

PUXTON PARISH COUNCIL

Puxton & Hewish: in the North Somerset Council Ward of Congresbury & Puxton

Clerk: Donald Hill - 18 Mitford Slade Court, Mendip Road, Yatton, North Somerset BS49 4JG

Tel: 01934 835578 Mobile: 07774 125578 e-mail: clerk@puxtonparishcouncil.org.uk Website: puxtonparishcouncil.org.uk

You are Summoned to a Council Meeting in the Village Hall **at 7.30pm on Thursday July 3rd 2025**

All are welcome, unless precluded by a procedural resolution. You will not be entitled to speak, except within the Public Session

Don Hill - Clerk

AGENDA & AGENDA NOTES

We have a vacancy for a Councillor - contact the Clerk or a Councillor, in the first instance, to apply

It is expected that members of the public attending Parish Council meetings will be respectful of the Councillors and of all attendees. Unacceptable behaviour will not be tolerated and the offender will be asked to leave. Parishioners will be invited to speak for 3 minutes in the Public Session. Their contribution must be to do with an agenda item or on current matters only and should be in the form of a statement; to be noted and followed up as necessary. It is at the discretion of the Chairman to suspend standing orders so that contributions from the public can be sought during the meeting if it is thought to be useful.

1. **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**
2. **DECLARATIONS** *(Dispensations apply to Cllrs re percept setting, and Village Hall matters)*
3. **PUBLIC SESSION** *15 minutes - contributions limited to 3 minutes: they should be concise and to the point*
4. **LAST MEETING MINUTES**
June 5th minutes to be agreed and signed.
5. **PLANNING** *Details at <https://planning.n-somerset.gov.uk/online-applications/>*
 - i. **New:** none
 - ii. **Decisions Due:**
 - a) **19/P/0815/FUL** Puxton Park car park.
 - b) **22/P/3067/OUT** Haybow Village (Banwell PC).
 - c) **24/P/0143/FUL: Gypsy/Traveller site below Heathfield Park.**
 - d) **23/P/2593/FUL Update re Gypsy/Traveller site opposite The Full Quart.**
 - e) **25/P/0523/FUL: Glebe Cottage Puxton - conversion to two homes.**
 - iii. **Approved:**
 - a)
 - iv. **Calling in to NSC's Planning and Regulatory Committee: Applications 24/P/0143/FUL and 23/P/2593/FUL above:** Members were consulted on this after it emerged that planners were minded to pass these applications without them being 'called in'* to be reviewed by the NSC Planning and Regulatory Committee. The Council's original concerns re these applications were put to planners at the consultation stage and remain significant both in terms of the legal and social frameworks within which a decision has to be considered. The four Councillors eligible to comment on these applications emailed the Clerk to contact our NSC Ward Councillor, on June 21st 2025, to call the applications in for review by the NSC Planning and Regulatory

Committee: this was done the same day and the decision to do so needs to be formally ratified here.

See Annexes 1 and 2 attached to this agenda for the original consultation comments on these applications.

(For the avoidance of doubt the Gov.UK definition of 'calling in' an application is to refer it to the Secretary of State - our expectation is that the application will be brought before the NSC Planning and Regulatory Committee for review and decision).*

6. **FINANCE**

- i. **2025-26 Accounts:** to be reviewed and approved against the bank statement.
- ii. **Payments to be Approved:**

