
Attendees

Parish Councillors Present:

Cllr. Andrew Leigh, Cllr Peter Willis Cllr Janine Forster, , Cllr Angela Allan, Cllr. Dorothy Oughton. Cllr David Crisp. Cllr John Howard. Cllr Graham Wylie, Cllr Karen Mann, Cllr Peter Williamson, Also, Cllr. Lorraine Tostevin, Cllr. Paul Walters, and 8 members of the public, and the Clerk.

1. Chair's Opening Address:

The Chairman welcomed the attendees, and informed the meeting that there is one vacancy, which is being advertised, and we have one applicant at present.

There will be a Remembrance Day Service at All Saints Church on Sunday 9th November, when the Council will lay a wreath, all councillors are invited to attend.

Our request for the annual Precept needs to be submitted in December at the latest, so a Finance Meeting will be convened within the next four weeks.

2. Apologies for Absence:

Cllr. Fiona Lennox,

3. Declaration of Interest:

Cllr Crisp – Allotments, Cllr Wylie – Hurworth Grange CIO.

4. Minutes from Meeting Held on 2nd October 2025:

The Draft Minutes for the meeting held on 2nd October, having made two modifications, were accepted, proposed by Cllr Oughton seconded by Cllr .Crisp, and passed unanimously.

5. Matters Arising:

- a. Salt bins.** Cllr Howard reported that he has done a survey, and thinks that the council should provide 10 more salt bins. He is going to list the locations, and also decide which model of bin we should purchase. In addition, he will talk to DBC about grit delivery, and if required, make alternative arrangements for the grit to be delivered. Residents will be urged to make use of the grit, to increase the safety level in their area.

Cllr Walters was asked to contact the DBC Dept that handles the grit deliveries. **Action Cllr Walters**

- b.** Cllr Allan gave the following report details:-

1. Rockliffe Court

Pavements

Cllr Allan attended the tenants meeting on Monday 6th October accompanied by Cllr Forster to discuss the poor condition of the pavements for wheelchair users and obstructions caused by parking on the pavements.

A tenant who had met with Matt Vickers at the Grange made him aware of the condition of the pavements from the village up to the Grange.

We had sight of a letter from Darlington Borough Council's Chief Executive to the MP which stated that a Highways Inspector had visited the location and did not find any actionable defects in line with their maintenance policy and will continue to monitor the area.

Cllr Allan was advised by Rockliffe Court that a representative from the council came to visit (9th Oct) and walked into the village with the tenant to ascertain the condition of the pavements. The representative from the Council said there is a budget but will need to put it forward for approval.

HPC will monitor the situation.

2. Chess

The possibility of setting up a Chess club for the village was also discussed. This was a suggestion made on the Parish Plan survey. Cllr Allan to action.

3. Four Monthly Visits

It was agreed that Cllr Allan and Cllr Forster will attend the Rockliffe Court tenant meetings every four months.

Hurworth Secondary School

Cllr Allan attended the Awards Ceremony at Hurworth Secondary School on 16th October which was a very enjoyable evening.

The Head Teacher and Assistant Head are keen that the school and pupils be more involved in the community and working with HPC. Further links and projects will be established with the school when the Parish Plan is finalised.

4. **Neighbourhood Watch (“NW”)**

Cllr Allan contacted the Chair of the Darlington NW Association for advice on the possibility of extending NW throughout the village. The Chair of the Darlington Association was very positive to this idea. We will liaise further with NW and work on an action plan when the Parish Plan is finalised.

6. Ward Councillors Report

Ward Councillors Report November 2025

Safety Concerns Roundhill Road junction with West End/Croft Road

Reports from residents of Speeding, accidents and overturned cars in this area prompted a site visit with the police team. These concerns have already been reported to the Highways at the Borough Council who are undertaking an analysis at present. The Police are keen to look for solutions and we met them to discuss what may be feasible. Initially there will be some community speed watch events and more volunteers to assist the police and the parish council would be appreciated. Hopefully the December PACT meeting will be used to feedback the speed data and discuss suggestions for improvement in this area. The December PACT meeting date will be circulated and concerned residents encouraged to attend.

