

Notice of Meeting of Brampton Ash Parish Council
Monday 26th February 2024 7.30pm, St Mary's Church, Brampton Ash
 Councillors are summoned to attend the above meeting

This meeting is open to members of the public, subject to prescribed regulations where applicable.

Agenda

77/23-24	Apologies for Absence																	
78/23-24	Chair's Announcements																	
79/23-24	Declarations of Interest: <i>To Receive Disclosures of Personal and Prejudicial Interests from Councillors on Matters to Be Considered at the Meeting.</i> Members are reminded to update their register of interests if necessary.																	
80/23-24	Minutes of the Meeting held 11th December 2023 (meeting 5): <i>To approve the minutes of the above meeting as an accurate record or to amend factual inaccuracies if they occur. It is assumed that minutes have been read prior to the meeting.</i>																	
81/23-24	Matters Arising from the above minutes <i>except where they are agenda items for this meeting</i> All matters arising from the above minutes are agenda items.																	
82/23-24	Policies Review: Model Biodiversity Policy: draft attached for discussion All other policies can be found at: https://bramptonash.parish-council.com/policies-and-procedures																	
83/23-24	Financial Matters: Parish Council Finance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Quarterly internal control: councillor checklist b) Councillor check of invoices against payments/reconcile to bank statement c) Current financial position statement no. 4/23-24 (attached) d) Reporting of payments made since the last meeting: <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">Clerk's salary Q3</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£209.95</td> </tr> <tr> <td>HMRC PAYE</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£42.50</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Designer Metal Suffolk</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£852.00</td> </tr> </table> e) Reporting of receipt since last meeting: <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 70%;">Cllrs Ward Initiative Fund</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£300.00</td> </tr> </table> f) Forthcoming Payments for approval: <table style="width: 100%; border-collapse: collapse;"> <tr> <td style="width: 40%;">Church Lighting Grant</td> <td style="width: 20%; text-align: right;">£250.00</td> <td style="width: 40%;">S137 payment approval</td> </tr> <tr> <td>VAS Wilbarston Parish Council</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£90.00</td> <td>(amount to be confirmed) S137 payment approval</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Defibrillator Maintenance</td> <td style="text-align: right;">£165.00</td> <td>S137 payment approval</td> </tr> </table> g) Budget Statement no. 4/23-24 h) Proposed Budget & Precept 2024-25: Update The signed form has been returned to NNC and approved for payment i) Other: A quote has been received from Brett Spencer to carry out work to level and slab the area around the telephone/defibrillator box in the sum of £1,200.00 + VAT and any applicable licence fees. Cllr Howes has made £300 available from the Cllrs Ward Initiative Fund to wards the cost. Councillors to approve the work, under S137. 	Clerk's salary Q3	£209.95	HMRC PAYE	£42.50	Designer Metal Suffolk	£852.00	Cllrs Ward Initiative Fund	£300.00	Church Lighting Grant	£250.00	S137 payment approval	VAS Wilbarston Parish Council	£90.00	(amount to be confirmed) S137 payment approval	Defibrillator Maintenance	£165.00	S137 payment approval
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84/23-24	<p>Defibrillator: Monitoring Report (verbal): (Cllr Pentlow) Annual maintenance fee of £165.00 becomes due in April 2024</p>
85/23-24	<p>Planning Matters: <i>To Consider Matters Relating to the following Planning Applications:</i> No recent applications received. Apparent breach of planning permission (Brampton Ash / Stoke Albany boundary) flagged up to North Northants Council: no further communication received from NNC. This is believed to be under investigation by NNC.</p>
86/23-24	<p>North Northants Council/Kettering Borough Council Conservation Policy - Brampton Ash: <i>Update: Cllr Lillie</i> North Northamptonshire Draft Corporate Plan 2021-25 Consultation (update if available). No updates are currently anticipated. This will remain an agenda item.</p>
87/23-24	<p>Strategic Town and Parish Forum (formerly Rural Forum) Meeting 29th November 2023: <i>Update if available: Cllr Lillie</i></p>
88/23-24	<p>Northamptonshire Action for Communities in Rural England (NACRE) To consider whether the Parish Council should subscribe to the above organisation. For details see https://www.northantsacre.org.uk/</p>
89/23-24	<p>Highway Matters: Updates on the following, where applicable:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Signage b) Potholes c) Lighting d) Litter-pick e) Road Safety A427: <i>revised speed limit signs have been installed.</i> f) VAS cameras: <i>installation dates are February, June and October 2024</i> g) Hermitage Road spring-water update (Cllr Lillie) h) <i>Parking on verge/lay-by outside St Mary's Church: the preliminary consultation document with Parish Council input has been forwarded to NNC for their consideration, together with a map showing the actual area of the verge.</i> i) <i>Request for formal weight restriction on Hermitage Road, to protect grass verges from damage by heavy goods vehicles: See response from Ian Boyes, NNC Highways (attached)</i>
90/23-24	<p>Parish Crime Report & Police Matters: No formal crime reports received. https://www.northants.police.uk/area/your-area/northamptonshire/kettering/desborough/about-us/crime-map</p>
91/23-24	<p>Communication with Parishioners To consider communications with parishioners via social media.</p>
92/23-24	<p>Parish Council Website & Email To consider whether the Parish Council should sign up to a .gov.uk website and email.</p>
93/23-24	<p>Any Other Business: <i>To report any matters of a minor nature not requiring formal approval.</i></p>
94/23/24	<p>Date and Venue of Next Meeting:</p>

