



**Minutes of the Hurworth Parish Council Meeting held
on Thursday 4th January 2024 starting at 7:00pm
at Hurworth Grange**

Attendees

Parish Councillors present:
Cllr Andrew Leigh, Cllr Dorothy Oughton, Cllr David Crisp, Cllr Peter Williamson, Cllr Peter Foster, Cllr Lennox.
Also
Peter Allan (Parish Clerk), Cllr Lorraine Tostevin, Cllr Paul Walters and 5 members of the public.

1. Chair's Opening Address

The Chairman welcomed the Councillors and members of the public.

The Chairman announced that Cllr Charlotte Marie Kay has resigned from the Council; Her new career move is proving to be taking a lot more of her time, and she does not feel that she can continue to make a constructive contribution to the council at this time. The Chairman expressed his thank to Charlotte and wished her good luck.

2. Apologies for Absence Cllr Charlotte Marie Kay,

Cllr Peter Willis, Cllr Janine Forster, Cllr Lynsey Probert, Cllr Kelvin Russell.

3. Declaration of Interests

- Cllr Leigh – Hurworth Albion
- Cllr Crisp – allotments

4. Minutes from the Meeting Held 7th December 2023

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

5. Matters Arising

- a. **Bellway estate.** - In the absence of Cllr Willis, there was no formal report. However, a resident, who lives on the Bellway estate, addressed the meeting. He confirmed that Cllr Willis was trying very hard to get the Bellway management to fulfil their estate obligations, but was receiving no satisfaction. He, himself, has been raising the issues, and intends to escalate the situation to a higher level. The general feeling on the estate, is that Bellway have not fulfilled their commitments, and have left the estate unfinished.
- b. **Potholes on Village Green** - In accordance with the decision at the last meeting, the potholes will be filled in. The work is scheduled to be carried out on 10th January, weather permitting.

6. Hurworth Grange Lease

We have approached four firms of solicitors, and three of them have submitted cost quotations for the drafting of a new property lease. All were given the same information and background.

Having considered each quotation, and details provided, the Council has selected Latimer Hinks, who are based in Darlington, and whose submission is attractive. **Action Clerk to respond to all the bidders.**

It is now necessary for HPC to have a meeting with Hurworth Grange CIO in order to agree on the terms of the lease. **Action Cllr Leigh and Clerk.**

7. Ward Councillors Report

1. Cllr Walters reported on the latest situation with the construction work being carried out on Neasham Road and the detrimental effect it is having on the flooding at the top of Strait Lane. An application has been submitted requesting permission for access to Neasham Road, but until the decision is made the gates must remain locked.
DBC Highways have written a strong letter to the constructors ordering them to make good the blockage of the water channel at the top of Strait Lane. Failure to comply will mean that DBC will carry out the work and invoice the constructors.
Cllr Crisp commented that the flooding in the area at the top of Strait Lane is the worst he has ever seen it, and it is doing damage to the road surface. There is a huge pothole, which needs urgent attention. **Actions DBC.**

2. Cllr Tostevin reported that a letter has been sent to accelerate the creation of new bus stops at Neasham. Two new bus stops have now been installed at the Tawny Owl inn.
3. There has been consultation regarding the situation of the Right of Way at Rose Villa. This is progressing.

8. Public Participation

A resident addressed the meeting and outlined a number of serious complaints and limitations of the current bus service, as it affects the residents of Hurworth Springs Country Park. The buses are unreliable and often very late. A system of 'Hail and Stop' has been introduced, but in practice this is not consistent in operation, as some buses are not responding. The resident expressed his frustration of not knowing who is in overall responsible for the bus service, and he, himself, is writing to the mayor, to try to get the service improved. He went on to state that the existing bus service is 'unusable', and can take 45 minutes to get from Hurworth to Darlington, and there are cases when passengers have had to get taxis to get home. Also, some bus stops have been removed from the list of new ones proposed by Stagecoach, while others, which have been requested, have not materialised. **Action Cllr Tostevin offered to pick up this challenge, and help to improve the service.**