Airport Noise

Residents in Neasham have raised concerns about the continuous flight of training aircraft around the airport and the noise it creates. This also affects some of the residents living on the perimeters of Hurworth at times. It would be appreciated if the representative from the Parish Council could raise this at the airport committee meeting and work with Neasham to consider the concerns. If it is possible to get a further parish council representative from Neasham on the airport committee that would be helpful.

Cllr Willis had not been able to attend the last two Airport Consultancy meetings, so was unable to provide any further details.

Darlington Cares Stronger Community Awards

These awards are held annually by Darlington Borough Council. In fact, our Parish Council Clerk was an overall award winner many years ago. This year a member of the Hurworth Youth Project has been nominated for an award in the Young Volunteer Category and so we would like to wish them the very best of luck at the Awards evening tomorrow night (Friday 7th November).

Solar Farm Hurworth Moor

A public consultation is now live for the proposed Hurworth Moor Solar Farm. Details can be found on the website <http://HurworthMoorSolarFarm.co.uk>

The site covers an area of 190 acres located to the East of Burma Road. Entrance to the site will be from the A66. There has been no formal planning application submitted as yet.

Traveller site Neasham Road

It appears that the hedgerow on Neasham Road has been stripped out and residents have complained about the unsightly appearance of the site. The planning officer and enforcement team at Darlington Borough Council have been made aware and are investigating the matter. An update will be provided as soon as it is available.

Cllr Tostevin went on to explain that there are two Traveller sites on Neasham Road; planning permission has been granted to one application, but the other has been rejected, and further details were required.

Cllr Howard stated that the second site would definitely receive permission, and this was essential in order to meet the DBC agreement regarding limiting further Traveller site applications in Hurworth Parish. Cllr Howard was very confident about the outcome.

Xmas Card Competition

This year we have organised a Christmas card competition and children from Hurworth Primary have designed a card; the winner of the competition will have their design printed on the front of a Christmas card which we will be sending out either in printed or electronic format to all residents. We will be announcing the winner and runners up this week.

Upcoming Events in Darlington

Sunday 16th November is the Christmas lights switch on, this is a big event with festivities starting at 4pm and the light switch on at approximately 5.30 pm

On the 23rd and 29th November there is Xmas wreath making at Hopetown cost £48.00

There are plenty of opportunities to meet Santa at Hopetown in December. For the cost of £20.00 children receive a wrapped gift, photos in the grotto and a visit to the elves workshop.

There is the annual Ice Sculpture Trail on the 13th December in Darlington Town Centre.

There are also plenty of Xmas events taking place in Hurworth itself including wreath making workshops, Xmas tree lights switch on and lantern parades, craft fairs, church services and many more. Details of which are advertised on Facebook.

7. Public Participation:

There were no topics raised by the public.

8. Hurworth Parish Plan 2025-30

The Chair reported all the councillors now had a copy of the draft Plan (Version 3).

The chair went on to say that the details would not be discussed at this meeting, but he undertook to make a full review, contact the councillors in order to get a consensus and agree the final details. He would then assign Project Groups, to construct an outline of the agreed projects.

A Public Meeting will be convened to present the Plan to the residents, and ask for their acceptance.

Naturally, the Projects will have a bearing on the Precept calculation, so tis is a time constraint.

9. Planning Applications: Cllr Angela Allan

Two planning applications have been received in the month of October.

Planning Application - 25/00813/FUL

Location - Skipbridge Farm, Neasham Road, Hurworth Moor, Darlington, DL2 1QL

Description - Demolition of farmhouse and outbuilding, erection of 1 no. detached residential dwelling (Use

Class C3) with driveway and associated access works

Planning Application - 25/01089/FUL

Location - 59 Manor Road, Hurworth Place, Darlington, DL2 2HH

Description - Erection of single storey extension to front of garage including alterations to roof height to

facilitate conversion of garage into habitable space

There are no objections to the above planning applications at time of writing.

10. Tree Report –

Cllr Williamson reported,

Some small trees require cutting back around the Strait Lane allotment area. At present, we are trying to ascertain who has the duty of care for these particular trees.

