



IN COLLABORATION WITH SLCC, NALC, OVV, COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS

Humshaugh Parish Council
DRAFT Minutes of Annual Parish &
Public Meeting
Thursday 8th May 2025 at 7.00pm
At Humshaugh Village Hall.



PRESENT Herbie Newell, Ian Birleson, Nicolle Croft, Francis Nohl, Claire Robson
Antonia Azocar-Nevin (County Councillor.) Alix Pearson (Clerk)
Nick Morphet, Retiring County Councillor.
Parishioners of Humshaugh.

Prior to the comment of proceedings, Cllr Newell acknowledged that it was the 80th anniversary of VE Day and invited ex-serviceman Cllr Birleson to mark the occasion with a statement to honour our parishioners who had served and to those that had paid the ultimate price in order to preserve our freedom. Cllr Birleson paid tribute to Colonel Gibson, Royal Artillery who served and to those whose names are inscribed on our War Memorial which are, Private CJ Brown of the Black Watch, Corporal William Cowan of the Durham Light Infantry and Sergeant JE Saint of the Home Guard.

1. WELCOME. Cllr Newell welcomed all to the meeting and explained its purpose.
2. APOLOGIES Apologies were received from Captain Kev Dodd. All Councillors introduced themselves.
3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES. The minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of 9th May 2024 were presented and approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.
4. CHAIR'S REPORT - REVIEW OF 24/25.

Thanks to hard work by many, 2024/25 has been another successful year for Humshaugh with our key institutions all thriving:

The Village Hall continues to be the focus for numerous community events and has installed PV with battery storage this year to improve energy efficiency and resilience. Plans for marking the centenary of the Hall in 2028 are currently under consideration.

Strong business has been maintained in our volunteer-run Village Shop which allows Humshaugh Community Ventures Ltd to award grants to local organisations and individuals. St Peter's Church continues to provide regular services and a range of community events. Highlights include the Crib Festival, now in its third year, very enjoyable School services and a packed Christmas Carol Service.

The Surgery has undergone major refurbishment this year and remains very busy providing comprehensive and expert medical care for the community.

Humshaugh First School continues to provide an excellent education for our children and was confirmed as being "Good" following an OFSTED inspection this year. The School has also installed PV this year.

Last, but not least, the wonderful Crown was named Best Pub in Northumberland in the National Pub and Bar Awards 2024! Congratulations to David and all his hardworking staff. Sadly, Humshaugh has lost three true community stalwarts this year: Dorothy Wilson, David Prest and most recently Maurice Gilmour. The contributions of Dorothy, David and Maurice to Humshaugh were myriad and immeasurable, and they are greatly missed.



IN COLLABORATION WITH SLCC, NALC, OVV, COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS

**Humshaugh Parish Council
DRAFT Minutes of Annual Parish &
Public Meeting
Thursday 8th May 2025 at 7.00pm
At Humshaugh Village Hall.**



2024/25 year was the final year of the current Parish Council. Councillors Jerry Oliver, Chris Robinson, Kaeti Seth and Peter Woodward have retired after 4 years of service, and the community is greatly indebted to them for their hard work. As the number of candidates (6) to serve on the next Parish Council did not exceed the number of vacancies (7) the Parish Council election this year was uncontested, with existing Councillors Ian Birleson, Kev Dodd and Herbie Newell being re-elected, and Nicolle Croft, Francis Nohl and Claire Robson being elected for the first time, leaving one casual vacancy. In Northumberland most Parish Council elections this year were uncontested.

The election of a County Councillor for the Humshaugh Ward of Northumberland County Council was contested by 5 candidates and Antonia Azocar-Nevin (Green Party) was elected with 800 votes on a turnout of 49.12%. The Parish Council looks forward to working with Antonia over the next 4 years and would again like to thank retiring County Councillor Nick Morphet for his outstanding and unstinting support for our community over the last 4 years, for which Humshaugh is extremely grateful.

Parish Councillors are also extremely grateful to our previous Parish Clerk Kaeti Seth and our current Clerk Alix Pearson for their hard work in support of the Council, and to our groundsman Trevor Bell for taking care of our Village.

A key achievement this last year has been the adoption of the Humshaugh Neighbourhood Plan which received a very high level of support in the referendum held in January this year (86% in favour). The Parish Council is very grateful to all residents who contributed to the Plan, as well as our planning consultant Joanne Garrick and staff at Northumberland County Council, in particular Sarah Brannigan and her team. The Plan is now a material consideration that will apply to all new planning applications, thereby giving Humshaugh a direct say in ensuring that developments in the Parish meet the needs of the community.

Humshaugh faces many challenges prominent amongst which is accommodating our ageing population, and the Humshaugh Neighbourhood Plan demonstrates the magnitude of this challenge. Households with occupants aged 65 and over are predicted to rise from 36% in 2011 to 49% in 2036. At the other end of the age spectrum, Humshaugh First School is already feeling the effect of the demographic change. This summer 11 children will leave Humshaugh to go to middle school; however, only 3 new children will be joining the School. Key to addressing the demographic challenges we face as a community is the provision of appropriate and affordable housing that both attracts young families to the Village and allows older residents to downsize; thereby releasing housing for families. The Neighbourhood Plan has a policy to promote appropriate housing development, and this will be a priority for the new Parish Council.

5. **OPEN DISCUSSION.** The Chair opened the floor to discussion of the Annual Report. All present were delighted with the achievements of the past year and wish the report be published in full in the next Parish News.
6. **ELECTION OF CHAIR & VICE CHAIR.** The Chair indicated his willingness to stand again for office. Ian Birleson nominated Herbie Newell as Chair, seconded by Francis Nohl. Herbie Newell was unanimously elected as Chair. Nicolle Croft proposed Ian Birleson as Vice Chair, seconded by Claire Robson. Ian Birleson was also unanimously elected as Vice Chair.



IN COLLABORATION WITH SLCC, NALC, OVV, COUNTY ASSOCIATIONS

**Humshaugh Parish Council
DRAFT Minutes of Annual Parish &
Public Meeting
Thursday 8th May 2025 at 7.00pm
At Humshaugh Village Hall.**



7. PARISH COUNCIL REPRESENTATIVES ON OUTSIDE BODIES. Many of the retiring councillors represented the Parish Council on outside bodies. They were thanked for their service and new representatives from the current Parish Council were sought to take their place.

Evans Trust: Rupert Gibson's tenure will expire during this year. It is traditional that the Chair of the current Parish Council serves on this trust and it is agreed that Cllr Newell will take the seat when Mr Gibson has vacated it.

Humshaugh Children's Playing Fields Trust: Cllr Ian Birleson

Humshaugh Community Ventures Ltd: Cllr Claire Robson

Humshaugh Net Zero: Cllr Francis Nohl

Humshaugh Village Hall Committee: Cllr Nicolle Croft

Additionally, other roles which had previously been carried by retiring councillors were filled as follows:

Noticeboards: Cllr Croft

Liaison with Groundsperson: Cllrs Newell & Birleson

Reporting on Fix My Street: Cllr Birleson

8. SCHEDULE OF MEETINGS

10th July 2025

11th September 2025

13th November 2025

8th January 2026

12th March 2026

The meeting closed at 7.20pm.