

**Minutes of the Hurworth Parish Council meeting Held on  
2<sup>nd</sup> April 2026 starting at 7.00pm, held at Hurworth Grange**

**Attendees**

**Parish Councillors Present:**

Chair – Mr Andrew Leigh, Cllr Fiona Lennox, Cllr Peter Willis, Cllr Janine Forster, Cllr Angela Allan, Cllr Dorothy Oughton. Cllr Karen Mann, Cllr Peter Williamson, Cllr David Crisp, Cllr Michael Feeney,

Also, Cllr Lorraine Tostevin, Cllr Paul Walters and 14 members of the public, and the Clerk.

**1. Apologies for Absence:** Cllr John Howard

**2. Declaration of Interest:** None required

**3. Chairman's Address**

The Chair welcomed the Councillors and the visitors.

- Councillor vacancy - the Chair announced that Cllr Graham Wylie has resigned from the council, leaving a vacancy. The vacancy will be advertised
- Annual Meeting - the Annual meeting will be held as a private meeting immediately prior to the monthly meeting, 7<sup>th</sup> May starting at 6.15pm
- Annual Assembly - the date is set for 22<sup>nd</sup> May in the Fletcher Hall
- Special Meeting - The Chair stated that he intends to have a Special Meeting, no date set.

**4. Minutes from Meeting Held on 5<sup>th</sup> February 2026:**

The Draft Minutes for the meeting held on 5<sup>th</sup> March 2026 were accepted, proposed by Cllr Oughton seconded by Cllr Willis.

**5. Matters Arising:**

- a. **Salt bin installation** – In the absence of Cllr Howard, Cllr Mann said that the bins have not been installed yet.
- b. **River Tees safety precautions** – In the absence of Cllr Howard, the Chair said that Cllr Howard was getting the notices for installation.
- c. **Land at Spar corner** – The Chair reported that the letter had been sent to DBC gifting the piece of land, but no response has been received yet.
- d. **Fox Close trees** – In the absence of Cllr Howard, the Chair stated that Cllr Howard wished to engage a specialist tree assessor to inspect the tree, before any decision will be made.
- e. **Hurworth Scouts** – In the absence of Cllr Howard, this subject was not discussed.

## **6. Ward Councilor's Report April 2026**

### **Delay to the start of food waste collections**

Food waste collections in Darlington will not commence this week as previously planned. In line with Government policy everything was in place to start and the food waste caddies and bins were in the process of being delivered however, the Council have been let down by a key supplier which means they do not have all the recycling wagons they need. Collections will now start on June 2<sup>nd</sup> and letters will be issued to remind residents of the new date. Full details on the new recycling service, including frequently asked questions, can be found on Darlington Borough Councils website.

### **Children's Services**

Following a recent Ofsted inspection of the Children's Services in Darlington the highest possible overall judgement of Outstanding was made. Ofsted praised the council's ambitious and relational approach, highlighting that the children's experiences, safety and aspirations drive every decision. We offer congratulations to all the children's teams for this amazing result.

### **Local Plan Consultation**

This revised plan which will extend from 2027-2042 is now open for the second round of the consultation. It can be accessed and responded to via Darlington Borough Councils website under Consultations. In terms of new housebuilding, we can advise that it doesn't currently include any further sites for building new houses in Hurworth.

### **Footpath 11**

There has been an application submitted to the Borough Council by the Landowner to redirect and make some changes to footpath 11. Comments on this should be made to the Council by the 30<sup>th</sup> April. Maps outlining the redirection are available to view online and your ward councillors and parish council also have copies so if you would like to see them, please get in touch.

### **Free events guide 2026**

The guide detailing free fun events for people of all ages is available at venues across Darlington; it can also be accessed on line at Enjoy Darlington. There will be many live town centre performances, including some from our own Hurworth Concert Band. Firm favourites including Tractor Tuesday, Emergency Services Day, Darlington by the Sea and the Gold tea Dance will all be returning this year. Plus, applications are now open for the Darlington 10K if you wish to enter that.

Cllr Allan expressed her concerns about the footpath from the Grange to the Mustard Tree, which requires hedges to be trimmed and vehicles to stop parking partly on the pavement, which restricts pram and wheelchair movement. Action Cllr Tostevin to speak to DBC.

Cllr Willis expressed his disappointment that the progress on the completion of the Bellway estate was very slow. Cllr Tostevin explained that part of the delay was due to some residents raising objections.

