

Naunton Parish Council

Clerk's Report for **Monday 15 July 2019 to Friday 20 September 2019** (Points numbered according to the minutes of the last meeting.)

Minutes and Clerk's report have been posted to the Naunton PC website.

5. Clerk ordered salt/grit bin, which has been delivered to Cllr Chance for installation and notified GCC of requirement for 1 pallet of salt this year.
6. Clerk has posted:
 - * 'No objections' comments for application 19/02235/FUL Brockhill Quarry; Permission has since been granted.
 - * Request for further bat survey and further investigation into tree encroaching onto neighbour's property for application 19/020088/FUL Longford barn conversion.
 - * Letter sent to owners of The Manse re: notice with details of how to access the lower burial ground. No response.
7. (b) Clerk has logged blockage issues with Gloucestershire Highways. FYI – Harry Roberts is away until February 2020. GCC reference number FS-Case-133475492
(c) Clerk has provided information regarding wildflower verges (see below)
(d) Clerk has provided information re: low cost ANPR equipment to monitor parking (see below).
Letter has been drafted for owner of Old Band Room holiday let (see below).
Cost of yellow no parking signs is provided (below).
Clerk has emailed Neighbourhood Policing re: arranging visits between 6 and 7 p.m. to observe parking problems.
8. (a) Letter of thanks to Mr Duval re: phone box repainting has been drafted (see below).
(e) Replacement dog waste bags have been ordered.
(i) Asset register has been updated with new quantities of flood monitoring equipment and litter picking equipment from CDC.
10. Clerk has registered Cllrs Chance and Bell to attend planning training delivered by CDC. No date as yet.

Also:

Organised Windrush Against Sewage Pollution 'fly training' day at the village hall.

Arranged legal checking of lease alterations to include appropriate parking.

Arranged return of last bundle of legal docs from Lloyds to NPC.



Wildflower verges

The charity 'Plantlife' has been campaigning for wildlife-friendly verges for some time. Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust is also involved.

The Plantlife guide to good verge management is very helpful:

[https://www.plantlife.org.uk/application/files/4614/8232/2916/Road verge guide 17 6.pdf](https://www.plantlife.org.uk/application/files/4614/8232/2916/Road_verge_guide_17_6.pdf)
Pages 12 – 14 explain good verge management as well as all the benefits.

The following information is taken from its website <https://plantlife.love-wildflowers.org.uk/roadvergecampaign/about-the-campaign/> advice section:

Will road safety be compromised by managing verges for wildlife?

No. Safety comes first but with the size of most verges there should be no conflict with conservation. For many verges, a regular late summer cut and removal of clippings will keep the verge open, safe and thriving with interesting wildlife. Certain verges must be cut regularly to maintain clear lines of visibility – this is particularly crucial at junctions where a 'visibility splay' has to be maintained at all times. On some busy roads, this also applies to the first metre from the edge of the carriageway.

Will it cost more money to adopt these guidelines?

Our basic advice is to cut less (only once or twice per year) and to change the timing of cutting from spring to late summer or autumn. If you're currently cutting verges three or more times a year, you could actually save money by reducing the number of cuts. For example, Dorset adopted a new strategy for managing its highway verges in 2014. Since then, the council estimates it has saved £100,000 through, among other things, fewer cuts of road verges. Further details on costs for better verge management projects can be found in the case studies of our website.

Is collecting grass cuttings essential for better management?

Reducing the number of cuts and changing the timing of the cut are a great place to start. However, collecting grass cuttings makes a significant difference. It reduces the thick thatch that can build up on verges and prevents wild flower seeds germinating, and it reduces nutrient levels, which encourage vigorous, competitive species. Over time, removing the cuttings makes the verge easier to manage as reduced nutrient levels means that slower-growing wild flower species start to replace lush grass growth.

