

**Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting
held on Thursday 19th September 2024 at 7:30pm.
At Wall Village Hall.**

PRESENT	Cllrs: Mark Wood (MW) Chair, Elisa Wyrley-Birch (EWB) Vice-Chair, Steve Blake, Jane Michie (JM) and Gina Scott (GS). Cllr Nick Morphet. Clerk: Alix Pearson (AP).
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NUMBER	DESCRIPTION
2644	1. Apologies for absence: Apologies were received from John Lamb (JL)
2645	2 Declaration of interests There were no declarations of interest.
2646	3. Approval of Minutes The minutes were approved as true record of the previous meeting and signed. There were no matters arising.
2647	4. Local Transport Plan Priorities 25/26 The following three priorities had been discussed and agreed at the meeting on 18th July. Cllrs checked the draft circulated by AP and there was further discussion regarding the impact of making New Lane Access only, comparing the needs of drivers with the needs of pedestrians. It was acknowledged that those villagers who had become accustomed to taking a short cut to the B6318 may feel unduly inconvenienced by having to drive the the crossroads. It was agreed that the proposal would be put forward and discussed again if NCC intended to put it in place. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • For additional traffic calming measures on the A6079 through the village. • For the safety and comfort of walkers on the HWNT New Lane to be Access Only for vehicles. • For a repair programme for Old Lane which is in a dangerous and dilapidated state. <p>AP to submit relevant documents to NCC Highways Programme.</p>
2648	5. Playground Safety A second maintenance inspection had taken place since the meeting of 18th July. The date was changed at the last minute and Cllr Wyrley Birch was unable to speak to the maintenance person. The clerk was able to speak to the contractor on the phone and his message was that the timber play equipment is always moving, affected by the weather, and that nuts and bolts are moving most of the the time. AP & EWB had read the equipment guarantees carefully and none specified that professional maintenance was required to validate the 10 year guarantees. In the light of this information, all agreed that: A maintenance team of villagers would be convened, who would work together to regularly tighten nuts and bolts in the season. Action EWB. Once the current maintenance contract expires, we will not renew it, as it is not giving us value for money.

2649	<p>6. Review of Planning Applications</p> <p>There had been very few planning applications since the meeting on 18th July.</p> <p>24/02097/FUL Fir Trees Farm Wall - Replace pole barn with double garage and store - resubmitted and permitted.</p> <p>24/02631/FUL Woodpecker Lodge Humshaugh Hexham Northumberland NE46 4HJ Retrospective application</p> <p>24/01512/FU Land North East Of Quarry House High Brunton Wall Northumberland. Agricultural Workers Dwelling. Refused.</p> <p>The actions against the unlawful development at Planetrees continue, see Cllrs Morphet's report at appendix 1 for details.</p>
2650	<p>7. Clerk's Financial Report</p> <p>As Q2 is not yet complete, the clerk presented the bank balance at 17th September and outlined projected income and expenditure to 31st March 2025.</p> <p>Balance of current account at 17th September - £11,593.</p> <p>Expenditure forecast to 31st March 2025:</p> <p>Clerk's salary - £1,800</p> <p>Toilet Cleaning £1,000</p> <p>Mowing £1,080</p> <p>Office expenses (payroll, hall rent, audit fees) £450</p> <p>Charitable Donations £500</p> <p>Resilience grant £915</p> <p>TOTAL: £5,745</p> <p>Anticipated income</p> <p>Toilet grant £2,160</p> <p>Therefore:</p> <p>Balance brought forward £11,593</p> <p>Plus toilet grant £2160 £13,753</p> <p>Minus anticipated further expenditure £5745 leaving £8,000 to invest in parish projects.</p> <p>This sum is predicated on the third party contribution to the Village Hall Refurbishment being made by another body.</p> <p>This sum also includes the £50 prize awarded from Love Northumberland for the Species Rich Grassland Area. AP to send cash to Cllr Morphet.</p> <p>This sum also includes the balance of the wildflower funds, which were destined for a new bench. Cllr Morphet may have a spare bench which he can donate.</p>
2651	<p>8. Drainage on the Back Green.</p> <p>The proposed inspection of the damaged drainage on the back green is likely to take place in the forthcoming week.</p> <p>EWB had informed Allendale Estates that the green will be disturbed and re-instated for this investigation and Will Witchell is happy to receive our report of the further action required.</p>