7. **PARISH MATTERS**

- i. **A370: St Annes School Signage and Speed Issues being monitored by Cllr Redding:**
 - a) **Police DCB** (data collection box): This collects number recognition data leading to direct prosecutions. In terms of motorists exceeding the speed limit and by what mph, Hewish is not significant in terms of some 500 sites that are demanding this sort of police enforcement.
 - b) **Gully overflows:** pictures of flooding needed by NSC before they will investigate.
 - c) **Road Safety:** St Annes Speed Watch scheme awaiting training schedule.
- ii. **Fly-tipping/Litter picking:** No progress with assistance via the probation service. The Parish Maintenance contractor having delegated powers to search and follow up on fly tipping still being investigated by Cllr Thomas. NSC will be meeting our contractor and Cllr Ridell re Dolemoor Lane fly tipping issues next week. Cllr Thomas will also attend.
- iii. **Highway Verge Erosion on Puxton Lane:** Responses awaited from two NSC online reports logged by Cllr Redding.
- iv. **A370 Footpath:** A small section of path will be cleared as a test for possible further work.
- v. **A370 Central Refuges:** NSC responses awaited on internet applications re bus stops at The Full Quart, Moorland Park and Puxton Lane and related road safety improvements.
- vi. **Bus Shelters** - Request for their retention with NSC. Response being pursued by Cllr Thomas. Cllr Riddell suggests that the Council would undertake cleaning of the shelters if they were to remain.
- vii. **Defibrillator:** The WI are discussing the possible installation of a defibrillator at the Village Hall. If this project goes ahead it is, in principle, likely that the Parish Council would fund the annual maintenance costs.
- viii. **Parish Maintenance:**
 - a) **Hand Cart for Litter Picking:** Purchased per June Minute 051/25vii a) at £368.99 against authorised price of £400 and added to Asset Register.
 - b) **Flowers for Planters:** Cllr Redding collected these and they are now with Cllrs Riddell and C Penfold for planting.

8. **COUNCILLORS' REPORTS**

9. **NEXT MEETING**

Thursday 3rd July 2025 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

ANNEXE 1 RE AGENDA ITEM 5d

23/P/2593/FUL - Land Opposite And To East Of The Full Quart, Off Bristol Road (A370), Hewish
PUXTON PARISH COUNCIL - Comment submitted date: Fri 16 Feb 2024

Change of use of equestrian land to Gypsy and Travellers site of 10 pitches with associated development including the erection of day-rooms and creation of hardstanding for each pitch

Change of use of equestrian land to Gypsy and Travellers site of 10 pitches with associated development including the erection of day-rooms and creation of hardstanding for each pitch

As the Council's February meeting was inquorate, the comments below have been drawn together by Councillors telephoning and/or emailing each other and will be ratified at the Parish Council's March meeting.

Two of our Councillors have a declared interest because they either own or live on existing local gypsy sites.

Below are some of the relevant provisions for consideration in planning law that also cover the concerns of the Parish Council.

This is an application for Planning Permission by individuals of settled status presumably for business interests. Ostensibly, a traveller/gypsy site to accommodate an unsettled population of 10 families/households is the objective.

This use, in this location, has not been in the North Somerset Council Development plan in the last 5 years, nor is it in the emerging plan to 2039.

Given the location and the nature of the location - green field/rural setting in a small village with a low number of settled inhabitants - this is a completely disproportionate and inappropriate use of the land. It runs contrary to the extant planning laws and the guidance note of the Department for Communities and Local Government August 2015 "Planning policy for traveller sites", paragraph 25 of which states that:

"Local planning authorities should very strictly limit new traveller site development in open countryside that is away from existing settlements or outside areas allocated in the development plan. Local planning authorities should ensure that sites in rural areas respect the scale of, and do not dominate, the nearest settled community, and avoid placing an undue pressure on the local infrastructure."

There is a high pressure gas main running through the site. This alone should preclude it from being built over.

The proposed new gypsy and traveller site will burden amenities, few of which exist in our area; it will create an additional risk and danger to road users due to the egress onto and off the fast and busy A370, being also on a significant bend. The proposal will provide no ascertainable benefit to the local population; indeed it can be argued that it will be to its detriment

There is no public mains sewage in Puxton and Hewish, although several private systems are linked in to the Wessex mains pipework, as is proposed for this development. It is believed that Wessex are reluctant to allow more private sewage systems to link into their system because it is running close to capacity. If a connection to Wessex is not possible, it is presumed that the project is too large to run on a septic tank system especially given the flood plain issues that prevail in the area.