This can present a challenge to some councils due to budget, time, or equipment constraints. It is therefore something to work towards implementing in the future; there are exciting developments in 'cut-and-collect' machinery being trialled by various councils and highways agencies. We're even seeing the appearance of mini-balers on some larger verges.

It's worth considering that cut-and-collect might be an option on a smaller scale if there is an active community or volunteer programme. Clippings can be raked by hand and composted nearby. Several volunteer verge groups have had success managing their verges this way – please see our case studies.

Is it a good idea to sow wildflower seeds on verges?

Planting generic mixes of wildflower seed does little to conserve wild flowers and can threaten the distinctiveness of natural local flora. Mixtures of annual, often non-native, flowers for pollinators can also be expensive and labour intensive to maintain. Instead, simply cutting less and later will give native plants the opportunity to flower and set seed. Given the chance to spread, verges will be full of life again before too long. If verges have

been neglected for a long time and are devoid of wild flower species, it may be worth restoring the habitat with locally sourced wildflower seed or green hay.

What about invasive and 'problem' plants on verges?

Himalayan Balsam (*Impatiens glandulifera*) with its explosive seeds has a very effective dispersal mechanism. The best way to manage Himalayan Balsam is to removing it before it has a chance to set seed. **More information is available on the Plantlife website here.**

Giant Hogweed (*Heracleum mantegazzianum*) – It is very important to note that Giant Hogweed contains an irritant chemical in its sap, which sensitises skin and leads to severe blistering when exposed to sunlight. For this reason, standard verge management that involves cutting would not be recommended. Very specific and targeted herbicide on Giant Hogweed plants has been shown to use has been proven effective to control and eradication this plant. **More information is available on the Plantlife website here.**

Ragwort – Common Ragwort (*Senecio jacobaea*) is a native plant with yellow, daisy-like flowers and is a natural component of many types of grassland. It supports many species including fungi and insects, however it is toxic to grazing animals. Good, careful management of verges will not encourage the spread of Ragwort. **More information is available on the Plantlife website here.**

Gloucestershire Wildlife Trust offers guidance on how to create a wildflower patch either from an existing lawn or from scratch.

<https://www.gloucestershirowildlifetrust.co.uk/actions/how-grow-wild-patch>

Option 1 - Let your grass grow long

Long grass, peppered with flowers, is one of the rarest habitats in our well-tended gardens, yet it is incredibly beneficial for wildlife. Patches of long grass encourage different plant species to grow, help insects to thrive, create feeding opportunities for birds, and shelter small mammals.

So simply let nature move in! Set aside some lawn, leaving it to grow, and wait to see what arrives. The less pristine the lawn, the more promising it is for wildlife. Just raise the cutters on your mower to make some paths (it'll look more cared for) and leave the rest of the mowing until July or August after plants have flowered.



Option 2 - Start from scratch

You can create a wildflower area from scratch on bare ground. Pick a poor patch of ground that hasn't been cultivated recently as wildflower meadows establish best on unproductive soil. It's worth checking what sort of soil you have and its pH before you choose which seeds to sow; wildflower seed merchants supply mixes suitable for various soil types and situations.

If your soil fertility is too high for perennial wildflowers to flourish, consider sowing a cornfield annual mix that includes plants like cornflower, corn poppy, corn marigold and corncockle, with some barley and wheat seed to add an authentic touch!

To create your patch from scratch:

- Control weeds by digging or rotovating, burying any vegetation to a depth of 15-20 cm (6-8 in). This also brings less fertile soil to the surface.
- Firm and rake the surface to make a seedbed.
- Don't be tempted to add manure or fertiliser as this will encourage excessive vigour in the grasses, which then swamp the wildflowers. This is the most important principle in establishing a wildflower meadow.
- Sow in autumn, giving the seed time to settle in over winter. If you are on heavy clay, however, it is better to wait until spring. Even large areas can be sown by hand quite easily.
- Ensure that the seed is scattered evenly by sowing half lengthways and the remaining half widthways across the plot. Mixing the seed with silver sand makes the process easier. Rake in lightly and water thoroughly.



