



Minutes of the Hurworth Parish Council Meeting held
on Thursday 2nd May starting at 7:00pm
at Hurworth Grange

ATTENDEES

Parish Councillors present:

Cllr Andrew Leigh, Cllr Peter Willis, Cllr Kelvin Russell, Cllr Janine Forster, Cllr Dorothy Oughton, Cllr David Crisp, Cllr Peter Williamson, Cllr Fiona Lennox, Cllr Debbie Williamson.

Also

Peter Allan (Parish Clerk), Cllr Lorraine Tostevin, Cllr Paul Walters and 4 members of the public.

1. Chair's Opening Address

The Chairman, Andrew Leigh opened the meeting.

The Annual Meeting had just been held, and he has been re-elected as Chairman for 2024=25, and Cllr Lennox has been elected as Vice Chair.

2. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Lindsey Probert.

3. Declaration of Interests

- Cllr Crisp – allotments
- Cllr Leigh and Cllr Russell – Hurworth Albion

4. Minutes from the Meeting Held 6th April 2024

The Minutes were accepted by the Council, proposed by Cllr Oughton and Seconded by Cllr Debra Williamson.

5. Matters Arising

- a. Bellway estate.** Cllr Willis reported that despite many attempts he has made no progress.

Cllr Tostevin reported - **Bellway Estate** – Following reorganisation of the Durham Bellway office the remaining Management are now in a position to be able to review the legacy sites and the work that is still outstanding. Bellway are aware of the outstanding work in Hurworth, and they are currently putting together a strategy following which they will be seeking contractors to undertake this work. Darlington Borough Council is not able to deal with comments from residents or any of the works until the site is handed over to them and therefore, residents must still communicate directly with Bellway. We have the contact details for Bellway and have also passed these details to the Parish Council.

6. Hurworth Grange Lease

The Chair informed the meeting that the content of the lease was now agreed, and that he would be finalising the draft before the next meeting.

7. Ward Councillors Report

The Ward Councillors gave the following report: -

1. **Orange Sludge in a ditch on Neasham Road** – An inspection of the ditch and a subsequent meeting has taken place with the Environment Agency (EA). It does appear that the work on the site adjacent to the ditch has increased the water run-off and that the former landfill site may have been disturbed leading to contaminants entering the water. The orange colouring may just be coming from the former orange clay which provided the material for the nearby brickworks. The EA have agreed to take some samples of the

water upstream and downstream and examine it for contaminants to see if they are impacting on Cree Beck. If this is found to be the case, then a further meeting will take place with the EA.

2. **Retrospective planning application for access on to Neasham Road** – this application has been resubmitted as part of a larger application for further development on the Gypsy site; this follows the appeal hearing whereby the Inspector has allowed the planning application on this site after it had been previously refused by Darlington Borough Council.
3. **Selling of illegal vapes** – a shop in Darlington called Magic Vape has recently been ordered to close for the selling of illegal vapes to children. Unfortunately, there appears to be quite a lot of children in Hurworth vaping on a regular basis despite the schools warning them of the dangers.
4. **20 mph outside Hurworth School** – We visited the school last week along with Paul Howell MP. The pupils had written to their MP to ask if he could help them to make the school crossing times safer. We were pleased to listen to the ideas from the pupils and we were able to tell them that Darlington Borough Council had already been working on a scheme for a safer route to school and that this scheme is scheduled to be implemented in the School Summer Holidays.
5. **Dog Waste Bins** - A request was made at the Annual Assembly for dog and waste bins to be provided on the new estates Bellway, Miller and Elder Brook Park estate, this request is now being reviewed by DBC.
6. **Bus Stop Hurworth Springs** - A request by residents supported by the Ward Councillors had been submitted to Officers at DBC for a new bus stop at Hurworth Springs along with the associated safety footpath, this matter was then referred to TVCA who are responsible for the provision of the buses and associated infrastructure; unfortunately, TVCA have rejected the request for further funding at the present time due to the way in which the buses are currently commissioned.

8. Annual Assembly

The Chairman reported that the Assembly had been very successful and supported by 130 people. There had been ten short presentations, and a session of Public Participation. Also, there were a dozen tables where residents could talk to representatives of the various community groups.

The theme of the 2024 Assembly was 'This is Your village'. The presentations and tables were to highlight all the excellent facilities and amenities there are in our village.

The second half was to invite the residents to tell the council what else they would like, and raise any topic where they think improvements could be made.