Signed: Liz Evans, Clerk to Brampton Ash Parish Council

tel: 01536 771470 email: bramptonashparishcouncil@outlook.com web: www.parish-council.com/bramptonash

RESPONSE TO THE BIODIVERSITY DUTY 30 October 2023

INTRODUCTION - STATUTORY DUTY

Under the 2021 Environment Act, public authorities (including town and parish councils) operating in England must consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Government guidance published on 17 May 2023 clarifies that, as a public authority, town and parish councils must:

- consider what they can do to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- agree policies and specific objectives based on their consideration.
- act to deliver their policies and achieve their objectives.

Town and parish councils, unlike other authorities, are not obliged to publish a report on their actions, but the [Government guidance](#) requires all public authorities to complete their first consideration of what action to take for biodiversity by 1 January 2024. They must agree their policies and objectives as soon as possible after this and must reconsider the selected actions within five years of completing their previous consideration, or more frequently if they choose.

To comply with the guidance, town and parish councils could as a minimum:

- have biodiversity as an agenda item for a meeting before the end of 2023.
- note what action they are already taking to conserve and enhance biodiversity.
- agree what further steps they should take to conserve and enhance biodiversity.

Such steps may include:

- reviewing what biodiversity or nature recovery plans are already in place from other local authorities, e.g. potential for jointly-supported wildlife corridors.
- making contact with local voluntary groups working on nature conservation.
- carrying out a biodiversity audit of council landholdings and/or the whole council area, potentially involving residents in a ["BioBlitz"](#)
- gathering expert advice on possible actions in support of biodiversity, such as from [Caring for God's Acre](#) and the [Eco Church initiative](#) in respect of churchyards
- drafting an action plan that covers action that the council will take itself as well as support for the actions of other local bodies.

Whatever action is agreed, as a minimum local councils could ensure they address biodiversity concerns when commenting on planning applications.

All these steps may inform an agreed biodiversity policy for which a model example is attached. Guidance for town and parish councils on developing a [local nature action plan](#) has been published by South Gloucestershire Council, as well as a [field guide](#) for those with little or no ecological background.

MODEL BIODIVERSITY POLICY

BACKGROUND

In accordance with the duty imposed on town and parish councils by Section 40 of the Natural Environment and Rural Communities Act 2006, updated by Section 102 of the Environment Act 2021, **[insert council name]** (hereinafter referred to as the Council) which has any functions exercisable in relation to England must from time to time consider what action the authority can properly take, consistently with the proper exercise of its functions, to further the general biodiversity objective.

This duty also means that town and parish councils can spend funds in conserving biodiversity.

DEFINITION

According to Defra (Biodiversity 2020), biodiversity is the variety of all life on Earth. It includes all species of animals and plants – everything that is alive on our planet.

