



City of Durham Parish Council

The City of Durham Parish Council. Office 3, Clayport Library. 8 Millennium Place. Durham. DH1 1WA.

Telephone: 07510 074875 Email: parishclerk@cityofdurham-pc.gov.uk

Date of Summons: 5th February 2025

SUMMONS

To all Members of the City of Durham Parish Council's Environment Committee: Councillors V Ashfield, L Brown, N Brown, D Freeman, R Friederichsen and C Lattin

You are hereby summoned to attend the **Environment Committee meeting** to be held **via Zoom at 13:00pm on Tuesday 11th February 2025** for the purpose of transacting the following Agenda business as shown.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84523859342>

Meeting ID: 845 2385 9342

Members of the public and press are also cordially invited to attend. Members of the public may address Council, Committee or Sub-Committee meetings for up to three minutes, with the agreement of the Chair of the meeting, provided that the statement is related to an item on the agenda. The speaker should approach the Clerk before the meeting commences to request to speak during the meeting.

Members are reminded that the Council has a general duty to consider the following matters in the exercise of any of its functions: Equal Opportunities, Health & Safety, Civility and Respect and Human Rights plus Social, Economic and Environmental matters.

Yours faithfully,

A. Shanley

Mr Adam Shanley
Clerk to the City of Durham Parish Council

AGENDA

- 1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**
- 2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS.**
- 3. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 14th JANUARY 2025**
- 4. TO RECEIVE ANY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION ON THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS**
- 5. TO CONSIDER THE LATEST NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDEN REPORT**
- 6. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE PRIORITIES:**

6a. To decide:

- I) Request to take over responsibility for a claimed public byway between the end of John Street to the end of Holly Street – report attached.
- II) Proposal to support the Wear Rivers Trust as part of the Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) project – report included.
- III) To consider a joint letter, with participant schools of the OASES Breath Clean Air project, to DCC on clean air in Durham City.
- IV) To consider what action the Parish Council might take in relation to the proposed new Tees Valley Energy Recovery Facility (TVERF) in Teesside.

6b. To complete:

- I) Report from Claire Murray-Kemp on an update re: fundraising efforts to fund new green roof bus shelters
- II) Update on the proposal to reinstall the boundary stone between the City of Durham and Shincliffe parishes
- III) Update on the proposed new blue plaque commemorating former Crossgate Councillor Sam Green.
- IV) Update on the production of a Community Emergency Plan.

6c. To note:

- I) To consider the Durham City Green Corridor project being delivered by DCC and the National Trust.
- II) Ongoing efforts to resolve issues in relation to the new parking permit scheme by DCC.

- 7. AOB** (please note for information only and not for formal decisions).
- 8. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

Tuesday 11th March 2025 at 1pm
Tuesday 8th April 2025 at 1pm
Tuesday 13th May 2025 at 1pm

CITY OF DURHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the Environment Committee held on Tuesday 14th January 2025 at 13:00pm via Zoom

Present: Councillors C Lattin (Chair), V Ashfield, L Brown, N Brown, D Freeman, and R Friederichsen.

Also present: Parish Clerk A Shanley, Councillor J Ashby, Councillor E Ashby, Ms Claire Murray-Kemp, Mr Geoff Knight (Durham County Council), and Hazel (STRIKE Collective).

1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES

The Chair welcomed all participants. Apologies were received and **accepted** from Councillor Liz Brown.

2. TO RECEIVE ANY DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST FROM MEMBERS

Councillor D Freeman declared an interest regarding the proposed Tees Valley Energy Recovery Facility (TVERF) as Durham County Council is a partner in the project.

3. TO RECEIVE AND APPROVE AS A CORRECT RECORD THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 12th NOVEMBER 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th November 2024 were unanimously **agreed** as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4. TO RECEIVE ANY PUBLIC PARTICIPATION COMMENTS ON THE FOLLOWING AGENDA ITEMS

Hazel from Strike Collective, a female-led creative group in County Durham, attended the meeting to discuss potential opportunities for public art projects in the city.

Hazel explained that the Strike Collective is a diverse group of 21 artists, including visual artists, poets, florists, and graphic designers. They are interested in creating site-specific public artwork to help bring more colour and life to areas of the city.

