



**Minutes of the Hurworth Parish Council Meeting held
on Thursday 7th September 2023, starting at 7:00pm
at Hurworth Grange**

Attendees

Parish Councillors present:

Cllr Andrew Leigh, Cllr Janine Forster, Cllr Dorothy Oughton, Cllr Charlotte Marie Kay, Cllr Peter Williamson, Cllr Peter Willis, Cllr Peter Foster, Cllr Lynsey Probert, Cllr Fiona Lennox,

Also

Peter Allan (Parish Clerk), Cllr Lorraine Tostevin, Cllr Paul Walters and 9 members of the public.

1. Chair's Opening Address

The Chairman welcomed the Councillors and members of the public.

a. Councillor Roles

The Chair read out the list of roles which the Councillors have agreed to take on for the next 12 months.

The role for addressing Youth activities has not been filled, and there is one Councillor vacancy which is being held open so that a suitable volunteer can be co-opted.

b. The Parish Council hold a surgery at 6:30pm immediately before the monthly meeting. Members of the public are invited to drop in and raise any topic they may wish to discuss. Two Councillors will be in attendance.

2. Apologies for Absence

- Cllr David Crisp, Cllr Kelvin Russell,

3. Declaration of Interests

- Cllr Leigh – Hurworth Albion
- Cllr Probert – Hurworth Grange CIO

4. Minutes from the Meeting Held 7th September 2023

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

The Minutes of the HPC Special Meeting held on 7th September 2023; proposed by Cllr Oughton and Seconded by Cllr Forster, were accepted.

5. Matters Arising

a. Twenty mph limit on Hurworth Road consultation

Cllr Tostevin reported that Andy Casey, DBC Highways, was still considering a few points, but expected to conclude the outcome by the time of our November meeting.

b. Bellway Estate

Cllr Willis reported that he understood a new contractor had been engaged to complete the outstanding work, A new contractor has, in fact, been seen on the estate. There are a number of issues still to be resolved before the site ‘sign off’ can be agreed. Cllr Willis agreed to continue his dialogue with the Bellway management, to ensure the estate is left in the condition of the contracts.

c. Village Green potholes

The Clerk was asked to update the meeting with the situation regarding the pothole. An assessment has been made by Cllr Russell, who has stressed that this is quite a big undertaking, if the repair is to be long-term sustainable. An estimate of the cost to dig out and resurface the specific area where the pothole is located, will cost circa £2,000, and if the larger area, to encapture the whole of this short internal road [was resurfaced](#), it would cost circa £4,000.

The Village Green has no known owner, and hence nobody or organisation has responsibility.

The parish council had agreed in 2022, to allocate £1,000 each year as a gesture, to keep the internal road within the village green tolerable for vehicles. The council must now decide whether to keep to the £1000, or to increase the amount for this specific project.

After an open discussion, a motion was tabled, proposed by [Cllr Forster](#) and Seconded by [Councillor Foster ???](#) that the Council should allocate upto £4,000, and to obtain three quotations, to meet the specification of the work required to complete the larger segment. The motion was carried unanimously. **Action Clerk**

d. Parking around Hurworth school,

The Chairman informed the meeting that the Headmistress of the school has sent a letter to the parents requesting them to park responsibly and try not to cause congestion or block resident access. The chair is optimistic that this will alleviate the problem, at least ease it.

e. Minutes recording query

The Chairman informed the meeting that the Minutes date 6th July 2023 have been modified, in accordance with the request made by a resident.