During the public participation the following topics were raised: -

1. The Hurworth Scout group is requiring a new scout hut and need funds. Will the parish council match fund their project?
2. Could we have a cycle path from Darlington to Hurworth?
3. Will the council reface the footpaths, to make them easier for resident walkers?
4. DBC spend a lot of money on entertainment in the town, why do they not allocate some funds to Hurworth for entertainment?
5. When will the traffic problems at the secondary school get sorted out? What are DBC planning to change?
6. Is there going to be a 20mph speed limit along the main road past the school?
7. The trees at Hawkswood need cutting back.
8. Could the Parish Council fund an arrangement so that Hurworth can have a regular weekly presence? This could be funded by an increase in the precept, to pay for our special arrangement.

The Chairman stated that a separate meeting will be arranged, or sub committees set up to evaluate each of these suggestions and decide what actions can be pursued.

9. Public Participation

1. A resident raised the Bellway situation again. Cllr Tostevin reiterated that the parish council can do nothing, nor can Darlington Borough Council do anything, as the estate has not been handed over to DBC at this stage. The residents need to keep lobbying themselves. Cllr Willis said that he has little faith in Bellway.
2. A resident enquired whether we could locate dog bins on the new estates, as at present there is no facility, and the bins on Westfield Drive get full quickly. **Action - Cllr Lennox and the Clerk will address this.** Westfield Drive get full quickly. **Action - Cllr Lennox and the Clerk will address this.**
3. Carving of the tree. A resident raised the question as to the progress of the project. Also, could there be further information made available publicly. **Action:** - It was agreed that more information would be forthcoming as to activities and public notices, dates and times of the sessions would be wider advertised times of the sessions would be wider advertised.

10. Planning Applications

Cllr Willis gave the following report: -

HURWORTH PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING APPLICATIONS –April 2024

9 Lych Gate Hurworth Darlington DL2 2AT

Ref. No: 24/00361/FUL | Received: Tue 16 Apr 2024 | Validated: Thu 18 Apr 2024 | Status: Awaiting decision

Hurworth View Neasham Road Hurworth Moor Darlington DL2 1QH

Ref. No: 24/00359/CON | Received: Mon 15 Apr 2024 | Validated: Mon 15 Apr 2024 | Status: Awaiting decision

Land Adjacent To 2 Neasham Springs Farm Cottages Neasham Road Hurworth Moor Darlington DL2 1QS

Ref. No: 24/00203/FUL | Received: Mon 26 Feb 2024 | Validated: Wed 10 Apr 2024 | Status: Awaiting decision

Land At Mole End Neasham Road Hurworth Darlington DL2 2AZ

Ref. No: 24/00132/FUL | Received: Wed 07 Feb 2024 | Validated: Mon 18 Mar 2024 | Status: Awaiting decision

[HPC submitted letter in support for this application](#)

47 The Green Hurworth Darlington DL2 2AA

Ref. No: 24/00088/FUL | Received: Fri 26 Jan 2024 | Validated: Thu 21 Mar 2024 | Status: Awaiting decision

[HPC submitted letter detailing the objections made by residents living close to this property.](#)

Full details can be read on the Darlington Borough Council web site.

11. Tree Report

Cllr Foster reported: -

The parish council has applied for and obtained consent to fell the large tree which is leaning on another tree near the entrance to the Grange. As soon as the weather is amenable, the arborist will fell the tree. The second tree is in good health and will remain.

The trees at Hawkswood require cutting back, and this work is scheduled for this month. We are applying for permission to remove some branches for a tree in Church View, which is within the conservation area.

12. Open Spaces and Environment Report

Cllr Lennox gave the following report:

Waste Bins Update

DBC confirmed that they are aware of the layby near The Comet, going towards Darlington, where there used to be a waste bin and isn't one currently. They do not see this as an issue but will continue to monitor the situation with litter dropping/fly tipping at that location.

CLOSED

ParkThatBike Project

This project, supported by Durham County Council, was offering various types of bike racks free of charge. HPC would have had to apply by end of April. A decision was made not to apply as the Grange did not want one, the Mustard Tree may have been an issue as outside their entrance is not private premises and they like to put seats outside in the summer months.

CLOSED

13. Highways and Traffic Report

Cllr Dorothy Oughton reported: -

Traffic Report

The averages for the month of April 2024 are as follow, also the highest speed recorded: -

The highest and average speeds are as follows: -

Metal Bridge	fastest	00 mph	average speed	Not operational
The Green	fastest	69 mph	average speed.	27.3 mph
Hurworth Road	fastest	72 mph	average speed	27.8 mph
Linden Court	fastest	72 mph	average speed	28.0 mph
Roundhill Road	fastest	51 mph	average	25.6 mph

The monitor at Metal Bridge has been back to the factory, but when connected, is still not working. We are going to check the connections and hope that it will be operational this month.

Action Clerk

The next PACT Meeting will be on Thursday, 11 April starting at 6.00pm at Hurworth Grange

Full details of the traffic volumes and statistics are available for your perusal on the HPC web site.

