

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting  
held on Thursday 15th May 2025 at 7:35pm.  
At Wall Village Hall.**

<b>PRESENT</b>	Cllrs: Mark Wood Chair, Elisa Wyrley-Birch Vice-Chair, Joshua Boulton-Baker, Andrew Gillespie, John Lamb, Jane Michie. County Councillor Antonia Azocar-Nevin. Clerk: Alix Pearson. Steve Blake, Village Hall Trustee.
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NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
2725	<b>1. Apologies for absence and Declaration of interests</b> There were no absences, therefore no apologies were necessary. There were no declarations of interest.
2726	<b>2. Approval of Minutes</b> The minutes were approved as true record of the previous meeting and signed. There were no matters arising that were not addressed in the agenda.
2727	<b>3. Approval of Annual Governance and Accountability Return 24/25</b> Having previously circulated the completed AGAR Form 2 which had been read by all, the clerk explained the purpose and process of the review. A Limited Assurance Review had taken place in 23/24 because expenditure and income had been higher due to the upgrade of the playground. This confirmed that all systems and processes were in good order. The clerk reported that newly published guidance would be applied to the AGAR in 25/26 which will require the Parish Council to make some changes to its operating procedures, specifically, but not limited to, migrating the website and the generic email address to a .gov domain. NALC has committed to supporting Parish Councils through this process and for this we are grateful.  The Chair asked for acceptance of the Internal Audit Report (p4) <b>ACCEPTED</b> The Chair requested approval of the Annual Governance Statement (p5) <b>APPROVED</b> The Chair requested approval of the Accounting Statements (p6) <b>APPROVED</b>  The Chair and the Clerk signed the form and the Clerk will send the Certificate of Exemption and associated documents to the Auditors, Forvis Mazars. The dates for the period of Exercise of Public Rights will be 1st July 2025 - 11th August 2025. The date of Announcement will be 30th June 2025.
2728	<b>4. Results of Parish and County Council Elections</b> The Chair welcomed the new Parish Councillors and congratulated the new County Councillor for having worked very hard to achieve a strong victory in the ward.  The clerk clarified that an Uncontested Election was still an Election - one that required no votes to be cast and confirmed that Uncontested Elections were the norm across most Parish Councils. We are fortunate to have filled all of our seats and we look forward to working together over the next 4 years.  <b>The clerk will send all Councillors Register of Interest forms for updating. New Parish Councillors will also be sent Standing Orders, Code of Conduct and Financial Policy for reference.</b>

2729	<p><b>5. Review of Planning Applications</b>  Councillors Reviewed:  Ref. No: 25/01665/FUL Planetrees Brunton Bank Wall Northumberland NE46 4EQ  Closure of vehicular access (Entrance 1) onto the B6318 and formalisation and upgrade of an existing access.  This was noted.</p> <p>Ref.No: 25/01666/FUL Land North East Of Quarry House High Brunton Wall Northumberland  Construction of self-build rural workers dwelling.  This was noted.</p> <p>Ref. No: 25/00833/LBC St Oswalds Cottage The Green Wall Northumberland NE46 4DX  Listed building consent for repairs to roof, renewal of rainwater goods, internal and external restoration of lime based materials to walls to replace cementitious materials. Removal of internal tank, create small channel around perimeter of existing concrete floor to allow diffusion of moisture at ground level. Installation of wood burning stove, new external boiler. Lowering of back doorstep, alterations to back door and insertion of cat flap.  This application was discussed in detail, although Parish Councillors were not aware that it had been validated that day.</p> <p>Also discussed was the imminent application from Eden Renewables for a 32MW Solar Farm above Fourstones sub-station. Most councillors had attended the Public Consultation Stage 2 held at Wall Village Hall on Monday 12th May. Detailed renders of the proposed installation were available for examination, although it was noted that the photographs had been taken on a dull day where general visibility was low. The ER team were encouraged to walk up the fell steps and take additional photographs of the site from that vantage point, so that additional renders could be produced.  The question of Community Benefit was also addressed and some suggestions were made to the ER team regarding access to the funds and their relevance to the Village and Parishioners of Wall. At time of writing, the planning application had not been validated.</p>
2730	<p><b>6. Introducing New County Councillor</b>  Cllr Azocar-Nevin was settling well into her role and was once more welcomed. Antonia &amp; Nick's comprehensive report appears at Appendix 1</p>
2731	<p><b>7. Chair's Maintenance Report</b>  The Chair's maintenance report related particularly to trees.  It was noted that a dangerous fallen branch had been removed by a tree surgeon, the invoice of approx £200 is awaited.  We await permission to prune and fell the trees in the small wood below the School House, which is interestingly noted in the Planning Record as 'Wall Village Fair Location'.</p> <p>The 2022 arborist report on the health of all parish trees was examined and it was found that all trees are due re-inspection, it having been longer than 33 months since the arborist's inspection took place. Since we are waiting for some trees to be pruned and felled, it was AGREED that we should have this work done first whilst researching how often trees should be formally inspected..</p>
2732	<p><b>8. Fix My Street Review</b>  There had been no recent posts on Fix My Street.  The village litter pick had taken place on 12th April and had been very well attended. Thanks to all who turned out.</p>

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## **9. Village Hall Report**

### **Overview**

Village Hall AGM took place on the evening of 14th May 2025. The meeting was quorate and all the nominated officers were in attendance.