Biodiversity is important for its own sake and has its own intrinsic value. A number of studies have shown this value also goes further. Biodiversity is the building block of our 'ecosystems' that in turn provide us with a wide range of goods and services that support our economic and social wellbeing. These include essentials such as food, fresh water and clean air, but also less obvious services such as protection from natural disasters, regulation of our climate, and purification of our water or pollination of our crops. Biodiversity also provides important cultural services, enriching our lives.

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The object of this policy is to work towards conserving and enhancing the biodiversity of the Council's area.

The Full Council and any committees of the Council will consider sustainability, environmental impact and biodiversity when making decisions and will develop and implement policies and strategies as required.

In particular, the Council will aim to improve the biodiversity of the area in the following ways:

- consider the potential impact on biodiversity represented by planning applications.
- manage its land and property using environmentally friendly practices that will promote biodiversity.
- support local businesses and council operations in the adoption of low impact / nature positive practices.
- encourage and support other organisations within the **parish / town** to manage their areas of responsibility with biodiversity in mind.
- support residents and local organisation activities to enhance and promote biodiversity.

ACTIONS

Planning applications

The Council will:

- when commenting on planning applications, support site and building design that benefits biodiversity through the conservation and integration of existing habitats or provision of new habitats.
- support protection of sensitive habitats from development and will consider whether the development would mean the loss of important habitats for wildlife in respect of all applications.
- consider what each proposed development might make in terms of biodiversity net gain.
- include policies in support of biodiversity within the neighbourhood plan.

Land and property management

The Council will:

- carry out a biodiversity audit of its landholdings.
- consider the conservation and promotion of local biodiversity with regard to the management of its open spaces. This will include adopting beneficial practices with regarding to cutting and removal of vegetation, application of chemicals and timing of maintenance work, paying attention to the Government's [regulations for plant protection products](#).
- take special care in the specification of grounds maintenance contracts to ensure that the work, whilst reaching acceptable standards, does not harm the natural environment.
- source sustainable materials when procuring supplies for the Council's use
- consider biodiversity issues and the implementation of changes when managing its buildings.

Local community

The Council will:

- raise public awareness of biodiversity issues, including through its website and newsletters.
- engage with local businesses and residents regarding biodiversity in the community and how members of the community can assist and make a difference.
- where feasible, involve the community in biodiversity projects on its land including for example tree planting, wildflower meadows, birdbox making.

Partners

The Council will work in partnership with other organisations to protect, promote and enhance biodiversity within the council area.

It will review any local nature recovery strategies, species conservation strategies, or protected site strategies in respect of local Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) and consider how it may become more involved in implementing the strategies' recommendations.

MONITORING

This policy was adopted on **xx** (Minute reference **yy**) and will be reviewed in two years or sooner should legislation dictate / each year at the Annual Meeting. A summary of how the policy has been implemented will be published annually, with reference to the original biodiversity audit to show progress.

DRAFT MODEL ACTION PLAN

SITE / OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOME	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING / PUBLICITY
Whole council area	Raise local awareness of biodiversity.	Gain local support for action.	Ongoing	Newsletter, social media, website
Protect and support biodiversity	Encourage suitable planting to support biodiversity.	Connect & diversify habitats to meet the needs of a variety of wildlife species	Ongoing	Mapping
Cemetery / churchyard	Additional planting Maintain and renew bird boxes as required. Adopt a plan to support wildlife and diversity whilst maintaining the site in a way which enables visitors to experience quiet and calm remembrance. Leave leaf litter and dead vegetation wherever possible as a habitat for invertebrates.	Increased diversity of habitats and food sources Increased cover for invertebrates, reptiles, amphibians and small mammals. Encouraging insects particularly butterflies and bees.		
Recreation ground	Sympathetically maintain hedging. Leave some areas unmown. Only use environment friendly pesticides where absolutely necessary and only in ideal weather conditions.	Food sources and cover Encourages insects. Sustain and enhance natural habitats.		