14. Rights of Way Report

HURWORTH PARISH COUNCIL

RIGHTS OF WAY REPORT

PETER WILLIAMSON

Date: 2 May 2024

Time: 1000 HRS

DATE: 23 FEBRUARY 2024

UPDATE

FOOTPATH 1:- COACH LANE – NEASHAM ROAD

REPORT

Several of the stiles have collapsed and been fenced by the landowner. This has now been addressed by the DBC Rights Officer and the landowner has agreed to rectify the problem.

Further along the pathway towards Neasham Road in the fields, there is a rotten stile, and you must jump the Beck. DBC Rights of Way Office and DBC Bridge Engineer have completed a site visit with regards to replacing the stile and putting a bridge across the Beck. Awaiting further information from DBC.

FOOTPATH 19 – THE GRANGE

The repair has now been approved by HPC and DBC Rights of Way, with DBC contributing 25% of the cost.

Site visit arranged for the 8 May 2024, with the Civil Engineer, DBC Rights of Way Officer and Peter Williamson, to finalised and schedule a date for work to begin.

FOOTPATH 12 – ROUNDHILL ROAD - TEES VIEW

At the Annual Assembly a member of the public reported the stile at the end of Footpath 12 (after the railway line), to be too high making it difficult to step over. The height of the stile has been verified, to be too high, by measuring against the national guideline's dimensions.

Discussions are to be had between the DBC Rights of Way Officer and the landowner, with regard, to replacing the wooden stile with a kissing gate.

15. Crime and Security Report

Cllr Oughton reported that we have received the February and March crime reports: -

April 2024 report

ASB	1 incident
Public Order	1 incident
Animals and wildlife	1 incident

16. Alloment Reports

Cllr Crisp reported as follows: -

Now that the weather has improved the allotment holders have started to work on their plots.
A 4x4 vehicle has driven on a section within the allotment compound and has caused an amount of ground disturbance.
This is being attended to, and the area shut off, to prevent a reoccurrence.
One of the water tubs requires a new tap, and this will be repaired.

17. Roads and Pathways Report

Cllr Forster said that there was nothing to report for the month of April.

18. Projects 2023 - 2024

a. Beech tree carving project –Cllr Forster gave a detailed report of the progress being made by the group.

Further future plans for the project would be presented and ready for the next meeting.

b. The Grange pathway entrance – Cllr Williamson reported that contract has been awarded.

A site meeting is scheduled for 8th May, when the contractor and the DBC rights of way manager will join him, to discuss the work, and the time frame.

19. Matters of Interest

1. A complaint has been received via Cllr Willis, from several residents of the Bellway and Millers estates. The content is as follows: -

The residents are complaining about the groundworks currently underway at the Hurworth Albion football ground, and I have just been to see what is going on. Their complaints are justified.

They are presumably preparing ground to add further football pitches

However, they have chopped down many healthy trees and shrubs and as a result of this and large deposits of soil deposited, access to the footpath along Cree Beck has been blocked off. This is a popular route for walkers and denying access to this path has caused a lot of local resentment.

The council has made a full investigation into this matter, with consultations with Mr McCarthy, Head of Rights of way and pathways at DBC. We have made site visits and confirmed land ownership.

Cllr Peter Williamson responded to this complaint with the following statement: -

HURWORTH ALBION FOOTBALL FIELD COMPLAINT INFORMATION

HPC Rights of Way Officer has had a field visit to this location. The findings are as follows:

There are no rights of way public footpath through the field.

The path going through the field has been worn due to people walking across the privately owned sports field, to join the registered rights of way public footpath.

All the groundwork that is being carried out is within the boundary of the sports field, which is privately owned and rented/leased to Hurworth Albion Football Club

Therefore, HPC have no jurisdiction over this private land.

Cllr Russell addressed the meeting, saying that the work was being carried out to provide two more football pitches on the land which is under their management. There is no legal right of way, and in the past people have knocked down a fence and created a pathway across the club's private land. This has included letting dogs run around and fowled the ground.

Hurworth Albion has taken a friendly attitude to these practices, but now that an official complaint has been lodged, their insurance company has said that continuing to allow trespassers and dogs on the playing field would be imprudent and could result in an insurance claim. Therefore, the club is to make a decision on what approach to take in the future.

Matter closed.

1. The grant opportunity relating to Community energy projects has been evaluated, and there appears to be no benefits to this parish.
2. Mr Sean Duffield has been given the position of Safer Communities Officer for DBC. He would like to meet the council. We invited him to attend this meeting but received no response; we will get in touch with him.