In the event that permission were to be approved for the project, it should be conditioned to ensure that all aspects of the application - day rooms for example - are completed before any of the pitches can become operational. If this is not done the expensive-to-provide day rooms could end up not being built and the pitches could simply drift into being used as a touring caravan park or park home site.

The proposed development would significantly impact the use and enjoyment of the public footpath which is currently seated in the country field that would become the development site.

It is also important to consider not just the Parish limits but the overall population and character of the immediate local area in metres and miles. Nearby there are traveller sites; this would amount to a 4th within just a few square miles of each other. This shifts the demographic significantly towards an unacceptably high level of unsettled v settled populants which is contrary to the planning guidance.

It is worth noting that, a development of a similar scale for a settled population would identify with a number of the concerns above regarding the lack of supporting infrastructure and amenities in the area and burdening the system significantly. Both of which are fundamentally objected to.

This is a further encroachment into the countryside, which will add to an imbalance in community, rural and environmental terms. The local population will have strong views which should be consulted upon. Proposals and developments on the application site have caused a lot of public concern over recent years, and people will feel aggrieved if they are unable to add their views in this particular case, which is not a simple run of the mill planning application. Wider consultation should be requested so our community can have transparency and that there is accountability for decisions made.

ANNEXE 2 RE AGENDA ITEM 5c

24/P/0143/FUL: Gypsy/Traveller site below Heathfield Park

Note: this proposed new site is nothing to do with the existing Gypsy and Traveller site called Heathfield Park

(Puxton Parish Council Objects to this application - Comment submitted date: Fri 12 Apr 2024

Puxton Parish Council discussed this application at its April meeting, which 13 members of the public attended.

It should be pointed out that two Gypsy/Traveller site owners/residents are Members of this Parish Council: they declared an interest in the application and were barred from taking part in the discussion about it.

The Site

This proposal represents a commercial venture on land that has already been declined for the purpose by NSC within its Draft Local Plan to 2039.

The land on which the proposed site will rest has recently been used for landfill: there is no knowledge of what potentially dangerous substances may lie in the ground, neither has it yet had time to become compacted enough to support the proposed construction work. There are also reports that rhynes have been blocked during the landfill process that could seriously impact the proposed drainage plan.

Despite the proposed site being on only a small part of the land declined for acceptance for the purpose during NSC's 'Call for sites', it is, as history shows us, inevitable that the whole of the site will become the subject of ongoing applications to enlarge the proposed facility.

The busy and dangerous A370 provides the exit and entry to the site. There is no provision for improving the splays or road markings to ensure safety for those using the entrance or for other road users.

The Legalities

Pitch provision within the existing sites as indicated by the Draft NSC Local Plan to 2039 is adequate to fulfil future needs for the plan period whilst also having cognisance of the legal arguments relating the the balance between travelling and settled communities that has been put forward in relation to another extant planning application and is included in support of the arguments against approval of the application as expressed here.

Some Domestic Realities

The subject proposal is from entrepreneurs seeking to make profit from an investment. The existing adjacent sites are run by members of the Gypsy community for the Gypsy and travelling community. The operating criteria adopted by 'Gypsy' landlords might reasonably be expected to be more paternal than commercial as against those driving a purely commercial venture.

The existing Gypsy/Traveller sites are long established and have become a settled community over the years. The hard-nosed commercial nature of the proposed new venture stands to introduce disharmony between the new and the established communities: a point that perhaps only people from the Gypsy/Traveller communities will be fully sensitive to.

Press Reports

It is unfortunate that the Weston Mercury reported the subject application as being part of Heathfield Park. It is not, and it will, indeed, significantly effect the visual and social amenity of Heathfield park in a way that is more likely to be detrimental than otherwise.