There is a very large willow tree opposite the La Vita restaurant. During the Spring several large branches broke off and fell very close to the Right of Way. We have asked DBC to survey the tree, with a view to reducing it, before the winter weather.

There is a request to reduce the large sycamore tree which is close to 10 Linden drive. Although the tree is healthy, the property owner near the tree is concerned that branches could fall. This tree is within the Linden Court estate, and hence we have referred the owned to DBC, to whom the tree is owned.

11. Open Spaces & Environment Report – Cllr Fiona Lennox

In the absence of Cllr Lennox there was no report.

The Chair read out a letter from the Tees River Trust, who annually spray the river bank areas, to kill off the giant hog weed, and also attend to other unpleasant growths, such as Japanese Knot Weed. We have been supporting them for several years, with a contribution of £1,000. They have applied to strengthen their team, and have asked us to confirm that we will continue to support them.

A vote was taken, and was unanimously agreed to respond positively. **Action Clerk.**

12. Allotments – Cllr Dave Crisp

The Allotment group organised a very successful Halloween Party for the children, at the Village Hall. The event was well supported, and the witch added to the attraction.

The skip arrived at the end of October, and the plot holders used it to get rid of their waste and rubbish.

The water has now been turned off for the winter period.

The AGM is scheduled for 11th December, and the invitations will go out this month.

13. Highways & Traffic Report – Cllr Dorothy Oughton

Cllr Oughton reported

Metal bridge	Total vehicles 48,177 Fastest 65mph Average speed 25.3mph
Hurworth Road	Total vehicles 56,848 Fastest 45mph Average speed 23.5mph
Linden Court	Total vehicles 141,022 Fastest 63mph Average speed 27.5mph
Roundhill Road	Total vehicles 56,956 Fastest 48mph Average speed 23.5mph

The monitor currently located on the main road opposite the Green is again faulty. The unit is 10 years old, and it was discussed whether to get it repaired again, or to replace it, possibly with a number plate recognition camera. It was decided to defer a decision until the Parish Plan was completed, as this is one of the topics being evaluated in the Plan.

14. Youth Activities Report

No report this month

15. Crime & Security Report – Cllr Dorothy Oughton

The following crime incidents were reported.

- 5 Anti-Social Behaviour
- 1 Vehicle crime
- 1 Theft

Cllr Mann stated that she thought that there was also some incidents on the Elder Brook Park and Hurworth Meadows estates. Cllr Tostevin said that there may be some confusion between these two new estates and the similar new estate which falls within Darlington. Enquiries will be made to ensure e receive accurate information. Also, Cllr Oughton said that if the incidents are not formally reported, they will not be included in the Police report.

16. Rights of Way & Parish Walks – Cllr Janine Forster

Cllr Forster reported that she had walked to the pathways through Burma Road and the Arena Rugby stadium. She is pleased to report that the rights of way were in good condition, and no work is required in this location at present.

17. Roads & Pathways Report and Hurworth Contingency Plan – Cllr John Howard

Cllr Howard said that he will be attending a meeting with the Environment Agency and DBC and the Flood committee from Hurworth Place.

This will discuss the arrangements for the change of the river measuring system, to a radar operation. It will also provide a platform to discuss the Contingency Plan.

The Council agreed that once the Contingency team is in place, the council will provide yellow coats, with Hurworth Parish Council printed on them. A variety of sizes will be required.

18. HPC report from Elderbrook Park and Hurworth Meadows Estates

Cllr Mann gave the following report:-

- The estate now has one new bin at the entrance to the Estates. I am told usage will be monitored! It looks well used to me! Thank you to Peter and Lorraine for the support for this measure
- A number of residents are unhappy with the maintenance of green spaces on the estate. I have informally submitted a complaint (privately) with photos of a neglected nature reserve, untrimmed hedges, litter, and leaning trees that will undoubtedly fall if there is a storm. I await a reply. Failing that, I will submit a formal complaint. I have also written to the Head of Planning and Estates at DBC concerning the maintenance contract with Trustgreen and the levels of dissatisfaction with their performance on the estate. He has agreed to take it up with senior staff at Esh Housing. I have queried why there appear to be two specifications for maintenance on the estate? One is lodged with the planning documents for the estate and the other was sent to me by Head of Planning and Estates at DBC. Both differ. No reply as yet. I am happy to pursue and escalate the issues for as long as it takes.

