otherwise) in the Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 7pm.

Signed

Chair
21 May 2026