Common / other open spaces	<p>Adopt a management plan.</p> <p>Encourage residents to remove litter and pick up after their dogs.</p> <p>Work with the county council on verge management, favouring biodiversity but noting which areas may need cutting for highway safety.</p> <p>Encourage residents to adopt areas to look after, making it clear what is expected e.g. peat free compost and no chemicals.</p>	<p>Sustain and enhance natural habitats.</p> <p>Protecting habitats</p> <p>Protecting/enhancing habitats</p> <p>Regular attention.</p>		
SITE / OBJECTIVE	ACTION	OUTCOME	TARGET (Years)	REPORTING / PUBLICITY
The Built Landscape	<p>Ensure that planning consultations are considered against the requirements of the Neighbourhood Plan</p> <p>Encourage hedgehog/small animal highways with permeable boundaries</p>	<p>Protecting/enhancing habitats</p> <p>Extending habitats.</p>	Ongoing	

<p>Increase community awareness of biodiversity</p>	<p>Ask residents for their views on what they would like to be done to conserve biodiversity within the parish.</p> <p>Raise awareness of the importance of gardens as habitats for wildlife, with possible actions highlighted in the parish magazine.</p> <p>Create a page on the parish council website for photographs / information / links</p> <p>Encourage local farmers to contribute.</p> <p>Provide seed bombs / bulbs etc. for residents' use.</p> <p>Discourage floodlighting.</p>	<p>Engagement/ownership of biodiversity</p> <p>Promote biodiversity.</p> <p>Promote biodiversity.</p> <p>Promote biodiversity.</p> <p>Extending habitats.</p> <p>Protect nocturnal animals.</p>	<p>Ongoing</p>	<p>Neighbourhood plan consultation</p>
<p>Support Community Projects</p>	<p>Support hedge/tree planting in any appropriate areas.</p> <p>Work in partnership with the school to develop young people's awareness of the environment around them.</p> <p>Consider events and offer volunteering opportunities to support biodiversity, working with local organisations.</p>	<p>Extending habitats.</p> <p>Promote biodiversity.</p> <p>Promote biodiversity.</p>		

RE: Hermitage Road, Brampton Ash - Request for Weight Restriction

Ian Boyes <ian.boyes@northnorthants.gov.uk>

Tue 16/01/2024 17:08

CLlr David Howes <David.Howes@northnorthants.gov.uk>;bramptonashparishcouncil@outlook.com

<bramptonashparishcouncil@outlook.com>

Dear Liz

Thank you for your request on behalf of the Parish Council for consideration of a 7.5t Weight Limit for Brampton Ash on Hermitage Road.

Although enforceable weight limits can be introduced (7.5 t Amenity Weight Limits) these will only be considered where there is strong evidence that a significant number of lorries are “rat running” on a daily basis and that the introduction of a restriction would result in a minimum reduction of 30 HGV movements per day, representing at least 50% of the total lorry movements in a day. Other considerations have to be taken into account to ensure that a limit will not transfer the problem to other communities and to ensure that there is a more suitable alternative route that would not lead to a major increase in distance for lorry operators as, if the alternative route is too long, this leads to disrespect of the limit. Where a weight limit is in place drivers having legitimate business to load / unload in the area can still legally access the area. Even if all these requirements can be met then a lengthy legal process, involving consultations, has to be undertaken that may result in objections. We currently have a back log of locations where we have requests for the introduction of limits but current funding constraints mean these cannot be progressed presently.

NNC’s Policy for the introduction of weight restrictions is outlined below:

- A minimum reduction of 30 HGV movements per day, representing at least 50% of the observed movements, can be achieved.
- A restricted area can be defined which does not transfer the problem to other communities and has sensible and practicable terminal locations.
- An alternative route exists for diverting HGVs that does not pass through environmentally sensitive areas, does not create a major increase in distance for lorry operators, avoids dangerous junctions or other unsuitable locations and will not result in increased road maintenance costs.
- Structural damage to buildings, walls and vehicles occurs.
- The road that is to be the subject of the restriction is not part of the Primary Road Network (PRN) or, other than in exceptional circumstances, a non PRN “A” road.

In situations where the above requirements cannot be met, we can install “advisory” unsuitable for HGV signing which are currently installed at each end of the road, which we note are already installed at either end of Hermitage Road as indicated below. (Photographs supplied)

It must be pointed out that it is far easier for a driver of a HGV to stay on a main road route rather than divert off through small rural roads and especially through villages where the tortuous nature of the roads, junctions and parked vehicles will result in far more gear changes and delays than maintaining their route on the main road. In most instances routes involving narrower roads in villages will only be used by drivers of larger vehicles if they have legitimate business to make deliveries in the immediate area.