Cllr Tostevin agreed to try to speed the project up.

Cllr Mann expressed similar hold ups which are slowing down the handing over of the Esh estate to DBC

Cllr Mann explained that there is a circular pathway around the estate, and bollards were planned to be installed to prevent traffic. These have not been installed, and her efforts to progress through DBC have failed to receive a response.

### **Public Participation**

A resident raised a problem regarding DBC trees intruding onto his property. Cllr Tostevin undertook to look into this.

A resident raised the subject of the problems on the Bellway estate, and said that the council should get a harder line to get the work completed.

Cllr Tostevin explained that it is a very long process, and not just on these estates but it is nationwide. She said it may take up to two years to get it finally accepted by DBC.

- 7. Hurworth Council Parish Plan 2025-30** – Chair stated that he was still receiving comments, and that he, himself, would read the document, and make the changes to produce the final Plan. He said he could do this in May 2026.

### **8. Planning Applications** – Cllr Angela Allan March 2026 planning applications

Three planning applications were received in March. The planning applications received were as follows:

1. Application - 26/00192/FUL  
Location - 24 Sanderson Road, Hurworth, Darlington, DL2 2AU  
Description - Erection of single storey rear extension incorporating roof lantern together with part conversion of garage into habitable space and associated works
2. Application - 26/00142/FUL  
Location - Brickyard Farm Cottage, Neasham Road, Hurworth Moor, Darlington, DL2 1QL  
Description - Formation of a new vehicle access on the north west boundary (including removal of approx.25m of hedgerow), together with the construction of an access track and installation of post and rail fencing (Retrospective Application) (Resubmission)
3. Application - 26/00252/FUL  
Location - Chestnut House, 6 Croft Road, Hurworth, Darlington, DL2 2HD  
Description - Erection of single storey extension to west elevation to provide additional habitable accommodation and triple garage to rear

There was a discussion regarding application 26/00142/FUL. The Environmental Health group have carried out an inspection and accepted, as clear; the hedges have been removed, but as they are owned by the property owner, this is legal. The council decided to raise an objection to this application, due to their concern about the 'line of site' for traffic on this busy road and junction of Neasham Road/Strait Lane. **Action Cllr Allan to log the objection on the DBC portal.**

**9. Tree Report – Cllr Williamson**

Cllr Williamson stated that he had nothing more to report.

**10. Open Spaces & Environment Report – Cllr Lennox**

Hope to put up dog poo bag dispensers over Easter break around village.

Flower planters all been checked and looking good; in full bloom now.

**11. Allotments Report – Cllr Crisp**

Cllr Crisp reported that there has not been much activity on the allotments, some tenants were now preparing their plots for Spring planning.

The grass has been cut at both sites

**12. Highways and Traffic Report - Cllr Oughton:-**

Metal Bridge	Total vehicles	26,834
	Fastest	55mph
	Average Speed	25.3
The Green	Total vehicles	40,515
	Fastest	54mph
	Average Speed	25.0
Hurworth Rd.	Total vehicles	64,025
	Fastest	57mph
	Average Speed	23.7
Linden Court	Total vehicles	145,385
	Fastest	63mph
	Average Speed	27.6
Roundhill Rd	Total vehicles	62,048
	Fastest	54mph
	Average Speed	26.4

**13. Crime and Security Report – Cllr Oughton**

Cllr Oughton gave the following crime report for March 2026.

- 1) Suspicious activity x1
- 2) Vehicle interference x1 under investigation
- 3) Animal - Horse on road x1

#### 4) ASB x2

Cllr Oughton confirmed that our PCSO will be attending the Parish Council meeting in May.

#### 14. Rights of Way and Parish Walks – Cllr Forster

Cllr reported:-

- Pathway 14 can be re-opened
- Pathway 17 is still not suitable for walking
- Pathway 15 is subject to moving the route.

**15. HPC Contingency Plan,** – Cllr Howard was not present, no progress.

**16. Elderbrook Farm estates** – Cllr Mann

#### **Report for Elderbrook Park and Hurworth Meadows**

A field that runs parallel to Acer Drive on the estate is completely under water and appears to get deeper by the day. This is spreading outwards to other fields owned by DBC and border Geneva Woods. This field is not owned by DBC. Can we find out who owns the land and why there is this enormous amount of water as the weather has not been as wet recently? Residents are concerned for their own properties.

