

Burgh and Tuttington Parish Council

DRAFT PAPER: Use and Management of Tuttington Village Green

Past

Tuttington Village Green was established after development of the Chapel Farm site in the early 2000s. The Green was initially designated an 'informal play area' by the District Council as part of the development. Although the Green is in multiple ownership, its original purpose as a space set aside for use by village residents and their children became established. A grass-cutting and general maintenance programme has been managed by the District Council. Parish Council insurance has covered events organised by community groups; some events have been covered by church insurance.

Present

The Green has a main area where events are held and the grass kept fairly short; wildflowers have been sown in a secondary area near to young trees. The Green is protected by a two-bar post and rail timber fence.

Issues have arisen with regard to the mowing programme and conservation of wildflowers in the main area, and with fence maintenance. There is local concern that irregular grass cutting or set-aside plots in the main area will lead to development of scrub compromising the use, look, and conservation of the Green as a valuable village asset. Also, lack of fence repair risks safety and appearance.

To develop a clearer programme of future use and management of the Green, the Parish Council have sought views of residents and the District Council. A majority of residents of The Green have expressed a wish that the grass is cut regularly and the fence maintained. There is anecdotal evidence together with the sizeable number of residents attending events on the Green that a significant proportion of the community would wish it to be maintained to allow such events to continue into the future.

Currently, the District Council funds some aspects of the management of the Green but future funding remains uncertain. There is a possibility that management with funding could be transferred to the Parish Council. However, any funding option has limits and alternatives might need to be found in the longer term.

Proposals for the Future Use, Maintenance and Management of the Green

1. **That the primary purpose of the Green is for residents** to relax, for children to safely play, and for modest organised events each providing significant wellbeing benefits for the community. The Green should comprise a main area for safe use by residents and their children. A smaller informal area near to trees can accommodate wildflowers.
2. **That there is regular cutting of the grass**, maintenance of the wildflower area, and upkeep of the fence for safety. This will ensure the Green remains a visual and environmental asset to the village. It is not intended that grass in the main area should be left to grow up and turn to scrub. All wildflowers are protected but regular mowing helps with conservation. Campaigns like 'No Mow May' should be restricted to the wildflower area but rare plants in the main area should be identified.
3. **That maintenance of the Village Green is co-ordinated by the Parish Council** who will develop a responsive management strategy with the District Council. The option to take over full management should be considered by the Parish Council who may need to investigate funding options.
4. **That communication between all interested parties is seen as key** to the future use and management of the Green and in which the Parish Council must play a central part. Roles, responsibilities and contacts should be advertised widely on websites and a notice drop to all households should be considered in addition to a dedicated notice at the entrance to the Village Green. Matters for resolution should be channelled via the Parish Clerk or the Parish Councillor who has the Village Green brief. It will be the Parish Council's responsibility to be alert to changing circumstances so that any future strategy can be developed in a timely way.

Simon Covey, January 2024