6. Ward Councillor's Update

Cllr Walters and Cllr Tostevin reported: -

- a. **Solar Farm**, - Cllr Tostevin stated that there was No update to report.
- b. **New Houses in Hurworth** – Cllr Tostevin informed the meeting that there will be a further 144 private houses built behind the new Elderbrook Estate which is opposite the arena on the A66 , approx 350 houses of the houses on this large site are within Hurworth Parish and are identified in the Local Plan.
- c. **Spar shop incident** –Cllr Walters had been in attendance when a PCSO was reviewing the parking times at the Spar Shop following a recent accident at school time. Cllr Walters was advised by the PCSO that the enforcement team would be asked to monitor the parking situation going forward. The Spar shop however, were surprised to find that a “no loading” sign had been placed outside the shop to prevent loading between 8.30 and 9.15. The Spar shop had previously requested help from the parish council in relation to loading taking place further up the road however, this had not happened. It was difficult for the Spar Lorry to attend at any other time of the day, and the Shop would appreciate a further discussion with the Parish Council to see if a solution could be found. **Action** The Clerk to contact the Spar Shop to arrange a meeting.
- d. **A new private road** – Cllr Walters reported that a new road has been constructed off Neasham Road, alongside Skipbridge Garage and this had taken place without planning permission and an amount of damage has been done to the hedge and roadside. DBC have again requested those responsible apply for retrospective planning permission and in the interim stop all work and make good the land, and a deadline has been set for this to be completed.

Cllr Foster stated that a heavy chain has been put around a style to prevent use. It was agreed that Cllr Russell will be asked to cut and remove this and make the style [safe](#) **Action Cllr Williamson.**

7. Public Participation

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1. A resident stated [that reference to](#) a motorbike had been included in the September Minutes AOB 20.2. She stated that it was not a motorbike. The clerk will check exactly what the 'item' was, and correct the Minutes accordingly.
 2. Two residents expressed their concern about the possible plan of constructing a fishing platform on the riverside opposite Tees View. The chair explained that, at this stage, it is only a suggestion which has been put forth, and no further developments have taken place to date.
 3. A resident stated that there were still pipes lying about near the kissing gate in Hurworth Grange. **Action Clerk will get them removed.**
 4. [The same resident started to list several other concerns which he wished to raise. The Chair asked him to stop and proposed that if there were a lot of questions that the resident write to the council, prior to any future meeting, so that appropriate answers can be prepared for him and that would then make the meeting more productive.](#)
 5. A resident stated that the roads and pathways on the Bellway estate are still not completed. The Agreement stated that all this work would be completed by Quarter 3 2023. Cllr Willis reiterated that he would arrange to talk to Bellway and to include this in his discussions. **Action Cllr Willis**
 6. [Cllr Williamson introduced a resident who has a problem relating to a footpath, on his land. The property and land which he has recently purchased need to be wheelchair friendly for his family needs. He has made suggestions about an alternative route for the footpath. Cllr Williamson has agreed to assist the resident to try and find a satisfactory resolution.](#) **Action Cllr Williamson.**

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Councillor Reports

8. Planning Applications – Cllr Willis

Cllr Willis submitted the following report: -

HURWORTH PARISH COUNCIL PLANNING– September 2023

Planning

There have been 3 planning applications made since the August report and 1 objection

- 1) 19B Roundhill Road
-

Willow tree to pollard

2) Neasham Road/Snipe Lane development

Ongoing planning requests – 14 affordable houses

3) 10 Elmfield Road

First floor extension above garage for extra bedroom/en-suite

4) 12 Manor Road

Owner has erected a new fence which the planning authorities have not approved
And is trying to contact DBC Planning Dept to resolve the matter.

9. Roads and Pathways Report

Cllr Willis submitted the following report: -
Footpaths/roads – September 2023

Footpaths/roads

Residents are complaining about the overall poor condition of the Roundhill Road pavement from Mowbray Drive to Westfield Drive – ongoing
No other issues to report this month

10. Trees – Cllr Foster & Cllr Lennox

Cllr Lennox gave the following report: -

Tree Report September 2023

I am pleased to have recently started with **assisting Cllr Peter Foster with the monitoring of the trees** in the parish.
I have a copy of the **HPC Tree Policy** and am starting to understand the basics of monitoring all the trees in the parish, most of which are within Hurworth Grange.

I have also got a copy of the **Tree Surveys carried out in January this year**, and during the next month I should be able to locate them from the maps provided. I am sure Peter Foster will give me guidance.