- I will attend the PACT meeting in December re night time prowlers trying the break in to garages and cars here. It's a regular occurrence. I want assurances that the estates are part of the police patrol.

19. Correspondence & Matters of Interest

- a. **Hurworth Grange annual insurance.** The lease agreement states that HPC will arrange and pay the annual insurance covering the buildings and community centre operations. HPC will then invoice Hurworth Grange CIO (the tenant) with the insurance costs. Cllr Howard stated last year that he thinks he can obtain improved premiums, and the meeting asked him to obtain quotations. **Action Cllr Howard**
- b. **Christmas Tree lights.** Cllr Crisp outlined the arrangements which are in progress for the Village Hall and Allotment Group to undertake the event this year. There will be a parade from the church to the tree lead by a piper, there will be music and entertainment with mulled wine and mince pies, and a small Christmas tree for the children to hang their baubles.
The council has received a letter from the Chair of the village Hall detailing the costs of staging this event and requesting a contribution of £400. The Chair read out the letter and asked the council if they agreed. Unanimously the council agreed to this section 17 award. **Action Clerk.**
Cllr Crisp went on to request the Council to make a donation to the resident who provides all of the lights and decorations on the green open area at the end of Strait Lane. The display for the last two years has been excellent. The Council agreed to make a Section 17 award of £300. **Action Clerk.**
- c. **Tees River Trust** The council has received a letter from the Tees River Trust saying that they are wanting to enlarge their team, and in order to get this through, asked HPC if they will be supporting them in 2026. We have provided a contribution for a stretch of the river bank for the last three years, of £1,000. The council confirmed that they will continue this support. Cllr Williamson suggested we increase our support to £1,500; to which the Chair said that, at this point, they had not specifically requested for a higher contribution, but it can be considered in 2026. **Action Clerk**
- d. HPC has been offered free trees, if they are prepared to set aside an area to substantiate a wooded area. After discussion the council agreed, that this is in accordance with suggestions received from the Parish plan survey, and that HPC should confirm interest in this project. **Action Clerk**
 - e. At present Cllr Wylie maintains the site and does all of the updating and control. This is a lot for Cllr Graham to undertake. Cllr Allan thinks that we should evaluate the current site. It was agreed that arrangements will be made to look into this further. Cllr Wylie said that he could install an internal internet network; however, the Chair said he was not in favour of this. **Action Cllr Wylie and Cllr Allan.**
- f. **Hurworth Solar Farm project.** The Council has been asked to 'comment' on the forthcoming application to construct a solar energy farm within Hurworth Parish alongside the A66.
Cllr Howard said that the land as 'tip land'/ redundant land, and is not usable for many other purposes. The height of the solar panels is low, and the site will not generate noise.
The Council's, collective view, is that will not cause any problems, nor disfigure the parish, and we should not register any adverse comments.
- g. The Friends of the Community Group intend to hold another **Wassail in January**, and have listed their cost outlay. The Council agreed to make a section 137 award of £150, to support this community event.
- h. The council received a letter from a resident requesting that the church or council would restrict allowing any plastic inside the church burial grounds; this would include wreaths and artificial flowers. The closed part of the burial grounds come under the jurisdiction of the DBC, and the eastern end is owned by Hurworth Parish Council, and managed by the Hurworth and Neasham Burial Trust. The council discussed this request, and concluded that artificial flowers brightened the graves, and that the amount of plastic present at any time is minimum, therefore no action should be taken. **Action Clerk to respond accordingly.**

20. Accounts for Payment

The schedule of payments made in the month of October 2025, having been distributed to all Councillors, were formally accepted by the meeting.