Needless to say the Parish Council has been sensitive, over the years, to many of the concerns expressed within the Public Session and within this minute during the suspension of standing orders. The current sites are well and peaceably run by local owners: there are pitch vacancies within the present community, so why provision for more pitches beyond the current plan proposals? If there is a further need for pitches, then expansion should take place within the existing planned capacity. The arguments presented during this meeting should form the comment made to North Somerset Planners, together with the legal comment already referred to and presented here as part of these Minutes:

The Legal Case

Below are some of the relevant provisions for consideration in planning law that also cover the concerns of the Parish Council.

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This use, in this location, has not been in the North Somerset Council Development plan in the last 5 years, nor is it in the emerging plan to 2039.

Given the location and the nature of the location - green field/rural setting in a small village with a low number of settled inhabitants - this is a completely disproportionate and inappropriate use of the land. It runs contrary to the extant planning laws and the guidance note of the Department for Communities and Local Government August 2015 "Planning policy for traveller sites", paragraph 25 of which states that:

"Local planning authorities should very strictly limit new traveller site development in open countryside that is away from existing settlements or outside areas allocated in the development plan. Local planning authorities should ensure that sites in rural areas respect the scale of, and do not dominate, the nearest settled community, and avoid placing an undue pressure on the local infrastructure."

The proposed new gypsy and traveller site will burden amenities, few of which exist in our area; it will create an additional risk and danger to road users due to the egress onto and off the fast and busy A370. The proposal will provide no ascertainable benefit to the local population; indeed it can be argued that it will be to its detriment.

There is no public mains sewage in Puxton and Hewish, although several private systems are linked in to the Wessex mains pipework, as is proposed for this development. It is believed that Wessex are reluctant to allow more private sewage systems to link into their system because it is running close to capacity. If a connection to Wessex is not possible, it is presumed that the project is too large to run on a septic tank system especially given the flood plain issues that prevail in the area.

In the event that permission were to be approved for the project, it should be conditioned to ensure that all aspects of the application - day rooms for example - are completed before any of the pitches can become operational. If this is not done the expensive-to-provide day rooms could end up not being built and the pitches could simply drift into being used as a touring caravan park or park home site.

It is also important to consider not just the Parish limits but the overall population and character of the immediate local area in metres and miles. Nearby there are traveller sites; this would amount to a 4th within just a few square miles of each other. This shifts the demographic significantly towards an unacceptably high level of unsettled v settled populants which is contrary to the planning guidance.

It is worth noting that a development of a similar scale for a settled population would identify with a number of the concerns above regarding the lack of supporting infrastructure and amenities in the area and burdening the system significantly. Both of which are fundamentally objected to.

This is a further encroachment into the countryside, which will add to an imbalance in community, rural and environmental terms. The local population will have strong views which should be consulted upon. Proposals and developments on the application site have caused a lot of public concern over recent years, and people will feel aggrieved if they are unable to add their views in this case, which is not a simple run of the mill planning application. Wider consultation should be requested so our community can have transparency and that there is accountability for decisions made.

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Minutes of the Meeting Held at 7.30pm on Thursday June 5th 2025

All meetings are held at 7.30pm in the Village Hall unless stated otherwise

Although under no obligation to, Dan Thomas, our NSC Ward Cllr, attends when possible

Present: Cllrs Lynda Redding, Clayton Penfold, Peter Penfold, Helen Riddell

In Attendance: NSC Ward Cllr Dan Thomas, Don Hill (Clerk)

Public Attendance: 0

045/25 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Cllrs M Ellis and J Corbett.

046/25 DECLARATIONS: *(Dispensations apply to Cllrs re percept setting, and Village Hall matters)*

None

047/25 PUBLIC SESSION *15 minutes - contributions limited to 3 minutes: they should be concise and to the point*

None

048/25 LAST MEETING MINUTES + Matters Arising

- i. **Annual and Ordinary Council meeting** The May 1st minutes were agreed and signed.
- ii. **Annual Parish Meeting** The May 1st draft minutes were noted and initialed by Chair to recognise. That the 4 Councillors in attendance at the Annual Parish Meeting recognise these minutes as a being a true record of the proceedings. The minutes will go forward to the Annual Parish Meeting in May 2026 for formal approval and signature.