2652	<p>9. Chair’s Inspection of Parish Assets.</p> <p>Following a successful re-painting of the pant, for which Cllrs are extremely grateful, the Chair identified the following maintenance actions:</p> <p>MW to strip around the signposts in the species rich grassland area, prior to JL mowing. Clippings then need to be raked. EWB & JM volunteered to rake, MW will provide the rakes. Strimming is required around benches and bus shelter. FWB to assist MW in achieving this. EWB to set up a WhatsApp group those with the time and energy to tackle maintenance jobs in the Parish. All those interested to send Elisa their number and to encourage others who may be inclined to join the group.</p>
2653	<p>10. Village Hall Report</p> <p>A meeting of the Village Hall Trustees/Management Committee to place on the 18th September 2024.</p> <p>The following business was conducted/discussed:</p> <p>Suez, NCC Grants and Hall Refurbishment. Much work has been done by the Chair (Alix Pearson) liaising with Suez and NCC. The Suez and NCC grants are now in place. Funding is in place (with one caveat, see below) that will allow for; the refurbishment of the kitchen, the installation of an LED Projector and electrically operated screen and the installation of new LED lighting and associated wiring. The Caveat is that 10% of the total funds that Suez are supporting must be provided any a third party (Not the Hall). It was noted that the PC had offered to underwrite the 10% (VH Trustees thanks noted). But it is hoped that the monies will be provided by the Village Society ‘Book Fund’. The matter will be discussed by the VS Committee at their coming meeting. It is anticipated that the first work will be the installation of the projector, screen and electrics.</p> <p>The Village hall is now in the ‘Northumberland Village Halls Portal’. This will provide a home for a variety of policy documents and a bookings interface. Readily searchable on Google and other search engines.</p> <p>B4RN have been in touch with the hall in regard to the siting of their fibre cabinet at the rear of the hall. This is quite a large structure that needs to be on a hardstand. Physically the space around the hall is suitable, but may interfere with hog roasts and BBQs. The chair and vice chair are visiting Barrasford’s installation to measure the cabinet and get a feel for the space it will/will not take. Other locations in the village – other than the green may need to be considered (PC Business?)</p> <p>Money Matters. The change of banking providers discussed at the last meeting has taken place, the hall now banks electronically. @ £1000 remains in the Barclays account to ensure any late Direct Debits get paid. Once cleared this will be transferred and the old account closed.</p> <p>The Secretary has developed a range of policies, relating to fire and H&S, this work is ongoing. The Bookings Secretary reported on the current booking rate, this is somewhat higher than the same period last year and he believes the uptick will continue into the festive season. The new fees are now in place and do not appear to have had an adverse impact on bookings.</p> <p>PC Report – NTR.</p> <p>Village Society report. In line with the reporting re the Suez grant above. Otherwise the Societies first lecture of the season will take place on the 26th September - Amanda aHepburn, John Clayton, The Man Who Saved the Wall. On 31 October; Ian Jackson will launch his new book Rocks on the Edge of Empire.</p> <p>WI Report: The representative was not present/apologies. However our understanding is the WI is now no longer active in the village. The WI Trustee position is dormant and a vacant Trustee post is now available.</p> <p>PCC. The representative was absent/apologies. NSTR.</p>

