

Minutes of the Hurworth Parish Council meeting
Held on Thursday 3rd April 2025 starting at 7.00pm



Attendees

Parish Councillors Present:

Cllr. Andrew Leigh, Cllr. Dave Crisp, Cllr John Howard, Cllr. Peter Willis, Cllr Janine Forster, Cllr. Fiona Lennox, Cllr Angela Allan, Cllr Graham Wylie, Cllr Karen Mann; Cllr Catherine Hartigan

Peter Allan (Parish Clerk), Cllr. Lorraine Tostevin, Cllr. Paul Walters and 12 members of the public.

1. Chair's Opening Address

The Chairman welcomed the attendees to the meeting.

Two new councillors have joined the Council, and have been registered with DBC. The Chair introduced Cllr Catherine Hartigan and Cllr Karen Mann.

A copy of the Standing Orders has been distributed to all councillors, drawing attention to the council meetings procedure, which the Chair intends to adhere to in future meetings.

In order to enhance the meeting format and make it easier for both the public and councillors to see presentations, planning applications, and other relevant material, the Chair is proposing to install a 'state of the art' TV, projection and audio system in the Hadwin Lounge. Discussions have been held with the Grange management, and they agree with the upgrade, which, in turn, will attract new organisations to rent the room for conferences and training sessions. The technology will integrate with the present hearing loop, which will reduce the overall cost. A survey has been carried out and a detailed quotation has been received for £4671.60. Normally three quotations would be required, but as this is very specialised and needs to interface with the existing infrastructure, it would not be practical to seek random quotations. A motion was tabled by Cllr Forster, seconded by Cllr Howard, and the vote was unanimous to proceed with the installation. The installation should be in place before the Annual Meeting in May. It was also agreed that the council should purchase a new laptop for presentations and councillor use, as the existing one is outdated.

2. Apologies for Absence

Cllr Bree Stamp.

3. Declaration of Interest

Cllr. Crisp – Allotments

Cllr Wylie – Hurworth Grange CIO

Cllr Leigh – Hurworth Albion

4. Minutes from Meeting Held on 6th March 2025

The Draft Minutes for the meeting held on 6th March were accepted, proposed by Cllr Forster seconded by Cllr. Willis and passed unanimously.

5. Matters Arising –

This was covered in the Chair's opening address.

6. Hurworth Council Parish Plan 2025-2030

The Chair expressed his view that during the last year, the Council has been performing in 'Reactive' mode, which is partly due to the previous Parish Plan covering the ten years, 2010-2020, which when it matured most of the Aims and Objectives had been completed. This was followed by the national recommendation that town and parish councils should prepare Neighbourhood Plans, integrating the parish with the Borough Plan. Hurworth did complete our Neighbourhood Plan, but DBC failed to complete their integration and agreement, so it was never ratified nor implemented

The Chair would like the council to become 'reactive' again, and to achieve this, the Council will need to collect information and Suggestions from the residents. Hence, the following procedure is being introduced; -

1. A Facebook page, with 12 sections has been put on the internet, inviting comments and suggestions from all residents of Hurworth Parish. This will remain on the net from 1st April to 31st May 2025.
2. Data collections sheets will be distributed to several community meeting places, including the Mustard Tree, Hurworth Village Hall, the Grange Bar, the Rockliffe Cricket Club, the Community Centre and Coffee Pot and Hurworth Albion. Residents will be encouraged to express their comments and suggestions, and hand them in at the venue.
3. The Annual Assembly will be held at Hurworth Grange on Friday 30th May starting at 7.00pm, with a free buffet and refreshments. Attendees will be asked to write their comments and suggestions on the data collection sheet provided.
4. The data collection survey will close on 31st May.
5. All the data collected will be analysed, compiled and summarised by the end of June.
6. During July the summaries will be fully considered, using a number of evaluation key points, which will include practicality, number of residents who we benefit, cost issues, potential from grants, and police and DBC planning agreement.
7. The recommendations will then be integrated with DBC Plan, which will require the co-operation of our ward Councillors, who will be our interface.
8. The target will be to introduce the Parish Plan 2025-2030 at the Parish Council meeting in September.

7. Hurworth Annual Assembly

The Annual Assembly will be held at Hurworth Grange on Friday 30th May starting at 7.00pm, with a free buffet and refreshments. It is intended to have guest speakers, during the first half session, a refreshment break, then Open Forum, for any resident to address the audience. This is not a Council Meeting, it is a Public Meeting, and all residents are invited.