Can the ward councillor ask the planning department if there are going to be bollards at each entry point to the footpaths as per the plans for the estate? The site manager confirmed that a member of the planning department at DBC told him to not bother installing them. Residents would like them installed to mitigate safety concerns. Cllr Mann has chased this and not received a reply in four weeks.

Cllr Mann reported that one house is suffering from water flooding into the property, and to date they have been unable to trace the source. The situation was described as very odd. **Cllr Tostevin offered to visit the site.**

#### **17. Correspondence and Matters of Interest**

- a. Website update – Cllr Allan stated that the current HPC website is not fully compliant, as it does not meet the regulation Accessibility standards. The Council agreed that a new website should be developed. **Action Cllr Allan**
- b. Procedures Review Plan – Cllr Allan is carrying out a review of the Council's existing procedures. **Action Cllr Allan**
- c. Non-Compliance – Cllr Allan stated that the council had not submitted a Statement of Accessibility; the new website must meet these standards. **Action Cllr Allan**
- d. The benefits of the new email addresses .gov.uk – Cllr Allan said she could not think of any benefits from having installed this functionality.
- e. Letter from Mustard Tree. The Chair said that the council had received a letter from the Mustard Tree, explaining why there is a delay in installing the new electric door.

- f. Letter received from the Village Hall thanking the Council for the award to fund the Armed Forces concert on the Village Green.
- g. Letter received to thank the Council for the award of £1,000 to sponsor the Beer Fest being organised by the Rockcliffe Hall Cricket Club and the Village Hall.

## 18. Accounts for Payment

The schedule of payments made in the month of March 2026, having been distributed to all Councillors, were formally accepted by the meeting

### Accounts for Payment March 2026

<u>Name</u>	<u>Cheque No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Amount</u>
BT Comms	DD	Communications	64.32
G Wylie	104293	Poster	17.34
P Williamson	104294	Land registry fees	54.66
F Lennox dog poo bag boxes	104295	Dog poo bag dispensers	488.12
Tees River Trust	104296	Section 137 support	1000.00
Rockcliffe Hall Cricket Club	104297	Beer festival support	1000.00
Hurworth Grange CIO	104298	Hurworth Country Fair	2000.00
Cancelled cheque	104299		0.00
		Armed Forces Day	
Hurworth Village Hall	104300	concert	400.00
Treeboy Ltd	104301	Tree work	925.20
P Robinson	104302	Salary	442.60
P D Allan	104303	Salary	1390.20
Inland Revenue	104304	PAYE	761.42
WAVE	104305	Allotment water	31.25
P D Allan	104306	Admin expenses	83.21
R V Roger oak trees	104307	2 oak trees	115.00
<b>Total expenditure</b>			<b>£8,773.32</b>
<b>Litter Picker refund</b>			<b>£4,652.00</b>

- a. Banking mandate update, Cllr Williamson has been added to the signatory mandate.
- b. Authentication procedure, Barclay's Bank have provided the mandate documents, and these will be processed, to allow direct bank transfer payments.

## 19 Financial Reports

The Financial Report as at 31st March 2026, having been distributed to all Councillors, was formally accepted by the meeting.