Update: -

- During September we have cut potentially dangerous branches from the lime tree outside numbers 31 and 32 the Green, which is on the north side.
- We have also heightened the canopy of the trees on the side of the internal roads on the Village Green. This will allow traffic to pass without hitting the lower branches.
- There is a **tree on the roadside in Emerson Road**, which the resident has reported as causing problems both with the long branches and with the root, which is starting to disturb the pavement. We reported it to DBC, and StreetScene visited and cut back some of the overhanging branches. The resident next to the tree complained again and asked for further work to be carried out. The response which we have received from the Head DBC arborist is as follows: -

‘There is no other work required to the tree Mr Allan, as there is no legal obligation indeed or finance upon the tree's owner to cut growth back from a neighbour's property. The property owner has the right to remove the offending vegetation (that being any material part of the tree above or below ground that encroaches into a neighbour's property) back to the common boundary and no further unless the tree is within a Conservation Area or is protected by a Tree Preservation Order then an application must be made to the Planning Department. Encroachment or works by persons not authorised beyond the common boundary may constitute trespass and/or criminal damage’.

We have therefore advised the resident accordingly. Therefore, this case is now closed.

Finally, re the Grange: -

The Manager of Hurworth Grange has reported that there are no problems with the trees on the estate at this time. The storm we had recently damaged the building, but did no damage to the trees causing any serious issues/danger.

Cllr Foster added that he has inspected several of the old oak trees in the parish, and that they are sound. However, he has also contacted DBC about the large ash trees which border Neasham Road. DBC has been and cut back several trees, but have not addressed the broken branches and pruning of the ash trees which are situated further back, these require tree work, and are the responsibility of DBC. It was agreed that ward Cllr Walters would contact Phil Haynes to arrange for further work to be carried out. **Action Cllr Walters**

Cllr Oughton reported that there is a tree in Coach Lane which is leaning and partially damaged. Ownership is not known, and it was agreed that the Clerk will investigate. **Action Clerk**

11. Youth and Playground – No report

12. Open Spaces – Cllr Charlotte Marie Kay gave the following report: -

Open Spaces and Environment Report September 2023

As a new councillor to the role, I am currently still finding my bearings with regards to the requirements and what comes under the remit.

Grange areas

I have reached out to the Grange for information on the volunteers that are involved in our Open spaces and hope to have contact with these individuals for their input with regards to, support required, any issues, ideas for improvements and long-term planning for the next meeting.

The Orchard – I have witnessed that there are currently 2 trees which have gone over and possibly cutting back required due to some issues with the trees. It would be useful to speak with the volunteers maintaining this area for their input and also involve our tree councillor for his opinion on the care of the trees.

Parish Benches.

I am planning a monthly route to hopefully visit all parish benches as an ongoing inspection.

Benches checked currently seem in good order. Some revarnishing will be required in the spring.

A bench on the Grange Field is getting overgrown, possibly preventing access to it for seating. As the temperature is due to drop this growth will subside however, this will need reviewing to ensure maintained when the growing season begins in the spring.

Bins & Dog Waste

The ones I have seen are in good order. I would say a 'just in time' emptying schedule however, some utilised more than others.

Grange Bin by turn stile knocked over on a number of occasions. Worth possibly looking into an alternative solution from DBC. I will monitor this.

Community

Thank you to the many volunteers which are making a difference to our open spaces around the village.

If residents around the village see and issues, please report them so they can be rectified as timely as possible. Also, any ideas for improvements for our open spaces.

13. Highways and Traffic

Cllr Dorothy Oughton reported:

a. Traffic Report

The averages for the two months September are as follow, also the highest speed recorded: -

	Average	Highest speed
Metal Bridge	24.7mph	66mph
The Green	27.0ph	72mph
Hurworth Road	27.0mph	54mph
Linden Court	28.0mph	63mph
Roundhill Road	22.2mph	48mph

b. Speed Watch A meeting has been arranged with the PCSO to make further arrangements for local speed checks in the village.