9. Planning Applications

Cllr Willis submitted the following report: -

There were two significant applications submitted in December 2023, viz:-

Darlington Borough Council

Planning Application REF 23/01240/FUL

Newbus Grange and caravan site,

Demolition of existing single storey extensions and fire escape stairs to the rear to allow for conversion and refurbishment of former nursing home to create offices at ground floor level and 6 self-contained flats to first and second floors of main building with the provision of bin store and increased cycle storage. Creation of new vehicular access road and refurbishment of hardstanding to create 23 parking spaces. Extension of existing caravan park to provide 70 additional spaces including 6 lodges and 16 touring pitches, formation of 2 ponds, jogging / exercise trail, planting of woodland to north of site and reconfiguration and landscaping to original site.

Planning Application REF 23/0111/FUL

Skipbridge Farm, Neasham Road, Hurworth Moor.

Variation order to convert 8 redundant agriculture sheds and conversion of barns into 8 dwellings, with associated parking and landscaping.

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Councillor Reports

10 Tree Report

Cllr Foster reported: -

Although there have been some severe winds, the trees in Hurworth have fared well. There have been a few broken branches, but nothing serious. He believes that this is because of the constant inspections being made, and the diligent upkeep of the trees,

Two large sections of a tree on the pathway between Couch Lane and Hurworth House School have been taken down. The branches were overhanging the street light for number 287, and stifling the light. This work has been done and the result is excellent.

The three cherry trees, which we ordered in April, will be delivered this month. There was a slight delay caused by the bad weather. The trees will be planted near the miniature railway, to replace the trees which were removed at the beginning of the year.

11. Open Spaces – No report.

12. Highways and Traffic

Cllr Dorothy Oughton reported:

a. Traffic Report

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

The highest and average speeds are as follows: -

Metal Bridge	fastest	mph	average speed	mph	Not operational
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The Green	fastest	69 mph	average speed	25.9 mph
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Hurworth Road	fastest	63 mph	average	27.1 mph
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Linden Court	fastest	72 mph	average	27.6 mph
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Roundhill Road fastest 48 mph average 21.8 mph

The monitor at Metal Bridge, will be repaired in January. Swarco have subcontracted the servicing to a national company, who do not have local engineers. Hence the cost of a repair is very high. We have made other arrangements, which will make it much easier and less expensive.

Residents reported that the chevron at Hurworth Place has been damaged. Also, the sign at the waterworks has been damaged. Action; **Cllr Tostevin** offered to report these incidents to DBC.

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

13. Rights of Way and pathways

Cllr Willaimson reported as follows: -

Time: 1400HRS 04 NOVEMBER 2023

FOOTPATH NO: 12 REPORT

DATE: 01 JANUARY 2024

ROAD NAME/PATH: - ROUNDHILL ROAD - TEES VIEW

REPORT:

Follow wide gravel track to stile 1 this track is all good. However, this track is also used by cars giving them access to their garages.

STILE 1

Stile 1 and signage in good condition. However, stile 1 is not used due wide entrance to field has been left by farmer ungated.

This track has now become a path, which is clear and free from any debris.
Continue along the path until reaching stile 2.

STILE 2

Stile 2, along with signage, both in good condition and stile is dog friendly.

STILE 3

Step 3 step rotten, along with signage, both steps and signage need replacing.

Pathway behind manor road estate, between stiles 3 - 4 completely under water
by about 3-4".

FOOTPATH NO: 12 REPORT CONT'D

DATE: 01 JANUARY 2024

STILE 4

Stile 4 completely rotten, although there is an open space at the side of it, allowing
walkers to be able to continue along the path to railway bridge.
Picture at bottom of report.

STILE 5

Stile 5 good condition and dog friendly. Signs are faded and need replacing.

STILE 6

Stile 6 in good condition and dog friendly. Signs need replacing on one side as they

are unable to be read.

STILE 6 – TEES VIEW

From Stile 6 there are no signs to indicate the public rights of way across the farmers track, to be able to pick up the path again, ending at Tees View.