I’m sorry that I cannot provide a more positive response but hope that this explains the situation.

Kind regards

Ian

Ian Boyes

Assistant Community Liaison Officer

ian.boyes@northnorthants.gov.uk

Date	On-line Transaction	Cheque no.	Item	Income £	Clerk's Salary	Expenditure £ inc VAT	(VAT Paid £)	Expenditure £ Section 137 inc VAT	Balance Excluding Reserves LGA72 S137	Balance Including Reserves	Reconciled to bank	Reserves 1 Running total LGA72 S137	Reserves 2 Running total Election Costs S137	Legal Power
Brampton Ash Parish Council: Income & Expenditure 1 Apl 2023 - 31 Mar 2024: Report 1														
01/04/23			Balance brought forward	£2,683.11					£450.02	£2,683.11		£2,133.09	£100.00	
01/04/23			t/f to reserve 2			£100.00			£350.02	£2,683.11			£200.00	
13/04/23	Y		Wilbarston pc VAS paid from reserve					£60.00		£2,623.11		£2,073.09		LGA72 S137 payment H/ways 1980 s41
27/04/23	Y		NNC Precept	£1,500.00					£1,850.02	£4,123.11	27/04/23			
27/04/23	Y		NCALC			£226.01	£26.00		£624.01	£3,897.10				LGA 72 s.143(1)(b) Local Audit & Accountability Act 2014
23/05/23	Y		HMRC VAT+	£59.62					£83.63	£3,956.72				
23/05/23	Y		HMRC VAT+ paid to reserve	£859.48							23/05/23	£2,932.57		LGA72 S137 receipt
01/07/23	Y		HMRC PAYE			£32.00			£1,651.63	£4,784.20				LGA 72 s.112
01/07/23	Y		Clerk's salary Q1		£167.85				£1,483.78	£4,616.35	19/07/23			LGA72 s.112
Signed:			N Bevan						Member		24/07/23			
Brampton Ash Parish Council: Income & Expenditure 1 Apl 2023 - 31 Mar 2024: Report 2														
28/07/23			Printer ink			£13.00	£2.17		£1,470.78					LGA72 s111
03/08/23			Website			£78.00	£13.00		£1,392.78					LGA72 s111
18/09/23			Flash drive			£10.99			£1,381.79					LGA72 s111
18/09/23			Flash drive refund	£10.99					£1,392.78					LGA72 s111
18/09/23			Flash drive			£7.99	£1.33		£1,384.79	£4,517.36	20/09/2023			LGA72 s111
Signed:			N Bevan						Member		09/10/2023			
Brampton Ash Parish Council: Income & Expenditure 1 Apl 2023 - 31 Mar 2024: Report 3														
03/10/23	Y		HMRC PAYE			£32.00			£1,352.79					LGA 72 s.112
03/10/23	Y		Clerk's salary Q2		£167.85				£1,184.94	£4,317.51				LGA 72 s.112
21/11/23	Y		NNC Grant	£1,093.00								£4,025.57		
30/11/23	Y		Zurich Insc.			£283.36			£901.58	£5,127.15				LGA 72 s.112
Signed:			N Bevan						Member		11/12/2023			
Brampton Ash Parish Council: Income & Expenditure 1 Apl 2023 - 31 Mar 2024: Report 4														
12/12/23	Y		Coles Nurseries				£21.00	£126.00		£5,001.15		£3,899.57		LGA72 s 137
27/12/23	Y		HMRC PAYE			£42.50				£4,958.65				
27/12/23	Y		Clerk's salary Q3		£209.95				£649.13	£4,748.70				
18/01/23	Y		Designer Metal				£142.00	£852.00		£3,896.70		£3,047.57		LGA72 s 137
13/02/24	Y		CLIs Grant InitFund	£300.00					£649.13	£4,196.70		£3,347.57		
Signed:			N Bevan						Member		26/02/2024			
Note: Reserves 1 + reserves 2 + balance exc reserves = balance inc reserves = bank balance														