Action Clerk

3. The Chairman made the suggestion that the council should install a 'hearing loop' in the Hadwin Lounge, which will make it much easier to conduct meetings, when there is a public attendance. The meeting agreed in principle, and the Clerk was asked to get details and costs. **Action Clerk**

20. Accounts Payable

Accounts for Payment April 2024

<u>Name</u>	<u>Cheque No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Tees River Trust	103995	Support for handling giant hogweed	1000.00
P Robinson	103996	Salary	562.80
P D Allan	103997	Salary	1220.80
Inland Revenue	103998	PAYE	364.40
Grange Bar CIC	103999	Annual Assembly expenses	1502.92
CDALC subs	104000	Annual subscription	549.75
Zurich Insurance	104001	Annual insurance	310.03
HCA	104002	Church newsletter	60.00
Hurworth Village Hall	104003	<u>Armed Forces event</u>	400.00
Latimer Hinks	104004	Legal expenses - new lease	912.00
BT Communications	DD	Communications	213.84
Gordon Fletcher audit	104005	Internal audit	250.00
P D Allan Assembly Ex etc	104005	Assembly and general admin exs	189.06
			<u>£7,535.60</u>

21. Financial Report to 30th April 2024

Financial Report to 30th April 2024				Ringfenced funds £9,689											
	Apr-24	May-24	Jun-24	Jul-24	Aug-24	Sep-24	Oct-24	Nov-24	Dec-24	Jan-25	Feb-25	Mar-25	Total	Budget	
Revenue														2024-25	
Precept	65000												65000	65000	
Litter Picker refund VAT & Grants		750	1050		3600						3600		7200	8400	
Rent & Interest					30			30			30	420	540	500	
Grants													0	0	
Allotment rent										1740			1740	1160	
Total Revenue	65000	750	1050	0	3630	0	0	30	0	1740	3630	420	74480	75060	
Expenditure															
Salaries & NHI	2148	2250	2250	2250	2250	2250	2250	2250	2250	2250	2250	2250	26898	25400	
Gen. Admin Expenses	1378	850	500	200	350	750	150	340	300	445	350	300	5913	4060	
Trees	0	550	400	480	455	185	270	500	560	435	800	650	5285	5000	
Open Spaces	1000	80	1600	1050	50	520	250	100	480	200	400	370	6100	5500	
Section 137	1752	500	2400	2000	0	500	1000	300	300	500	1000	500	10752	11200	
Projects	0	5000	750	200	1000	500	0	400	1500	800	600		10750	8000	
Repairs & Maint		100	300	60	0	650	120	80	180	0	0	300	1790	1800	Apr-24
Newsletters & Posters	60	60	60	60		60	850	60		60	60	850	2180	3150	
Youth Activities		500				1500		500		300		200	3000	3000	100638 Deposit
Paths/ Grit/ Heritage Trail		200	130	450	100	300	0	100		570		250	2100	1600	3375 Current
Allotments			300	360		60		420			300		1440	1500	30000 BOND
Highways			500					500	500		400		1900	1500	2500 Hur Albion
Handyman		100	100	200		300	100	100	200	100	100	100	1400	1500	136513
Hurworth Grange support															11689
Capital & Legal exs	760	750			258		0			259			2027	517	124824 ok
VAT	438														
Total Expenses	7536	10940	9290	7310	4463	7575	4990	5650	6270	5919	6260	5770	81535	73727	
													-7055	1333	
Funds in Hand less ringed	67360	124824	114634	106394	99084	98251	90676	85686	80066	73796	69617	66987			
Revenue less expenses	57464	-10190	-8240	-7310	-833	-7575	-4990	-5620	-6270	-4179	-2630	-5350	9689		
Funds in Hand	124,824	114,634	106,394	99,084	98,251	90,676	85,686	80,066	73,796	69,617	66,987	61,637	Ringed		

A copy of the Financial Accounts can also be read on the HPC web site.

Motions tabled by the Chairman

1. The internal Audit has been completed and the report was circulated to all the Councillors. A motion to accept the Internal Audit Report was tabled by Cllr Crisp, Seconded by Cllr Forster, and passed unanimously.
2. The summary of the **Financial Accounts for the 12 months to 31st March 2024 was circulated to all the Councillors.** A motion to accept the accounts was tabled by Cllr. Oughton, Seconded by Cllr Russell, and accepted unanimously.
3. A copy of the completed Governments Statement was circulated to all the Councillors. A motion was tabled to accept this report by Cllr. Oughton and Seconded by Cllr. Crisp, and passed unanimously.

22. Association Reports

a. **HCA** – No Report

b. **Hurworth Village Hall** - No Report

c. **Hurworth Albion** – Cllr. Russell reported as follows:

There is a huge amount of work being carried out at the playing fields, as the club urgently needs two more pitches for the younger teams.

The Club was disappointed that complaints have been made, whereas they have been very tolerant regarding people walking across their private land. Now that this has been formally raised, the club may have to take a firmer stance on repassing, and close off the pathway, as it could affect their insurance cover.

23. Any other Business (Non-Financial)

No other Business

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.30pm