FOOTPATH PICTURES



STILE 4
Grid Reference NZ29657 10212

FOOTPATH NO: SALTERS LANE BRIDALWAY DATE: 07 JANUARY 2024

ROAD NAME/PATH: - BURMA ROAD - YARM ROAD

REPORT:

At end of Burma Road leads to bridleway, bridleway is overgrown with trees which need cutting back, as walkers or riders will have to duck under the trees to continue along

path/bridleway. Making it extremely difficult to continue for the first 50 metres.

There are signs indicating (Salters Lane) Bridleway. The metal sign is completely broken and the bridleway signs are faded and need replacing. Pictures at bottom of report.

Follow bridleway to A66, there are 2 posts and a large bolder which stops vehicles from using the bridle way, riders/walkers do have access. There are no signs indicating the continuation of bridleway from this point forward over the A66.

STILE 4
Grid Reference NZ2965

Having crossed the A66, the bridleway continues past a large boulder, but there are no signs at all to show continuation of bridleway.



**BURMA RD/ SALTERS LANE
ENTRANCE**
Grid Ref: NZ31230 12380.



**BURMA RD/ SALTERS
LANE ENTRANCE**
Grid Ref: NZ31230



**BURMA RD/ SALTERS
LANE ENTRANCE**
Grid Ref: NZ31230 12380

FOOTPATH NO: 13 REPORT

DATE: 07 JANUARY 2024

ROAD NAME/PATH: - FROM 12 STILE 6 - TEES VIEW

At stile 6 turn left following farm track under trees, until reaching tarmac (Linden Road). At first junction turn right to Tees View. There are no stiles or signs to indicate the way.

A resident raised the situation regarding the pathway near Rockliffe Hotel, which has been the subject of a dispute for several months. The ‘new’ pathway is badly flooded, and a solution is required. Cllr Tostevin said that she is aware of this situation and undertook to follow up on the Matter. **Action Cllr Tostevin.**

14. Crime Report

Cllr Oughton provided the following Crime report, provided by the police:

ASB	1
Suspicious activity	1
Burglary	1
Road related	1

A PACT meeting as held at Hurworth Grange earlier in this evening.

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15. Allotment Report

Cllr Crisp reported as follows: -

With winter upon us, there is very little activity on the allotments.

We have six names on the Waiting List at strait Lane, and at this moment, we have three vacant plots.

The rents are due this month, and we will know at the month end, exactly how many plots will be available for new tenants.

It is with great sadness that Cllr Crisp reported that a friend and great stalwart of the allotments, Mr Brian Cooper. Known to everybody as Skooby, has died and his funeral is next week. Skooby has been on the Allotment Committee and has helped many new allotment holders over the many years that he has held allotment tenancies.

16. Roads and Pathways

In the absence of Cllr Forster, she submitted the following report

Potholes

The pothole at the end of straight lane on the way out of the village, has been reported a few times on Hurworth Live, also to me personally the other morning, there is flooding there also making it difficult to notice.

Could you please bring this to the ward councillors attention. **Action Cllr Walters**

Also, outside the Spar shop there are a few ruts developing where the tarmac was replaced, (photos attached).

These are now getting deep and need resurfacing.

The Parish Council are responsible for this area, so we will address this. **Action Clerk**

Cllr Oughton informed the meeting that there is a number of potholes along the pathway from Lime Cottage to Hurworth House School. It was agreed that HPC would get these filled in. **Action Clerk**

17. Projects 2023-24

a. Beech tree carving project – Cllr Forster submitted her report: -
There has been no more information on this, still gathering funding.

b. Emerson Road footpath –. The project is awaiting better weather, and DBC will construct when appropriate conditions prevail.,

18. Matters of Interest

A Correspondence –

- a. **Council Notice Boards** – We have now selected the notice boards, and received a proforma invoice so that we can place the order. Three notice boards will be ordered, all coloured silver, and all have a 5 years guarantee. A small discount has been negotiated. Delivery is approximately 5 weeks. Total cost £1,913.71 plus VAT.
- b. **Hurworth Grange Pétanque Club**, The Clerk reported that he has submitted an application for this project. The path is a simple pathway, leading to the Boule courts.
- c. **Royal Garden Party**. The meeting agreed to put forward Cllr Tostevin's name for the opportunity to attend this function. **Action Clerk**

19. Accounts for Payment

The schedule of payments having been distributed to all the councillors, were accepted with no queries.