Accounts for Payment October 2025

<u>Name</u>	<u>Cheque No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Tree Boy Ltd	104232	Treework	166.50
Mustard Tree	104233	Section 137	4000.00
G Wylie	104234	Poster	18.00
Mazars/ cancelled	104235	Revised audit fee to come	0.00
Rockcliffe Cricket Club	104236	Section 137	7000.00
DBC Grit	104237	Road grit	969.20
P Robinson	104238	Salary	598.40
Inland Revenue	104239	PAYE	430.20
P D Allan	104240	Salary	1400.20
P D Allan	104241	Admin and Plan Exs	142.10
Hurworth Grange CIO	104242	Rent, etc	840.00
BT Comms	DD	Communications	64.30
Poppy Shop (PDA) wreaths	104243	Wreaths	74.90
G Wylie	104244	Flag and posters	56.00
Total for month			£15,760.10

21. Financial Report

The Financial Report as at 31st October 2025, having been distributed to all Councillors, were formally accepted by the meeting.

Financial Report 31st October 2025

	<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>01/12/202</u>	<u>Jan-26</u>
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Revenue

Precept	80000							7000		
Litter Picker ref & VAT		1718				4505				
Rent & interest			273	1410		272		70		
Grants - Other				6363						
Allotment rent										1740
Total Revenue	80000	1718	273	7773	0	4777	0	7070	0	1740

Expenditure

Ringfenced funds £11,689

Salaries & NHI Gen. Admin	2110	2193	2591	3614	2429	2594	2429	2590	2850	2650
Expenses	1056	706	175	129	209	134	1042	690	310	340
Trees	247	0	347	1545		2779	167	1400	545	220
Open Spaces		225	1040	216				100	240	650
Section 137	1000	684	1037	1200			11062	700	500	500
Projects & Plan Repairs & Insurance		313							1500	400
Newsletters & Posters	799	323	74	29		15	62	20		20
Youth Activities Paths/ RoW								300		300
Allotments	142	241	141		100	443		120		320
Highways/ Defib Handyman						451	808	100	500	
Hurworth Grange support Capital & Legal exs	5356		2000	10112				100	200	200
VAT	59	3	258	503	18	32	190			
Total Expenses	10769	4688	7663	17607	2756	6448	15760	6120	8825	5859
Funds in Hand less ringed Revenue less expenses										
Funds in Hand	123,146	120,176	120,176	112,786	102,952	100,196	98,525	82,765	83,715	74,890

We have received the External Audit report, with a clean bill of health; we have displayed the Bill of Rights throughout October, the audit fee will follow in November.

22. Association Reports

1. Village Hall

Cllr Crisp delivered the following report:-

The Village Hall Lantern Parade

Sunday 30th November.

Meet at All Saints Church at 4.30pm and follow the bagpiper to the Village Green at 4.45pm for the turning on of the Christmas Tree lights at 5.00pm

Refreshments are available courtesy of the friends of Hurworth allotments.

And, a separate tree is there for children to decorate with their own baubles or Christmas wishes.

2. Hurworth Grange

Cllr Wylie submitted the following report:-

The Rolling Stones Tribute Band were fantastic, and they proved so popular that many people have asked for their return.

Our ever-popular Christmas Fair will take place on Saturday, 30th November, from 10:30 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. With over 40 stalls offering a wonderful variety of gifts, you're sure to find something for everyone on your Christmas list.

New Year's Eve is already shaping up to be a great night, with a talented duo performing live to help us sing and dance our way into 2026.

The Memorial Garden has recently been refreshed with new plants and shrubs. A big thank you goes to Tony Sayers and Tony Gent for organising and carrying out the work.

New signage will soon be installed to reflect the latest businesses at the Grange and remove outdated listings.

Finally, the guttering will be cleaned shortly to clear fallen leaves. Since this job requires a cherry picker, we'll also take the opportunity to replace a couple of high-up bulbs at the same time.

23 Any Other Business

- a. A resident enquired about storing logs at Hurworth Grange, and this was referred to the Grange representative.
- b. Cllr Allan said that she would be visiting Rockcliffe Court again.

The Chair closed the meeting at 8.20pm.