Northam Burrows Pass Process

January – Application forms are produced & stationery ordered.

February – On the **3rd Friday** of the month (being **19th February 2027**), application forms and blank envelopes are available from Council offices or can be downloaded from the website (and need adding to website that morning).

The **following Monday** (being **22nd February 2027**) application forms can be returned (ideally posted through the letterbox after 7.30am).

Over the weekend, applications are put through the Council's letter box. The box is emptied to separate and stack applications which have been returned before the official date for applications to start.

The letter box is emptied by: Friday 6pm, Saturday 8am and 6pm, Sunday 8am and 6pm, Monday 8am.

The order in which those applications are processed is the reverse of the order emptied and after all applications received on the first day, so to 8am Tuesday.

- **Day 1**

Two staff work from the chamber and deal with the queue of people who wish to apply in person (Tina and Corinne). Last year over 300 people queued to do this on the first day. The queue is managed and seats are available for those that are less able to stand for a long period. Doors are closed at 1pm to allow time to process those applications received.

This involves checking that applications have been completed correctly (e.g. checking that applicants live within the Ancient Manor and that registration numbers are legible), numbering them in sequential order, checking driving licenses are still in date and taking a card payment (or attaching the cheque to the application).

Some people hand in multiple applications, and payment links are emailed to applicants once we start processing the passes. Application forms are put into bundles of 100.

Guy and Ian monitor the queue and encourage applicants to hand over their application forms to add to the pile in the office. They also start opening and checking the hundreds of envelopes that have been put through the letterbox, making sure they are labelled as to when they were taken out of the post box.

Staff stay at work until every envelope is open in order that the numbering system can continue when people come into the Chamber on day 2. (We count the number of applications that have been posted through the letter box to ensure we haven't exceeded the 1500 passes available).

- **Day 2**

Tina and Corinne continue to deal with in person applications in the chamber until 1pm. Ian and Guy empty the post box and continue to open envelopes and manage any queue.

Once the office is closed to the public at 1pm, Tina and Corinne help open any envelopes which have come though the letterbox or been handed in at the desk. Application forms are numbered according to when they were received.

Once applications are numbered, Tina and Corinne begin processing the passes. This involves:

- Taking a basket of 100 applications
- Adding each application to the spreadsheet for that year (manor pass number, registration number, name, address, payment method, cheque number if applicable and finally writing out the manor pass.
    - They get sorted between cheque and card payments.
    - Card payments got into a basket (with the pass in the envelope) for which individual invoices are generated through the Square POS.
        - Cleared payments are checked before posting the passes out. This is done at the start of each day.
    - Cheque payments get kept in a pile until we have 50 at a time before banking the cheques. This involves recording in a bank paying in book

and getting added to a separate spreadsheet in order that we can confirm the cheques have cleared before posting out the passes. This is very time consuming and causes a lot of daily phone calls from the start of the 2nd week – card and invoice payments are much quicker. Even recording each one in the paying in book takes time.

- **Day 3 onwards (the process can take up to 4 weeks to fully complete)**

Processing continues, along with managing more applications coming in via the letter box or counter in person.

This is balanced alongside our normal workloads. We continue to answer phone calls, manage incoming emails and deal with other day-to-day tasks such as managing hall bookings and anything else that is urgent.

Every morning, we take it in turns to check Square to see if card payments have gone through. If they have, we frank the envelopes for posting.

Once we see that cheques have cleared, we frank those envelopes. Problems occur if any cheques out of a batch of 50 does not clear (i.e. is returned ('bounces') or takes longer than normal to clear). Then we must wait for notification from the bank to confirm which cheque number it relates to. If the delay is caused by the applicant's bank not processing a cheque as quickly as possible, then this stops us posting that batch of 50 and again causes a lot more phone traffic. The longest delayed cheque clearance in 2026 was 3 weeks.

In 2026, we started processing on 24/02/2026 and finished writing the passes on 16/03/2026. This doesn't mean all the passes are sent out then as once they are on the system we still must send all the payment links out for people who have requested to pay by card. This is normally done once a batch of 100 has been added to the spreadsheet.