Hurworth Parish Chronicle

Cllr Wylie reported that the material has now been received and collated and the draft chronicle has been delivered to the printers. The chronicle will be delivered in mid April, by All Saints Church volunteers. The theme for this edition is 'The Future of Hurworth'.

8. Ward Councillors Update

Ward Councillors report 3rd April 2025

Bellway and Miller Homes

To date there has been no further update. The last information received from Darlington Borough Council stated that they were unsure why residents on the Bellway site were now being asked to indicate which option they would prefer to bring the roads and footpaths up to the required standard; there is only one solution that DBC would accept and Bellway were fully aware of this.

The standard required is that set out in Section 38 of the agreement as stated in the covenant for the properties. The roads and footpaths remain the responsibility of Bellway until such time as they carry out the works necessary to comply with the drawings attached to the agreement. Residents may wish to take their own advice regarding their covenants and what obligations Bellway has to each resident.

Stockton and Darlington Railway Celebrations

Tomorrow (4th April) marks the launch of the railway exhibitions at Hopetown. There is a display of some models of the original steam trains launched from 1825 onwards. The trains the Locomotion One, the Steam Elephant and the Penny Farthing. These trains will be on display until June when they will be replaced by some more futuristic trains designed to represent rail travel in the next 100 years.

At the weekend our MP Matt Vickers led a group of volunteers to help clean up the Brick Train near Morrisons. A lot of litter and graffiti was cleared from the site to make the area more attractive to visitors who may wish to visit the train in this historic year.

Darlington Local Plan 2016 to 2036

The consultation for this plan was launched in March of this year and it begins with the 'call for sites' suitable for housing and employment. This information once gathered from submissions by developers will be reviewed and eventually form part of the new Local Plan to be available to residents in 2027. The new plan period will be extended up until 2042. A paper on how the community will be engaged in this process is due to be considered at Cabinet next week.

Warm Homes grant

The Borough Council has been awarded 3.5 million pounds to improve energy efficiency in their council homes. This means that windows and wall insulation within council homes will be upgraded. This should include eligible council homes in Hurworth. A grant has also been received for Railway properties across Darlington.

9. Public Participation

a. Mr Chris Aston referred to the complete closure of the road outside the school for a period of up to two weeks, and the difficulty to could cause to residents who may not have transport, and need assistance to attend appointments or get to the shops. He suggested that a group of volunteers in the village could offer to drive residents who needed assistance, and he would be prepared to set up a group and actively participate. The offer received support from the meeting; Cllr Tostevin expressed her concern that ‘insurance’ needs to be considered. The Council supported the suggestions, and Mr Aston should continue to implement his plan.

b. A resident commented about the lack of progress with the outstanding work required at the Bellway and Miller estates. Cllr Tostevin fielded the comments, and expressed her own disappointment that progress appeared not to be happening, although DBC are pressing the contractors.

10. Planning Application

Cllr Willis gave the Planning Application report.

There are 4 planning applications in March

1. Meadowbank Close - Erection of part single storey, part two storey extension to front elevation
2. 19A Roundhill Road - Demolition of existing garage and erection of replacement garage to rear with the installation of solar panels to roof and erection of a car port within garden to front incorporating 2 electric charging points
3. Rockcliffe Cricket Club - Erection of an extension to north elevation of existing score box to provide changing room facilities and replace access door with a window on the north west elevation of the pavilion to allow for internal alterations
4. Rockcliffe Hall Hotel – Installation of replacement roof and alterations to south facade fenestration of Orangery, creation of a terrace and footpaths to south of Hall and associated landscaping.

Following the review, the Council decided to state ‘No objection’ to these 4 applications.

11. Tree Report

No activity in March 2025

12. Open Spaces & Environment Report

Open Spaces and Environment by Cllr Fiona Lennox

Tees River Trust

The Trust have started to spray our stretch of the riverbank this month, and as mentioned at last meeting, will deal with some giant hogweed on a pathway owned by Rockcliffe Hall Hotel. So far, they have treated flood banks, river banks and the first island near the bridge. We will continue to be kept up to date with this work especially when Japanese knotweed comes through later in the season.