The Chair (Alix Pearson) summarised the main points of the year's administration and management of the hall:

The roof and matters relating to the roof are all now finished. A final report, a requirement of the grant provided by Councillor Morphet has been sent to the Council.

The refurbishment of the kitchen has been completed, with new cooker, plate - warmer, and fridge in use. The installation of the LED projector, screen and amplifier/sound system is also complete and has been used to good effect supporting several presentations. The lighting system and wiring was also fixed.

Warm Hub status has been achieved, in the past this would have attracted some monies. Unfortunately this is no longer the case.

The village branch of the WI has closed, and with its demise the hall has sadly lost one of its longest running users, and a Trustee.

There is now a Wall Village Hall page on the Northumberland villagehalls.org site

The treasurer has managed to migrate the hall's finances to an online bank, which has greatly improved the management of our finances.

### **Finance**

The hall currently has a closing balance of £11170.58, down slightly on the 2024 closing balance of £12161.73. Considering the amount of refurbishment activity that has taken place in the period, the hall is financially in a 'good place'. This is largely due to the Chair's relentless pursuit of grant funding (notably SUEZ) and management of the installation processes.

An invoicing system is now in place for rental fees, and revenue and routine expenditure are expected to break even in the coming year. It was noted that some 'effective marketing' could see a rise in income which, along with grants could support further development projects.

### **Trustees and Officers**

All bar one of the current Trustees (bar one – see below) volunteered to stay 'in post' subsequent voting supported that and the election of a new Trustee. Delia Faran. One Trustee Chris Jones, retired, having had a tenure of over thirty years! Chris's contribution has been remarkable and the committee thanked him for this with a farewell tipple.

Steve Blake has resigned from the Parish Council, but remains the 'Vice Chair' This means the post of Parish Council representative is clear. (This will probably be resolved at the PC AGM on the 15th)

Current Members of the Management Committee are:

Alix Pearson Chair

Steve Blake Vice Chair

Amy Harris Secretary

Bob Bell Treasurer

Rob Say Booking Secretary

Mark Wood Village Society Representative

Muriel Horne Parochial Church Council Representative

David Watson

Stephen Porteus

Delia Faran

There is one protected nomination remaining for the PC representative.

### **Events**

Unfortunate circumstances prevented 'Old Years Night' taking place, hopefully it will proceed this year. However, there have been several events of note, a recent concert by Michael Barker was a great success and will be followed by another in December, The VE Day celebrations were a great success and contributed £520 to the Spend a Penny fund. More routine use by the Village Society, Rob and Ally Say, the Beekeepers and so on have ensured the hall stays in use and relevant to village life. Some other regular use is being negotiated.

### **Date of next meeting**

**Thursday 17th July 2025 at 7.30pm.**

The meeting ended at 9.05pm

**NOTES FOR UPDATE FOR WALL PC MEETING 15-5-25**

**1)** A follow up report on the petition for traffic calming measures on the A68 at Beukley was shared with the Tynedale Local Area Committee members in April. Highways Improvement have decided that no further safety measures are required. I can share the report with anyone who'd like to read it once they have sent it to me.

**2)** The intermittent drainage issue on the A6079 at Dunkirk has finally been addressed. Northumbrian Water discovered that one of their stopcocks was leaking and installed a new meter chamber. Although the weather has been very dry, early indications are that the work has solved the problem.

**3)** Nick has told me about the long-running saga of the attempted glamping site on Brunton Bank also known as the land south of Black Pasture Cottage. I contacted Alex Campbell, the Planning Enforcement Officer and she told me that she believes the land has been sold and she's made an attempt to contact the new owners but they haven't gotten back to her. To further this investigation, she said she will contact the land registry to see if the ownership details have changed and if they have she will write to them directly to their home address.

**4)** Nick attended the three-day Public Inquiry at Acomb Village Hall in early April. The Inquiry was held so that an Inspector could decide whether to make a Definitive Map Modification Order to create four new public footpaths in East Wood. His decision will be made in May or July. Nick wrote a report on the Inquiry for the Local Access Forum, and I can share his report with anyone who'd like to read it.

**4)** I have emailed Stephen Sam's to find out whether repairs to the A6079 within Wall village have made the 2025/26 Local Transport Plan programme. He told Nick that it was contingent upon them finding extra funding.

**5)** Phase 2 of the surface dressing of the Military Road (B6318) between Stagshaw roundabout and the Fawcett Hill turn was completed in April. The next three phases will be carried out in May, June and July, but the exact dates haven't been set yet.

**6)** The repairs to the U8176 at Codlaw Dene haven't been programmed yet.

I have also signed up to receive road closures alerts and will post about them on Facebook.