The Clerk advised that he had previously met with Hazel and another member of the collective, Zara, to discuss potential locations for their public art, and he brought those ideas to the Committee. The locations discussed included the wall at East Atherton Street, Fowler's Yard as well as the Leazes underpass area.

The Committee expressed its desire to work with Strike Collective and **agreed** to continue discussing potential locations and funding sources. The Clerk also noted that one of the collective's members, Maria, currently has work on display at the Dead Dog Gallery at the local sixth form college.

5. TO CONSIDER THE LATEST NEIGHBOURHOOD WARDEN REPORT

The Committee praised the work of the Neighbourhood Wardens and discussed potential recognition, including nominating them for the Good Citizen Award. It was noted that their efforts in addressing waste management and fly-tipping, particularly in Fowler's Yard, had been highly effective.

6. DISCUSSION OF ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE PRIORITIES:

6a. To decide:

I) Discussion with DCC Clean and Green regarding future work on Durham in Bloom as well as planting for Spring/Summer 2025.

The Chair welcomed Geoff Knight from Durham County Council to the meeting. Geoff provided an update on proposed budget cuts that would impact the county's floral displays and entry into the Northumbria in Bloom competition.

Specifically, Geoff shared that the county is proposing to:

- Cease providing winter bedding displays across the county
- Reduce the amount of summer bedding displays
- End the county's entry into the Northumbria in Bloom competition following the 2025 competition.

Geoff indicated this was due to both financial pressures and a desire to move towards more sustainable planting. Geoff offered to continue providing staff support if the Parish Council wanted to take over the Northumbria in Bloom entry, but advised that the financial burden for delivering this would fall to the Parish Council.

The Committee discussed this proposal, with some concerns raised about the potential loss of the Northumbria in Bloom entry and the impact on the city's floral displays. However, no specific agreements were made about future work or funding from the Parish Council on these initiatives.

Geoff also confirmed that he was still awaiting an answer on the matter of costs for both Spring and Summer planting as requested by the Parish Council.

The Chair and Committee Members thanked Geoff for his work with the Parish Council and specifically highlighted the excellent work of Joe Peat in the Clean and Green team at DCC.

At this point, Geoff thanked the Committee and left the meeting.

II) Supporting the work of the Durham City Riverscape Community Group as well as the Wear Rivers Trust with the Invasive Non-Native Species project.

The Committee discussed their continued support for the work of the Durham City Riverscape Community Group and the Wear Rivers Trust, particularly their efforts around invasive non-native species management along the River Wear.

The Clerk firstly noted that the Riverscape Community Group had approached him about getting insurance coverage, which he was able to help them obtain at a reasonable cost of around £100. The Clerk also advised that the group did not need any additional equipment funding from the Parish Council at this time.

Regarding the Wear Rivers Trust, the Chair explained there had been issues with the Trust not being allowed access to Pelaw Woods by the County Council, in order to conduct their balsam removal work. The Chair expressed frustration that the Trust has been told they would need to pay for licenses to access this land, which she felt was unreasonable and a matter she would again raise with Councillor Mark Wilkes.

The Committee also **agreed** they would like to continue providing £5,000 in funding to be split between the two groups, with the Riverscape Community potentially using some of that for expanding into Fowler's Yard, and the Wear Rivers Trust using it for their educational work with schools.

The Chair and Clerk **agreed** to follow up with the Wear Rivers Trust to better understand their funding needs and any issues they are facing with accessing land. The Committee expressed its wholehearted support of the important work both groups are doing to protect the River Wear.

III) To consider next steps in the OASES Breath Clean Air project with schools on local initiatives – reports included.

Councillor R Friederichsen provided an overview of the recommendations from the OASES report on their clean air project with local schools. Councillor R Friederichsen suggested the committee take a few key actions:

1. Write to Durham County Council to advocate for interventions like improved cycle lanes and crossing patrols near schools, based on the recommendations in the OASES report.
2. Commit funding for 2025 to support a follow-up project with OASES, building on the work they have already done. Councillor R Friederichsen proposed a budget of around £2,500 for this.

The Committee discussed the proposal. Councillor V Ashfield expressed some concerns and advised that she felt the new OASES project seemed too similar to what has already been done, and that she was not sure it would provide enough new or tangible outcomes to justify the significant budget they had requested.