Also, we received a communication from our contact at Tees River Trust, on behalf of Tees Invasive Species Project which aims to tackle invasive non-native species (INNS) asking us to review and sign a Landlords Agreement. This agreement gives them formal permission to go onto our land, and sections of the riverbank, so they can perform their work. The document stresses the fact that we will carry no responsibility, and they are not asking for any payment for the services. It’s purely for the access. We have questioned whether this is for the parish council to sign, as we only own a small part of the land they treat.

Waste Bins

Reported to Street Scene at DBC, however, no reply as yet, chased again 1.4.25: -

- Glebe Lane, Dog waste bin has fallen off, replacement requested
- Church lane waste bin is looking a bit past its sell by date, replacement requested
- Top of Manor Fields dog waste bin was never replaced after being destroyed by the workman doing the tree work, replacement requested

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New Bench

The new bench to be located at the village green should be installed this week (Friday).

Please, if you see something that should be reported under the management of Open Spaces and Environment, please email the parish council with the details of the issue, on: -

enquiries@hurworthparishcouncil.org.uk

13. Highways & Traffic Report

Cllr Allan gave the following report:-

Traffic Report for March 2025

The traffic report covers the five monitored areas within the village. The summary shows the average speed, fastest speed and total vehicles recorded in each of the five areas for the month.

Location	Fastest Speed	Average Speed	Total Vehicles
The Green	54 mph	27 mph	36,499
Hurworth Road	51 mph	23.8 mph	64,954
Linden Court	63 mph	27.6 mph	145,037
Metal Bridge	55 mph	25.4 mph	30,697
Roundhill Road	48 mph	25.4 mph	61,516

A more extensive analysis is shown on the HPC website.

We thank Mr John Hedley for extracting and compiling this valuable information.

14. Youth Activities Report

Cllr Stamp provided the following report: -

- I met with Cllr Dave Crisp and Lynne Drum last night to talk about the Scarecrow festival and I will put out communications/marketing as soon as possible and see what the response is before we start to organise the event.
- The meeting with Hurworth House was cancelled and will now be next week
- I have assumed that John Howard is now liaising with the Scouts based on the emails, but if there is anything I can do to help, do let me know
- In discussions with the PTA to take advantage of the sports equipment I purchased and start the sports day again - I will update

Cllr Stamp also has been enquiring about the amount of Section 106 still available. Cllr Tostevin reported that there is £26,000 still available. This money has not yet been allocated, and suggestions can be presented.

15. Crime & Security Report

Cllr Angela Allan gave the following report: -

Crime and Security Report

HPC Meeting 03.04.25

Incidents

Hurworth

Period 01.03.25 - 31.03.25

Incidents reported – 22

This included one incident of anti-social behaviour

Date	Location	Incident Details
21/03/25	Hurworth Grange	Anti-social behaviour

A report of a group of youths refusing to leave Hurworth Grange, when asked. It was logged as an anti-social behaviour incident and is not classed as a crime.

The Terrorism (Protection of Premises) Bill known as Martyn's Law

After last month's meeting it was confirmed with the Chair of the Grange CIO that some of the Grange outdoor events would have attendances of over 800 people e. g. Classic cars and the Country Fair. This means that the Grange will need to follow the Enhanced Tier requirements of the Bill.

The National Counter Terrorism Security Advisor was contacted for advice. The advice received included examples of measures to be taken (e.g. identifying potential threats and access control). Several documents were also received including a risk assessment proforma and Security Plan Advice. If there are any problems the Security Advisor can arrange staff training at no cost. All of the information received was passed to the Chair of the Grange CIO.

Two Step Verification

The Regional Economic Crime Coordination Centre (RECCE) published advice on the importance of Two-Step Verification ("2SV") and the importance of adding this extra layer of security to your accounts to help to keep you safer online. When you turn on 2SV you will be asked to provide a "second step" which only you can access e.g. passcode sent to your mobile.

The advice leaflet also contains three helpful QR codes

Stop! Think Fraud 2SV Guidance – gives guidance on 2 Step Verification and how it works

Action Fraud – to report fraud or cybercrime any time of the day or night using an online reporting tool

National Cyber Security Centre website – gives a step-by-step guide to recovering online accounts and advice on how to tell if you have been hacked.