START

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JANUARY

Prepare application forms & Order stationery

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FEBRUARY (3rd Friday)

Application forms released

• Available from Council Offices

• Downloadable from website

• Website updated

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APPLICATION PERIOD OPENS

(Following Monday ‘Day 1’)

Applications accepted:

• In person

• Via letterbox/post

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WEEKEND PREPARATION

Empty post box multiple times (Friday 6pm, Saturday 8am and 6pm, Sunday 8am and 6pm, Monday 8am)

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Separate applications submitted early - Stack and label by collection time

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DAY 1

├—► Public Queue Management

- Chamber open for applications
- Doors close at 1pm
- Applications checked
- Applicant eligibility verified
- Vehicle registrations checked
- Payment taken/recorded

├—► Application Numbering

- Sequential numbering
- Filed into batches of 100

└—► Post box Applications

- Open envelopes
- Check contents
- Label by collection time
- Count total applications
- Ensure limit not exceeding 1,500 passes

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DAY 2

├—► Continue Public Applications (until 1pm)

├—► Continue Opening Mail

└—► Number All Applications in order received

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PROCESSING (in Batches of 100)

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ENTER APPLICATION DETAILS into spreadsheet

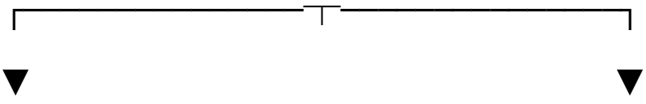
- Pass number
- Vehicle registration
- Name
- Address
- Payment method
- Cheque number (if applicable)
- Ensure limit not exceeding 1,500 passes

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WRITE PASS

▼

PAYMENT METHOD?



▼ ▼

CARD

Generate invoice &

Email payment link

Payment received?

– No ——► Await payment

└ **Yes - Ready for posting**

CHEQUE

Record payment in payment book

Add to cheque tracking spreadsheet

Bank in batches of 50 (£1,000)

Cheque cleared?

├– No –► Hold batch of 50 and await bank confirmation of failed transaction or cleared funds

└ **Yes - Ready for posting**

DAY 3 ONWARDS

Processing continues (ensuring limit not exceeding 1,500 passes) while:

• New applications received (in chamber or at window, as determined by the number of applicants)

• Phone calls answered

• Emails managed

• Normal council business maintained

DAILY PAYMENT CHECK

├—► Check Square payment and bank account for cleared cheques.

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Frank envelopes

└—► Check cleared cheques

▼

Frank envelopes

▼

POST PASSES

▼

ALL APPLICATIONS PROCESSED (Example: 24 Feb 2026 → 16 Mar 2026)

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Remaining Tasks:

• Send outstanding payment links

• Await payments

• Final posting of passes

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END

As presented to the Finance & HR committee in July 2026, the number of hours taken to complete the Manor Pass issues is as follows:

Activity	Hours taken	Cost / hour*	Cost to Council
Preparing for the Burrows Pass year, advertising, posters, getting tickets, ordering stationery, clearing out old pass applications etc.	18	£21	£378
Receiving and making phone calls	27	£21	£567
Taking applications and selling passes Chamber 9hrs x 2 staff Opening envelopes 50hrs Window sales 12hrs	80	£21	£1,680
Processing, recording and issuing passes	75	£21	£1,575
Registration changes 97 changes at 10min/change = 970 minutes (16 hours)	16	£21	£336
Burrows committee meetings (ALC's rule of thumb was 1 committee per month is 1.5 to 2 days day a week, so 6 meetings a year would be 9-12 days) 37/5*9=66.6	66	£21	£1,386
Grant process	16	£21	£336
Cash book and accounts	37	£27	£999
Annual accounts in preparation for annual return	16	£27	£432
Total (ex VAT)	**351**	**Net**	**£7,689**
		VAT (20%)	£1,537.80
		Total	**£ 9,226.80**

* Notes:

- Estimated based on individual staff costs
- Hourly rate increases each year by c1.6% (SCP rise) and by Cost of Living (3.3% 2026/27). Average for applicable staff is therefore 4.9%.