However, the Committee generally **agreed** that continuing to work with OASES and support their efforts to raise awareness and drive action on air quality issues around schools was worthwhile. They decided to allocate the £2,500 that was already budgeted for this work in 2025.

The Committee also discussed the importance of ensuring the Parish Council receives due credit and recognition for funding these types of educational initiatives in the community.

The Clerk **agreed** to work with OASES on getting publicity and acknowledgement for the Parish Council's support.

IV) Request for the Parish Council to endorse the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.

The Committee **agreed** to refer this item with its endorsement to the next Full Council meeting in January.

Councillor V Ashfield advised that she had drafted a motion about the non-proliferation treaty, but felt that there was insufficient time in the context of this meeting to give this big issue full consideration today. Councillor V Ashfield suggested that her report and motion on the non-proliferation treaty go straight to the Full Council meeting in January and this was **agreed** by Members.

The Committee did not take any action or make any agreements related to endorsing the Fossil Fuel Non-Proliferation Treaty.

V) To consider what action the Parish Council might take in relation to the proposed new Tees Valley Energy Recovery Facility (TVERF) in Teesside.

The Committee **agreed** to defer this item until the next Environment Committee in February 2025.

6b. To complete:

I) Report from Claire Murray-Kemp on an update re: fundraising efforts to fund new green roof bus shelters – to include a discussion on potential projects for S106 funding from Neville's Cross division.

Claire Murray-Kemp provided an update on her work to secure funding for new green roof bus shelters in the Elvet and Gilesgate areas of Durham. Claire noted that she needs to get an updated quote from the County Council's preferred supplier and also gather some information on community views to include in the funding application.

The Committee confirmed, for the purposes of this Section 106 application, the bus shelters the Parish Council is specifically looking at replacing with sedum roof shelters were:

- 1 @ Lower Claypath (opposite side to library)
- 1 @ Chains flats facing on to the main street Claypath/ Gilesgate
- 1 @ New Elvet (opposite the Three Tuns)
- 1 @ Church Street (at the entrance to the church yard)

For wider funding opportunities, the Committee also confirmed that it would like Claire to look for finance for two replacement sedum shelters on either side of Gilesgate Bank at Magdalene Street in Gilesgate.

The Clerk advised that there is approximately £83,000 remaining in Section 106 funding that could potentially be used for this project.

The Committee thanked Claire and the Clerk for this update and **agreed** that Claire should work to get the updated quote and community feedback information, with the goal of submitting the funding application by early March, before the current council term ends.

II) Further report on the proposed new blue plaque commemorating former Crossgate Councillor Sam Green.

The Committee noted progress on the blue plaque initiative and agreed to bring a formal proposal to Full Council.

The Clerk provided an update on the research carried out into Sam Green's history. The Clerk confirmed that Sam Green unfortunately passed away and died in 1999 and the Council is of the view that there are no surviving relatives remaining.

The Committee discussed a future unveiling event and the Clerk advised that the organisation Stonewall has offered to support this event in any way it could by providing wider publicity and potentially a big name to support the plaque's unveiling.

The Committee **agreed** that the blue plaque should be placed at 40 The Avenue, where Sam Green lived when he was first elected and thanked Mr Cornwell for agreeing to this. The Committee did not agree a date for the unveiling but Members expressed a desire for some time before May if possible.

III) Update on the production of a Community Emergency Plan.

The Chair expressed her gratitude to the Clerk for the extensive work he has done in putting together the 101-page Community Emergency Plan document. The Committee unanimously **approved** the Community Emergency Plan, which will be presented to the Full Council meeting in January for formal adoption. Once the Council approves it, the plan will then go to the County Council's Civil Contingency Unit to be tested and officially approved before going live.

The Clerk advised that the Parish Council has budgeted £2,000 this year and proposes another £2,000 for next year to support the implementation of the plan. The Chair advised that she would work with the Clerk on how to best utilise that funding.

The Committee also recognised the hard work of resident volunteers who have contributed significantly to developing the plan. The Chair encouraged the Committee Members to direct any questions or feedback directly to those resident contributors when the plan is presented at the Full Council meeting.