Accounts for Payment December 2023

<u>Name</u>	<u>Cheque No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Amount</u>
G Wylie	103945	Software licence	230.40
G Wylie	103946	Posters	15.58
CDALC	103947	Training	30.00
G Johnston trees	103948	Treework	315.00
P Robinson	103949	Salary	627.05
P D Allan	103950	Allotment, software & admin exs	236.32
P D Allan	103951	Salary	1220.80
Inland Revenue	103952	PAYE	380.60
HCA - Harrisons	103953	Guttering materials	191.72
Total expenditure			£3,247.47

20. Financial Report

The Financial report to 31st December 2023 having been distributed to all Councillors, prior to the meeting, and no queries were raised

	Financial Report to 31st December 2023													
BLUE-Allocated	BLUE-Allocated				Ringfenced funds £11,689									
	Apr-23	May-23	Jun-23	Jul-23	Aug-23	Sep-23	Oct-23	Nov-23	Dec-23	Jan-24	Feb-24	Mar-24	Total	Budget
Revenue														2023-2024
Precept	59000												59000	59000
VAT & Litter Picker refund	114	2097			2697						3100		8208	8200
Rent & Interest	20		220	0		236	100		236		120	550	1482	650
Grants													0	0
Allotment rent										1160			1160	1180
Total Revenue	59134	2097	220	0	2697	236	100	0	236	1160	3220	550	69850	69030
Expenditure														
Salaries & NHI	2089	2088	2228	2088	2087	2229	2088	2088	2228	2088	2088	2250	25639	27500
Gen. Admin Expenses	352	1165	1374	67	424	217	138	223	490	400	350	300	5500	4060
Trees						220		585	315	700	400	650	2870	5000
Open Spaces	218	52	794		265		63	0		200	400	370	2362	4500
Section 137	382		1230	400	400	500	250	465		500	300	5000	9427	10000
Projects	1459		120	254				378		4000	600	4000	10811	12000
Repairs, Maint	867									1405	705	1250	4227	3000
H Grange support			600				3244	150	160	4000			8154	0
Newsletters & Posters	60	95		12	659	86	97	60		240	60	750	2119	2500
Paths/ Grt/ Heritage Trail					403			0		320		250	973	2000
Allotments			137	200		171		250			300	350	1408	1400
Highways & Defibs	234						192	0		600	400		1426	1500
Handyman	130	150	30				220	100		200	200	200	1230	1500
Rights of Way & Walks			150					0		100		200	450	500
Capital Expend & Youth					259					259	200	300	1018	3517
VAT	146	6	109	60	118	36	25	89	54				643	
Total Expend	5937	3556	6772	3081	4615	3453	6317	4388	3247	15012	6003	15870	78257	78977
													-8407	-8947
Funds in Hand less ringed	65106	118303	116844	110292	107211	105493	102270	96053	91665	88654	74802	72019		
Revenue less expenses	53197	-1459	-6552	-3081	-1718	-3223	-6217	-4388	-3011	-13852	-2783	-15320	11499	
Funds in Hand	118,303	116,844	110,292	107,211	105,493	102,270	96,053	91,665	88,654	74,802	72,019	56,699	Ringed	

Clerk reported that he had changed some of the expense headings in order to provide a clearer picture of the expenditure.
A significant change is the financial assistance HPC is giving to Hurworth Grange.

The Financial Reports are available for perusal on the HPC web site

21. Association Reports

a. Hurworth Village Hall –

Cllr Crisp read out the Village Hall report for December 2023.

We look forward to another great year at the Village Hall and fingers crossed we'll continue to go from strength to strength.

We will host several new events across the year including working in partnership with All Saint's Church to bring you a variety of concerts in the church. A truly unique venue which hopefully will see the first of these events taking place in March with 'Rock Choir' performing.

We will also have all the old favourites from quizzes, to workshops to Sunday films and The Pudding Club.

b. HCA – In the absence of Cllr Probert there was no report.

c. Hurworth Albion – In the absence of Cllr Russell there was no rep

22. Any Other Business (Non-Financial)

There was no further business.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.22pm