049/25 PLANNING *Details at <https://planning.n-somerset.gov.uk/online-applications/>*

- i. **New:** none
- ii. **Decisions Due:**
 - a) **19/P/0815/FUL** Puxton Park car park.
 - b) **22/P/3067/OUT** Haybow Village (Banwell PC).
 - c) **24/P/0143/FUL:** Gypsy/Traveller site below Heathfield Park
 - d) **23/P/2593/FUL** Update re Gypsy/Traveller site opposite The Full Quart.
 - e) **25/P/0523/FUL:** Glebe Cottage Puxton - conversion to two homes.
- iii. **Approved:**
 - a) **25/P/0576/FUL:** Middleton Motor Care Hewish - new workshop and store
 - b) **25/P/0867/CRN** - Manor Farm Barns change of use. (Change of use noted)
 - c) **25/P/0501/AGA:** The Grange Wick Lane - Spur to existing field track - prior approval not required
 - d) **25/P/0674/LDE:** Hewish Barn - Lawful commencement of development

050/25 FINANCE

- i. **2025-26 Accounts:** were reviewed and approved against the bank statement.
- ii. **2024-25 Accounts:** have been posted to the Council's noticeboard and website.
- iii. **Payments Approved:** HMRC PAYE Apr/May/Jun - £240.60.

O51/25 PARISH MATTERS

- i. **A370: St Annes School Signage and Speed Issues being monitored by Cllr Redding:**
 - a) **Police DCB** (data collection box): erection awaited.
 - b) **Gully overflows:** pictures of flooding needed by NSC before they will investigate.
 - c) **Road Safety:** St Annes Speed Watch scheme awaiting training schedule.
 - d) **SID Data:** Cllr Redding reported that traffic flow and speed data gathered by the Speed Indicator Device (SID) on a 24 hour a day basis is now posted to the Council's website.
- ii. **Fly-tipping/Litter picking:** No progress with assistance via the probation service. The Parish Maintenance contractor having delegated powers to search and follow up on fly tipping still being investigated by Cllr Thomas. NSC will be meeting our contractor and Cllr Ridell re Dolemoor Lane fly tipping issues next week. Cllr Thomas will also attend.
- iii. **Highway Verge Erosion on Puxton Lane:** Responses awaited from two NSC online reports logged by Cllr Redding.
- iv. **A370 Footpath:** A small section of path will be cleared as a test for possible further work.
- v. **A370 Central Refuges:** NSC responses awaited on internet applications re bus stops at The Full Quart, Moorland Park and Puxton Lane and related road safety improvements.
- vi. **Bus Shelters** - Request for their retention with NSC. Response being pursued by Cllr Thomas.
- vii. **Parish Maintenance:**
 - a) **Hand Cart for Litter Picking:** Two options were looked at and given that either would prove suitable, the cheaper one (£400) was agreed to and the **Clerk authorised to arrange the purchase.**
 - b) **Flowers for Planters:** Cllr Redding collected these and they are now with Cllrs Riddell and C Penfold for planting.

052/25 COUNCILLORS' REPORTS

Cllr Riddell

Parish Maintenance work flows re litter picking and general upkeep are working well

Cllr Redding

Defibrillator: The WI are discussing the possible installation of a defibrillator at the Village Hall. If this project goes ahead it is, in principle, likely that the Parish Council would fund the annual maintenance costs.

Vexatious Complaints: Work with outside parties on the persistent receipt of vexatious complaints by the Council is continuing,

053/25 NEXT MEETING

Thursday 3rd July 2025 at 7.30pm in the Village Hall

There meeting closed at 8.40pm

PUXTON PARISH COUNCIL INCOME & EXPENDITURE: 1st April 2025 - 31st March 2026 (Precept £12752.00)

[illegible]

