

North Runcton Parish - Bonfire Etiquette

Alongside dog mess and inconsiderate drivers, **bonfires** are one of the most common resident complaints reported to the Parish Council. Most of us are tolerant of occasional bonfires – but frequent, smoky fires and inconsiderate planning of fires is unacceptable.

- It is an offence under the **Environmental Protection Act 1990** to dispose of domestic waste in a way that can cause pollution to the environment or harm to human health, such as by burning it. This means you must not burn *certain types of waste* that can create excessive smoke and fumes. This would include plastics, rubber, oils and other materials that will potentially give off toxic fumes.
- Under section 161A of the **Highways Act 1980**, you cannot allow smoke from a fire to drift across a nearby road. You will face a fine if it poses a danger to traffic or leads to injury.
- If bonfires are recurrently bothersome to the point that they affect a person's enjoyment of their property (such as smoke and ash drifting into their garden), then the bonfire may be considered a nuisance and this can result in an '**abatement notice**'. Failing to adhere to a notice could lead to a fine of £5,000.
- The burning of commercial waste on a building site is illegal and an offence under the **Clean Air Act 1993** and **Environmental Protection Act 1990**. Property owners must ensure that a registered contractor removes the waste they produce and takes it to a registered disposal site. Offenders can be fined up to £20,000 or imprisoned.

North Runcton Parish Council strongly urge parishioners to avoid having bonfires. There are many alternatives to burning garden waste:

Compost: It is possible and beneficial to compost most garden waste (especially if you have a garden shredder). Compost bins are cheap. The Borough Council have a working partnership with Straight PLC to supply compost bins at discounted rates. There is also on-line advice about how to compost. See www.west-norfolk.gov.uk/info/20140/what_goes_in_each_bin/398/compost_bin

Brown Bin Scheme / Food Bin Scheme: BCKLWN will collect your garden waste and food waste and send it to a commercial composting site. Brown bin collections currently cost £56/year and the food waste scheme is free.

Saddlebow Tip: Green waste and many other materials can be tipped for free at the Saddlebow recycling centre, and other recycling centres across Norfolk.

If you must have a bonfire, please:

- Choose a day when the prevailing wind is blowing away from neighbouring properties.
- Be considerate of neighbours (eg if they are working or having leisure time outside, have their washing out or their windows open – don't light a fire!)
- Do not burn green or wet material which will create a lot of smoke (and toxins)
- It is illegal to leave a fire unattended, even when it's just smouldering.

We are fortunate enough to live in a green and pleasant village, please do your bit to ensure we can all enjoy it.