2653 cont	AOB. NCC have asked if the hall can store the voting booth. This was agreed as was the fact the polling would continue to attract a three day charge/booking The next meeting is scheduled for the 13th January 2025.
2654	<p>10a) County Councillor's Report</p> <p>Cllr Morphet's comprehensive report appears at Appendix 1.</p> <p>Cllr Morphet brought the Improvements to Public Rights of Way Consultation to our particular notice and encouraged Cllrs to take part in the survey. Link in appendix 1.</p> <p>Cllrs discussed the installation of dropped kerbs at Warden View and The Care and did not think that the option of a raised continuous footway would be appropriate in these cases.</p> <p>In his capacity as Bus Board substitute, Cllr Morphet asked if there were any suggestions for improvements to the bus service. AP mentioned that two parishioners had commented that there was no bus which would arrive in Hexham for 10.00am which would allow them to attend medical appointments.</p>
2654	<p>11. B4RN Update</p> <p>AP reported that there had been 62 expressions of interest to B4RN and 9 volunteers to assist in the roll out. B4RN will arrange a meeting of volunteers in October. All Cllrs asked to continue to spread the word and encourage as many people as possible to sign up. There is no commitment behind the sign up at this stage, but it may help our project rise up the installation list.</p> <p>See minute no 2653 Village Hall report for details of the siting of the B4RN fibre cabinet. Cllr Blake and the Clerk will visit Barrasford to look at their cabinet.</p>
2655	<p>12. Dog Fouling Measures</p> <p>Cllr Morphet had put Cllr Scott in touch with the Dog Welfare Officer at NCC who had delivered tarmac stencils, No Fouling stickers and poo bags. The No Fouling stickers are available to be stuck to any surface where the owner and the base material will accept them. Please contact Cllr Scott if you would like some stickers. The yellow stencils have been sprayed on the road.</p> <p>AP to research wall mounted poo bag dispensers.</p>
	<p>11. Date of next meeting Thursday 21st November 2024 at 7.30pm.</p> <p>The meeting ended at 9.15pm</p>

COUNTY COUNCILLOR UPDATE FOR WALL PARISH COUNCIL MEETING 19/9/24**4. LTP PROGRAMME 2025/26**

I think I'll be able to request the improvements to **the footway between the layby and Low Brunton crossroads**. Richard McKenzie suggested waiting until we had funding, but we don't have to and it would be nice to keep it on the officers' radar. The strength of the request is that we have a quote and we've submitted a funding bid. I'm still trying to arrange a site visit with the Rural Growth Manager, and I'll let you know the date as soon as it's been agreed.

I can also request **dropped kerbs at the entrances to Warden View and The Chare**. I could request a continuous footway (which would give pedestrians priority over motor vehicles) across the entrance to The Chare rather than two dropped kerbs, if you'd like me to.

6. PLANNING APPLICATIONS

Land South of Black Pasture Cottage (**the "glamping site" on Brunton Bank**). The Enforcement Officer is considering prosecuting the landowner over non-compliance with the Enforcement Notice for the illegal entrance, because she doesn't think that her department can afford to do the work itself.

MY UPDATE

1) The quote for **improvements to the footways alongside Front Street** came to £50,000 for work in two areas and would presumably be around £75,000 if a third area was included. We could start the ball rolling by requesting a Road Safety Audit, but it would cost us £2,000. Do you think we should request the audit, or should we look into how we'd fund the work first?

2) **The Advanced Stop Lines at each end of Chollerford bridge** should be implemented by the end of September. Once they're in place we can assess the effect they've had on cyclist safety and we can push for a longer green light again if necessary.

3) The Highways officers have decided against installing **double yellow lines between Low Brunton crossroads and the bridge**, because the problem of illegal parking appears to have passed. I asked them if they could be ready to implement them quickly if the problem returns, but they haven't promised anything. So we'll be back to square one if we have a long spell of good weather. Perhaps not quite back to square one though, because we'll know exactly what to ask for and we know that residents are happy with the plan.