6c. To note:

I) Update on the proposal to reinstall the boundary stone between the City of Durham and Shincliffe parishes.

Councillor J Ashby provided an update on the boundary stone project. Councillor J Ashby advised that the stone was previously located between the two parishes but had been removed. Councillor J Ashby explained that the stone is currently

being stored in a garage in Shincliffe and that the Shincliffe Historical Society is interested in doing something to restore and reinstall it.

The Committee **agreed** that they would like to work jointly with Shincliffe Parish Council and partners on this project to reinstall the boundary stone. Councillor J Ashby offered to draft a letter to Shincliffe Parish Council proposing this joint effort, which the Clerk also agreed to review and send.

The Clerk shared a map showing the approximate location where the boundary stone had previously been situated. The Committee also **agreed** that an informational sign or plaque should be installed alongside the boundary stone to provide historical context. The Clerk offered to work on the design of this sign but advised that he requires the content from other partners for what goes into this information board.

The Committee acknowledged that they will also need to get approval from Durham County Council, as the land is likely under their jurisdiction, before reinstalling the boundary stone. Councillor J Ashby **agreed** to draft a letter to the County Council to seek their approval for the project.

7. AOB

None received.

8. DATES OF FUTURE MEETINGS

Tuesday 11th February 2025 at 1pm

Tuesday 11th March 2025 at 1pm

Tuesday 8th April 2025 at 1pm

There being no further business, the Chair thanked all participants for their attendance and contributions and closed the meeting.

Signed,

**Chair of the Parish Council's Environment Committee
(11th February 2025)**

ITEM 6A) II) PROPOSAL TO SUPPORT THE WEAR RIVERS TRUST AS PART OF THE INVASIVE NON-NATIVE SPECIES (INNS) PROJECT

Funding period: March 2025 onwards

Project lead: Claire Dodds

Project area: Durham Peninsula (Shincliffe Bridge - Barkers Haugh Sewage Treatment Works)

Acronyms: INNS = Invasive Non-Native Species; DP = Durham Peninsula; WRT = Wear Rivers Trust; CDPC = City of Durham Parish Council; JK = Japanese Knotweed; HB = Himalayan Balsam; GH = Giant Hogweed Funding breakdown

Funding Breakdown

Activity	Potential Locations	Daily Rate	No. of Days	Total Costs
School Engagement	Framwellgate School	£330	1	£330
	Durham Johnston School	£330	1	£330
	St Leonards RC School	£330	1	£330
	Planning	£330	1	£330
Removal of INNS including volunteer engagement	Durham Peninsula	£330	4	£1320
TOTAL				2640

Thank you for offering to support INNS management in Durham Peninsula during the 2025 season. It is looking very promising that WRT will be able to tackle INNS in DCC woodland this year, an issue which has limited our progress over the past few years. WRT have requested permission to remove invasive species and litter pick in Pelaw Woods, Aykley Woods and Flass Vale between March and October 2025.

INNS Management

WRT have secured Northumbria Water Branch Out Funding. The funding will pay for scythe training for 4 volunteers from the Friends of Groups in Durham Peninsula and two WRT staff. The skills from the training can be used to manage the INNS management in DP more sympathetically. It will also allow from the removal of large sections of Himalayan Balsam late in the season, when hand picking is no longer an option. WRT will engage in volunteer and staff led events to remove INNS in DP.

Timescale: March – October 2025

Volunteer Engagement: 12 volunteers

School Engagement

In previous years WRT have worked along Cub and Scout Groups to remove Himalayan Balsam, they have made a significant impact in St Giles Church, and this will continue in 2025. In addition WRT would like to educate older children about how invasive species are being spread and how they can help build a map of known locations. Pupils at Framwellgate School, Durham Johnston School and St Leonards RC School are regularly accessing DP and are at risk of spreading seeds, but they are also our eyes on the ground. Spreading the Check Clean Dry Campaign to schools and introducing the INNS Mapper App can have a major contribution on reducing the spread of invasive species. The sessions in schools can be supported by well-timed volunteer days in DP, which pupils will be encouraged to attend.

Timescale: Summer Term 2025

Groups: three schools, up to 75 children per school; continued engagement with cubs and scouts' groups, approximately 40 children