Maintaining your wild patch

During the first year, it is essential to get the mowing regime right. Cut to 5-7 cm (2-2.5 in) whenever the height reaches 10-20 cm (4-8 in). The number of mows required can range from one to four. Control assertive weeds like thistles, nettles and docks by hand-weeding or spot-treating with a wildlife-friendly herbicide.

After this, a couple of cuts a year should be enough: once in late July/early August and then again in early autumn. After mowing, always leave the clippings

for a couple of days to drop any seed, then rake up and remove to keep soil fertility down.

Top tips for getting your wild patch right

- Be careful when mowing – small mammals, amphibians and reptiles may be hiding in the grass. Some birds nest in larger meadows, so don't mow until after the beginning of August.
- Wildflowers are available in plug form and in ready-planted turf rolls, which can make establishing the plants even easier.
- Sow a mix of wild grass and wild flower seed.

Guide prices for wildflower plug plants:

<https://www.habitataid.co.uk/wildflower-plug-plants-chalk-limestone> 52p per plant (13 species inc VAT and delivery)

<https://www.wildflowerlawnsandmeadows.com/shop/chalk-and-limestone-soils-plant-plug-mix/> 15 species £1 per plant inc VAT and delivery (look like bigger plants than above)

Low cost ANPR equipment

ANPR equipment (Automatic Number Plate Recognition) can be used to identify vehicles. There are no specific parking regulations in Naunton so vehicles parked inconsiderately are not committing a crime. This means that the police would not be able to prosecute. However, if the inconsiderate parking was regular and the number plate was noted for each occasion, the police can at their discretion, contact the owner of that vehicle and ask them to park more considerately.

The technology has fallen in price recently and can be bought for £295 +VAT. It needs either solar or battery power. It includes a license for the software for the first year but has to be renewed after that.

Draft letter to owner of Old Band Room holiday let

Emma Spires
Close Cottage
GL54 3AA

Xx xxx 2019

Dear Emma

Re: The Old Band Room/Hatters Cottage Barn

I am writing to you regarding parking for The Old Band Room. The Council understands that your advice to guests wishing to park is that they should use on-street parking close by. However, planning permission for the conversion of the Old Band Room was granted with the condition that off-road parking was provided (and used). We have checked [the Planning Decision notice](#) (06/02279/FUL), which states:

“3. The parking space shall be provided prior to the occupation of the dwelling and shall be kept available for the parking of vehicles associated with that dwelling thereafter. Reason: In the interests of highway safety, in accordance with Cotswold District Local Plan Policy 39.”

The parking space is also clearly marked on the associated plans but appears to be currently in use as an outdoor dining area. This would seem to be a contravention of the conditions of the permission granted. As such an enforcement notice could be requested.

As you are no doubt aware, parking in Naunton can be very difficult and there have been a number of incidents where buses and other large vehicles such as emergency vehicles could not pass along the main road through Naunton due to the volume of parking, some of it unhelpful. To reduce the number of cars on the road, would you please ensure that the parking area is kept as such and that guests are reminded of the requirement to park off-road in the designated parking space.

Please would you confirm that you will be taking the required actions as soon as possible.

Best regards etc

Yellow no parking sign costs

The cost of a sign depends on the way in which the sign is going to be mounted in position; the choice of material, the colour and the wording.

Mounting options:

- Bolts drilled into the surface
- Glued in place
- Strapped to a post

Material options: ([Safetysigns4less/thesignbuilder](http://Safetysigns4less.com/thesignbuilder))

- Self Adhesive Vinyl

A flexible gloss-finished material suitable for use on smooth, clean, non-porous surfaces

- 1mm Rigid Plastic

A white High Impact Polystyrene (HIPS) plastic in 1mm thickness. Can be drilled for fixing or stuck to a flat surface.