2StepVerification
Advice NEROCU.pdf

16. Rights of Way & Parish Walks

Cllr Forster gave the following report: -

Hurworth Parish council public footpath walk report 2025

For paths 11, 13, 12 and 19 – Walked 31st March 2025.

From The Grange Entrance, walking over Hurworth Road and behind Rockcliffe court surgery, joining path 11 along the all-weather path towards the railway line. Continuing on path 11 along the side of the railway and back out onto Hurworth Road. The steps up and the stile are both in good usable condition (Picture 1).

From here over the Railway Bridge and right into Belgrave terrace, then along path 13 passed Linden Court to join path 12. The stile into Dents Hill is also in good condition, the one out of the field onto the foot bridge over the railway is slightly slanted but strong (pictures 2 & 3). When you leave the foot bridge there is no longer a fence and the stile is there for obsolete.

Continuing along path 12 behind the grange estate, has a part adjacent to Hawkswood that is very boggy, even at this time of year (picture 4). In my attempt to walk round this I tripped on a root, no harm done apart from muddy hands and trousers. But hopefully this can be looked at for possible filling with chippings or similar.

The rest of path 12 was clear and easily walked, both stiles in and out of the following field are in good order and easy to get over (picture 5).

Taking the kissing gate into The Grange park (picture 6), along path 19 at the East edge of The Grange park is a nice little wander through the pine trees, coming out back onto Hurworth Road.



Summary – Paths 11, 12, 13 and 19 are good to walk, stiles are in good order with only the boggy part on path 12 causing a passing difficulty.

17. Allotments Report

Cllr Crisp reported that all the allotments were now active, and potatoes are being planted.

The main gate gatepost requires attention, and this will be repaired with the next two weeks.

The Allotment Fun Day, to be held on 2nd August has been confirmed, and Cllr Crisp asked the Council if they will fund the event, as previously, with a £400 contribution. The Chairman put forward the motion, Seconded by Cllr Wylie, and the motion was passed unanimously.

18. Roads & Pathways Report

Cllr Forster reported that further work was being carried out in front of the Grange, with three-way traffic lights. Also, this section of the road will be closed for up to two weeks during the Easter holidays.

Roundhill Road has been resurfaced, and the surface is now excellent. Cllr Willis asked why the resurfacing had not continued down to the new estates. Cllr Tostevin responded by saying that it was limited by the cost and DBC budget.

19. Correspondence & Matters of Interest

a. **The Annual Meeting** will be held at 6.30pm on 1st May.

At this meeting the Chair and Vice Chair will be elected, followed by councillors offering to undertake the various roles, which are currently listed.

The Clerk requested that nominations for the office of Chair and Vice Chair need to be sent to him, at least 7 days before the meeting, and a Proposer and Seconder will be required.

It would also be very helpful if councillors would inform the Clerk which role or roles, they would be prepared to undertake for the year 2025 to 31st March 2026.

The Annual Meeting is a private meeting, and will be followed immediately afterwards by the normal monthly meeting, which is open to the public from 7.00pm.

b. The Minutes of the Special Meeting held on 25th March 2025. The Minutes were accepted by the council, Proposed by Cllr Howard and seconded by Cllr Forster. All agreed.

20. Hurworth Contingency Plan.

Cllr Howard reported that no progress has been made.

21. Projects 2024-2025

Rockliffe Cricket Club were scheduled to be making a presentation at this meeting, but requested that it is postponed until the next council meeting, when they will be better prepared.

22. Accounts for Payment

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

Accounts for Payment March 2025

<u>Name</u>	<u>Cheque No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Defib batteries - reversed		Defib batteries, cancelled	-403.58
M Harrison	104128	Handyman	95.00
WAVE	104129	Allotment water	32.57
Hurworth Grange CIO	104130	Section 137, Country Fair & Music Festival	4000.00
DAYCM - Martin			
Stand	104131	Section 137, Listening post	400.00
Sevenside Defibs	104132	Defib batteries	532.80
P Robinson	104133	Salary	686.20
P D Allan	104134	Salary	1208.40
Inland Revenue	104135	PAYE	407.80
P D Allan	104136	Admin expenses	121.94
Data Protection licence	104137	Annual licence	52.00
Hurworth Grange CIO	104138	Support for Grange building costs	20000.00
Total for Month			£27,133.13
Litter Picker refund received	£6,602		

