

Allotment Annual General Meeting

Held at Hurworth Grange on Thursday, 11 December 2025

Minutes

Those Present

Cllr Crisp, Cllr Forster, Adrian Savage, Della Kerr, Mr and Mrs Michael Feenie, H. Maclintock, V. Court, Tony Gent, Bernadette Olney, Stephanie Nattrass.

Also present: Peter Allan (Parish Clerk / RFO).

1. Chairman's Address – Cllr David Crisp

The Chairman welcomed everyone in attendance and thanked them for coming.

The gentleman who has been cutting the grass throughout the year has now left. From next year, Cllr Peter Williamson will be undertaking this task.

Allotment holders are asked to keep the pathways clear and not to leave stones or any rubbish on them, as this can damage the mower.

This year's Allotment Fun Day was well attended and a great success. It was funded by the Parish Council, and the revenue raised at the event was used to fund the Halloween event in the Village Hall.

A group called *Friends of the Allotments* has been formed. They joined forces with the Village Hall Committee and organised the switching on of the Christmas tree lights, including a lantern parade led by a piper and refreshments around the tree. This event was also funded by the Parish Council and was well supported despite the cold evening.

2. Minutes of the AGM Held on 11 December 2024

The minutes were proposed for acceptance by Mrs Kerr, seconded by Adrian Savage, and passed unanimously.

3. Matters Arising

Mrs Kerr stated that the notice board at the Grange allotments needs either repairing or replacing, as some tenants were not informed of the meeting.

The Clerk informed the meeting that posters had been displayed on the Council notice boards for four weeks, as well as on the HPC website and Hurworth Live. In addition, emails were sent to all allotment holders and those on the waiting list. However, not all tenants' email addresses were available, and several emails bounced back.

A form will be prepared for all tenants to provide their email addresses and telephone numbers when they pay their 2026 rent.

4. Introduction of the Allotment Committee

- Cllr David Crisp – HPC
- Cllr Janine Forster – HPC

There should be three tenant representatives; however, none were in attendance. The Chairman stated that there are three representatives, but they do not like attending meetings. There is currently no representative for the Grange allotments on the committee. Mrs Kerr agreed to act as their representative.

5. Allotment Register and Waiting List

All plots are currently occupied at both the Grange and Strait Lane.

There is a waiting list of six names for Strait Lane and a waiting list of five names for the Grange. The Grange waiting list is now closed, as plots rarely become available.

The Chairman stated that at least four tenants at Strait Lane will not be renewing their tenancy for 2026.

6. Expenses Incurred in 2025

For the twelve months to 30 November 2025:

Item	Cost (£)
Water	315.87
Repairs	140.00
Skip hire	350.00
New strimmer	141.66
Grass cutting	300.00
Fence repairs	151.24
Gate repairs	23.38
Bond refund	30.00
Total Expenditure	1,452.15

The annual revenue for the 57 allotments is £1,140, resulting in a small deficit for the year. This deficit will be absorbed by the Parish Council.

7. Allotment Rules

The allotment rules were reviewed in October 2025.

Comments:

- The clause relating to residents of Neasham Parish being offered an allotment when the waiting list is empty was removed.

- The Chairman explained the rules relating to fires on the allotment site; no changes were made.
- The Chairman also explained the rules regarding the size of huts, greenhouses, and polytunnels; no changes were made.

8. Allotment Upkeep

Reports from all attendees confirmed that the allotments have been kept in good condition throughout the year.

The Chairman referred to two plots that have been neglected and confirmed that appropriate action is being taken.

9. Allotment Rent for 2026

The rent for 2026 will increase from £20 per year to £25.

This is the first increase in 15 years (or more) and is largely due to the cost of water at Strait Lane. There were no objections.

10. Requirements for 2026

It was noted that the notice board at the Grange allotments requires replacement.

Further work is also required on the Strait Lane shed.

No other requests were made.

11. Any Other Business

Mrs Kerr suggested that, due to a glut of apples, it would be beneficial to purchase a cider press. This could be used by both the Grange and Strait Lane allotments, and potentially by residents who frequent the Community Centre.

The estimated cost is approximately £150. All agreed that the proposal should go ahead, and Mrs Kerr agreed to organise it.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 7.45 pm.