- 2mm Rigid Plastic

A white High Impact Polystyrene (HIPS) plastic in thicker 2mm material. Perfect For Outdoor Use. Can be drilled for fixing or stuck to a flat surface.

- Photoluminescent

A rigid plastic material of 1.2mm thickness which is rated Class B for photoluminescent performance, making it suitable for use in emergency signage such as in office buildings

- Metal signs. Aluminium coated signs are available and may be more durable.

Colour

I could not find a standard sign in yellow but they can be made bespoke.

Wording options

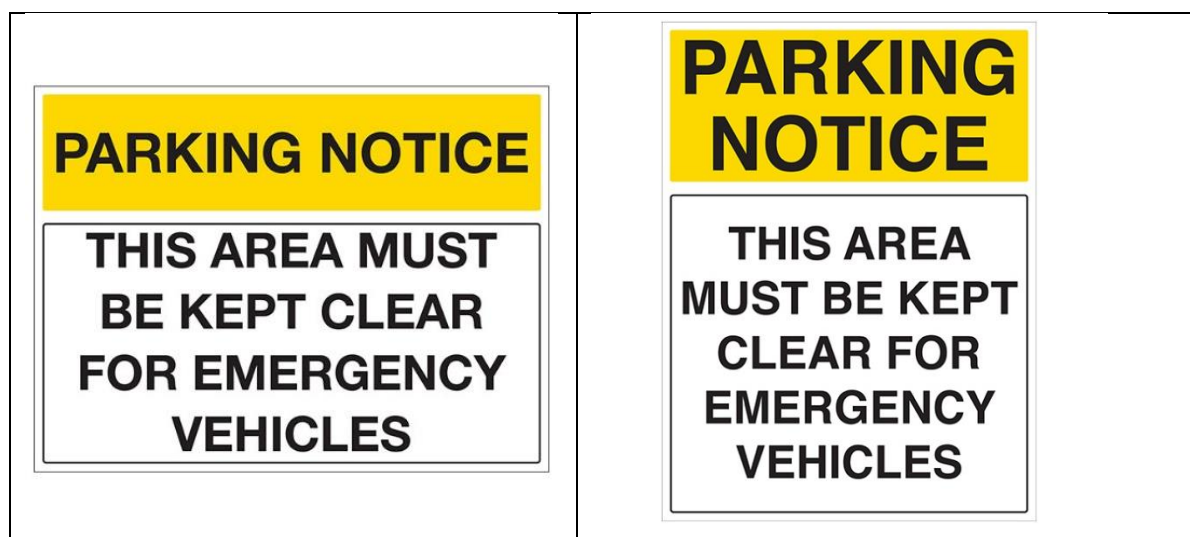
- The specified text 'No parking – this area must be kept clear for emergency vehicles' is not a standard sign so would have to be made specially. Signs with similar standard wording are available with part of the sign in yellow.

Prices (Ex fixings)

A bespoke aluminium covered sign is £25.80 +VAT (thesignbuilder.co.uk)

A bespoke sign on 2mm plastic is priced at £19.30 + VAT (portrait 300mm x 400mm)

A standard 2mm thick rigid plastic sign 450 x 300 mm is available for £13.20 + VAT (see below).



Draft letter of thanks to Mr Duval

Xx xxx 2019

Maxi Freeman, Clerk, 20 September 2019

Mr J Duval
The Pound
Naunton
GL54 3AS

Dear Mr Duval

At the meeting of Naunton Parish Council held on 15th July your work with regard to the village phone box was discussed and minuted. On behalf of the village, councillors would like to express their gratitude that you not only cleared the site around the phone box, but also arranged for the phone box to be painted. Naunton Parish Council wishes to thank you for your generosity and community spirit in carrying out these works. As a finishing touch, Naunton Parish Council will be replacing the old 'telephone' signs with 'Defibrillator' signs shortly.

Best regards

Maxi Freeman
Clerk to Naunton Parish Council