4) There hasn't been much progress on **the A68 road safety petition**. We weren't presented with an update at the Local Area Committee meeting on the 10th September, but hopefully we'll get one at the next meeting on the 12th November. I have been sent the Road Safety Study from January 2020 though, and it reveals that the section to the north of Beukley is more dangerous than the section to the south which the Highways officers' response to the petition focused on. It also presents data showing that the road surface is worn and slippery. I've already pointed out that the response to the petition needs to consider the section to the north of Beukley as well as the section to the

south, and I'll ask about the worn and slippery road surfaces at the next Local Area Committee meeting.

5) The **Wild Wall** (species-rich grassland) site is due to be cut and raked this month! I asked a group of scythe enthusiasts if they'd like to help us cut it, but they couldn't help this year – so we'll need to cut it ourselves again – and rake it once it's been cut.

We were going to spend the £50 that we got through the Love Northumberland awards on a couple of wooden rakes, but my friend Christine who helps me with the project at Barrasford has just managed to get her hands on a couple - so we're not sure what to spend the money on. It should have been paid into the parish council's bank account by now, so you can either sit on it until we've decided what to spend it on or pay it to me and trust me not to mis-spend it! I'd be happy to show you the receipt for whatever we do decide to spend it on.

6) We voted on who would be Tynedale's representative on **the Local Bus Board** for its second year of existence and the vote went John Riddle's way again. But they've agreed that I can be the substitute representative. I'm collecting suggestions for improvements to services, which I'll pass to the board as soon as they're ready to accept them. I'm happy to take suggestions by phone or email, any time.

7) There's a **community resilience event** at Hexham Mart on Monday (23rd Sept). They'll be telling us how to set up and run a Community Response Centre and how to volunteer to help in an emergency, and there'll be an update on the digital phone switchover too. It starts at 12.30pm and finishes at 4.30/5pm, and if you'd like to go you'll need to email Jacqui Burton at Northumberland Communities Together (jacqui.burton@northumberland.gov.uk). There's a second event in Bellingham on 10th October for anyone who can't make the Hexham one.

8) The **Warmer Homes scheme** is still open for applications but will be closing any day now. You need to live in a house with an EPC rating of D or below and have a combined household income of less than £36,000 (and up to £44,000 for households of four people or more) to be eligible. Anyone who is eligible would be absolutely crazy to miss out.

9) The County Council is leading on **the Local Nature Recovery Strategy** for the North of Tyne area (which is Northumberland, Newcastle and North Tyneside). It's keen to work closely with land owners and land managers and is running a survey for them to comment on the council's plans for nature recovery. Link to survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/8DVNGYC>. It closes on 1st October. There will also be a series of engagement events, which are listed here: <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Economy-Regeneration/Programmes/Rural-Growth-and-Innovation/Local-Nature-Recovery-Strategy.aspx>.

10) Round three of **the Community Energy Fund** opened in August and closes on 13th October. There's up to £40,000 on offer for feasibility studies for clean energy projects, and community groups of all types are eligible - including parish councils. For more information, go to: <https://www.neynetzerohub.com/projects-and-events/delivering-programmes/c/>.

11) The County Council has rewritten its **Rights of Way Improvement Plan**, and is consulting on the draft document until October 18th. It's an important document, and the more feedback the County Council get on the draft the better the final version will be. The consultation also gives you the opportunity to bring the officers' attention to gaps in the current Rights of Way network that need to be filled. Given that the officers are probably too busy to attend parish council meetings, the

Confirmed as a true record of Meeting: Original Signed

consultation's your best chance to submit suggestions. To read the draft ROWIP and complete the consultation, go to:

https://haveyoursay.northumberland.gov.uk/neighbourhood-services/northumberland-county-council-rights-of-way-improv/?utm_source=social&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=FH%20App&utm_content=ap_l3hixits73.

12) The Northern Powergrid Foundation has extended its deadline for applications to Oct 14th. Any non-profit organisation can apply for up to £20k for a community energy resilience project. Solar panels and batteries are both potentially covered. For more information, go to www.northernpowergridfoundation.com.