**Financial Report 31st March 2026**

Ringfenced funds £11,689

	<u>Apr-25</u>	<u>May-25</u>	<u>Jun-25</u>	<u>Jul-25</u>	<u>Aug-25</u>	<u>Sep-25</u>	<u>Oct-25</u>	<u>Nov-25</u>	<u>Dec-25</u>	<u>Jan-26</u>	<u>Feb-26</u>	<u>Mar-26</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Budget</u> <u>2025-26</u>
<b>Revenue</b>														
<b>Precept</b>	80000												80000	80000
Litter Picker ref & VAT		1718				4505						4652	10875	10288
Rent & Interest			273	1410		272			186			120	2261	790
Grants – Other				6363									6363	2000
Allotment rent										825	575		1400	1740
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>80000</b>	<b>1718</b>	<b>273</b>	<b>7773</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4777</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>186</b>	<b>825</b>	<b>575</b>	<b>4772</b>	<b>100899</b>	<b>94818</b>
<b>Expenditure</b>														
Salaries & NHI	2110	2193	2591	3614	2429	2594	2429	2494	2594	2429	2429	2594	30500	30200
Gen. Admin Expenses	1056	706	175	129	209	134	1042	288	602	84	909	148	5482	4800
Trees	247	0	347	1545		2779	167	675			342	1040	7142	6500
Open Spaces		225	1040	216				580		272	974	1488	4795	3500
Section 137	1000	684	1037	1200			11062	900			-7000	3400	12283	11000
Projects & Plan													0	7000
Repairs & Insur		313							9291	-9291			313	1800
Newsletters & Posters	799	323	74	29		15	62		33	14		17	1366	3400
Youth Activities													0	3000
Paths/ RoW												55	55	2000
Allotments	142	241	141		100	443		350	165		339	31	1952	1700
Highways/ Defib						451	808		55	720	105		2139	2250
Handyman									75				75	1200
Hurworth Grange support			2000	10112									12112	5000
Capital & Legal exs	5356			259					3	259			5877	8517
VAT	59	3	258	503	18	32	190	123		59	397			
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>10769</b>	<b>4688</b>	<b>7663</b>	<b>17607</b>	<b>2756</b>	<b>6448</b>	<b>15760</b>	<b>5410</b>	<b>12818</b>	<b>-5454</b>	<b>-1505</b>	<b>8773</b>	<b>85733</b>	<b>91867</b>
													<b>15166</b>	<b>2951</b>
<b>Funds in Hand less ringed</b>														
<b>Revenue less expenses</b>	<b>53915</b>	<b>123146</b>	<b>120176</b>	<b>112786</b>	<b>#####</b>	<b>100196</b>	<b>98525</b>	<b>82765</b>	<b>77355</b>	<b>64723</b>	<b>71002</b>	<b>73082</b>	<b>11689</b>	
<b>Funds in Hand</b>	<b>123,146</b>	<b>120,176</b>	<b>112,786</b>	<b>102,952</b>	<b>#####</b>	<b>98,525</b>	<b>82,765</b>	<b>77,355</b>	<b>64,723</b>	<b>71,002</b>	<b>73,082</b>	<b>69,081</b>	<b>Ringed</b>	

- a. These are the final accounts for the Financial Year 2025-26
- b. The AGAR for the external audit has been received.
- c. The books of account and all other documentation required, will go to the Internal Auditor in April.
- d. The Risk Assessment as at 31<sup>st</sup> March 2026 will be completed by Cllr Andrew (estimated date 17<sup>th</sup> April).

## **20 Association Reports**

### **a. Village Hall – Cllr Crisp**

Cllr Crisp gave the following report:-

#### **March 2026**

Sunday Cinema - 'The Salt Path.' Another good attendance and some welcome new faces.

Dave Dean - A very informative and enjoyable talk about 'Secret Women' and the variety of roles they undertook during WW2.

The Pudding Club - over 200 individual portions of some very tasty treats. Overall winner was Heather Barron with a baked white chocolate cheesecake topped with fresh raspberries and blueberries.

#### **June 2026**

The Beer Festival - Sponsorship is going quite well with sponsorship for ten barrels already covered. There's space for more people to offer sponsorship or to take out adverts in the event programme if they wish. Also, if anybody wants to get involved in helping to raise funds please contact Bill Drumm.

### **b. Hurworth Grange CIO**

Mr Graham Wylie submitted the following report.

#### **Hurworth Grange Report**

The compound area near the containers is set to undergo a significant makeover. Work has already begun, with the existing fencing currently being dismantled. Once this is complete, attention will turn to clearing and tidying the waste within the compound, creating a cleaner, safer, and more visually appealing space for everyone.

In addition, improvements to the surface of the Grange Playpark are planned over the coming weeks. Following a productive meeting with the planning department at Darlington Borough Council, steps are now being taken to enhance the quality and usability of the play area.

Alongside these upgrades, I have also explored the cost of installing a Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA). This facility would provide a dedicated space for activities such as football and basketball, ideally located next to the existing skate ramp to create a more inclusive recreational hub. The aim is to secure funding support from the National Lottery, alongside contributions from the Parish Council, to help bring this project to life.

Looking ahead to upcoming events, we are excited to welcome Jamie Tinkler, who will be performing a selection of popular 80s hits at the end of April—an event that promises to be a great evening for the community. This will be followed by the much-loved Classic Car Event, taking place on 10 May from 10:30am until 4:00pm, which is always a highlight of the local calendar.

Finally, after a great deal of thought and consideration, I have decided to step away from my involvement with the Grange. I believe the time is right for new energy, fresh ideas, and continued dedication from someone new to take things forward. I am proud that the Grange is now in a stronger position than when I first became involved, and I sincerely wish it every success in the future.

## **21 Any Other Business (Non-Financial)**

**The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30pm**