23. Financial Reports

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

Financial Report 31st March 2025					Ringfenced funds £11,689									
	1st December	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 ref & VAT				1230	4370							6602	12202	8400
Rent & Interest			1559		100	329	169		277	70		208	2712	500
Grants		750							2780				3530	7060
Allotment rent		20								780	340		1140	1160
Total Revenue	65000	770	1559	1230	4470	329	169	0	3057	850	340	6810	84584	82120
Expenditure														
Salaries & NHI	2148	2148	2302	2348	3344	2897	2231	2485	2302	2148	2148	2302	28803	25400
Gen. Admin Expe	1378	347	216	85	2	293	174	474	433	288	387	174	4251	4060
Trees	0		2250	693	517	828	1467	1170	792		552		8269	5000
Open Spaces	1000	51	180	220	0		84	130	614		1963	136	4378	5500
Section 137	1752	20	4008	1750	1500	1400	250	545				4400	15625	11200
Projects	0	60						1350			1000		2410	8000
Repairs & Maint			600										600	1800
Newsletters & Pos	60	74	74		84	60	73	889	13	73	73		1473	3150
Youth Activities													0	3000
Paths/ RoW			4960				0						4960	1600
Allotments			634			125	449	320	23		30	33	1614	1500
Highways			20						931		234		1185	1500
Handyman									280		28		308	1500
Hurworth Grange support												20000	20000	0
Capital & Legal ex	760			575	258	575	64				258		2490	517
VAT	438	3	575	115	5	152		125	73	11	78	88		
Total Expenses	7536	2703	15819	5786	5710	6330	4792	7488	5461	2520	6751	27133	96366	73727
													-11782	8393
Funds in Hand less:	67360	124824	122891	108631	104075	102835	96834	92211	84723	82319	80649	74238		
Revenue less exp	57464	-1933	-14260	-4556	-1240	-6001	-4623	-7488	-2404	-1670	-6411	-20323	11689	
Funds in Hand	124,824	122,891	108,631	104,075	102,835	96,834	92,211	84,723	82,319	80,649	74,238	53,915	Ringed	

1. The Clerk reported that the financial year end is 31st March, and hence this will be the final report for the year 2024-2025. A report detailed report will be available after the Internal Audit.
2. A copy of the Risk Assessment has been circulated to all councillors, and should be read. As formal acceptance is required. Cllr Lennox has made a few changes, and the Chair wishes to read it through and report back to the Clerk.
3. The books will be going to the Internal Auditor within the next two weeks.

24. Association Reports

1. Village Hall

Cllr Crisp gave the following report: -

On Sunday 6th April we have the usual soup and cinema. All are welcome and as ever, entry and soup is by donation.

Sunday 20th April it the Easter Mosaics Workshop – 2.00pm to 3.30pm.

Still some places left and children over 7 are more than welcome as long as they are accompanied by a well-behaved adult. Cost is £20 per person.

Overall, It's a fairly quiet month this month at the Village Hall.

The regular groups and classes continue to provide financial stability and resilience with the additional events such as these adding to the hall's secure position.

2. Hurworth Albion Football Club

Cllr Leigh reported that the club's container has been broken into, and several items have been stolen.

The season is coming to an end, with about three matches still to play.

Unfortunately, one player had a rather bad accident at the ground, and was temporarily paralysed. The ambulance took an hour to arrive, and the club members did their best to keep him comfortable. It is understood that the injured person is making a good recovery.

An end of season tournament has been arranged for 3rd to 5th May.

1. Hurworth Grange

Cllr Wylie reported: -

Hurworth Grange Community Centre:

Hurworth Grange Community Centre is entering its busy season! Baldy Holly will be performing on April 26th, and we have a packed schedule of weddings this year.

We are now in a position to get the stable block roof renewed and we will be arranging this.

The snooker table has been recently recovered, and membership remains popular. The Snooker Club has enjoyed another year competing in the Darlington and District Snooker League.

Please note that The Coffee Pot will be closed on Saturdays until further notice.

The Grange Bar has updated its opening hours:

- Monday to Thursday: 5 PM – 11 PM
- Friday: 4 PM – 11 PM
- Saturday: 1 PM – 11 PM
- Sunday: 1 PM – 10:30 PM

We look forward to seeing you soon!

25. Any Other Business

There were no items of Any Other Business.

The chairman closed the meeting at 8.00pm.