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

14. Crime Report

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

HURWORTH CRIME FIGURES FOR 01/07/2023 - 30/09/2023

06/07/23 – CRIMINAL DAMAGE

Methodist Church - damage to the front porch – incident investigated - no suspects identified

08/07/23 - THEFT

Rockcliffe Hall - theft of a golf buggy - incident investigated - no suspects identified

16/07/23 – VEHICLE CRIME

Strait Lane - Van broken into and tools taken - incident investigated - no suspects identified

17/07/23 – SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

Hurworth Road - unknown youths on e bikes acting suspiciously around houses

22/07/23 - BURGLARY

Hurworth Place - outbuildings broken into – incident investigated - no suspects identified

28/07/23 – DAMAGE TO VEHICLE

Coach Lane - report of damage to vehicle – incident investigated - no suspects identified

28/07/23 – CRIMINAL DAMAGE

Croft Road - damage caused to windows on BT exchange building – incident investigated - no suspects identified

01/08/23 – SUSPICIOUS ACTIVITY

Roundhill Road – 2 males walking up and down the road appearing to be videoing the Spar shop and houses - Police attend, no trace of males

08/08/23 – CRIMINAL DAMAGE

Hurworth Comprehensive School - 3 youths climbing onto the roof and pulling guttering down causing minimal damage – investigated and suspects identified

08/08/23 – Anti Social Behaviour

Rockcliffe Hall – youths on bikes riding around the entrance causing a nuisance – Police attend and conduct area search but no trace

11/08/23 – Road Related

Comet Hotel – tree partially blocking the road – council attend and deal with

21/08/23 – Anti-Social Behaviour

Rockcliffe Hall – youths on bikes shouting and swearing at guests – Police attend and youths disperse

23/08/23 – Anti-Social Behaviour

Rockcliffe Hall - youths in grounds causing a nuisance - youths leave before Police arrive

31/08/23 – Anti-Social Behaviour

Rockcliffe Hall – youths causing a nuisance – Police arrive and take details of youths involved

18/09/23 – Anti-Social Behaviour

Church View – youths outside church hall causing a nuisance and making a noise

15. Allotment Report

In his absence, Cllr Crisp submitted the following report: -

There are currently five people on the Waiting List for an allotment at Strait Lane.

A skip is booked for Strait Lane allotments on 20th October.

16. Rights of Way and Parish Walks

Cllr Williamson reported as follows: -

MEEETING HELD

IN ATTENTDANCE:

Geoffrey McCarthy	-	Rights of Way Officer	-	Darlington Borough Council
Peter Allan	-	Parish Clerk	-	Hurworth Parish Council
Peter Williamson	-	Counsellor	-	Hurworth Parish Council

AGENDA:

To set up lines of Communication for any issues as they arise.

FOOTPATH NO: 7 REPORT

DATE: 01 OCTOBER 2023

ROAD NAME/PATH: Neasham Road – Burma Road REPORT:

Neasham Road between the kennels and Low Spring Cottage Road

Verge badly overgrown hiding broken and twisted road signs causing the public to walk on the road way making it dangerous due to the blind S bend. (see pictures on first row below)

STILE NOs: 1, 2 and 3

All stiles are in good condition, except the signage on the stiles need replacing as unreadable.

Field 2 – Public footpath edges overgrown between the ash tree, oak tree and wooden bridge.

This making the footpath impossible to walk on, without having to struggle along the ploughed field.
Resolution to have the grass mown. (see bottom 3 pictures)

REPORT CONT'D 05.08.23

FOOTPATH NO: 7 REPORT

DATE: 01 OCTOBER 2023



Neasham Road

Grid Ref:

NZ31583 10895



Neasham Road

Grid Ref: NZ31583

10895



Neasham Road

Grid Ref:

NZ31583 10895



Neasham Road

Grid Ref: NZ31583

10895



Bridge between

Field 2 and 3

Grid Ref: NZ31885

11261



Field 2

Grid Ref: NZ31869

11121

FOOTPATH NO: 18 REPORT

DATE: 29 SEPTEMBER 2023

ROAD NAME/PATH: Burma Road – A66 – Neasham Road (Behind Stadium to Railway Bridge)

REPORT:

No stiles long this pathway. All signage visible and legible. Pathway clear, no action required.

17. Matters of Interest

a. **Correspondence – Chair**

- 1 The council has been offered free trees from DBC Tees project. The council agreed that as we have over 600 trees to tend, we will not request any more at this time.
- 2 DBC are carrying out a survey on the location of Polling Stations for forthcoming elections. In the past, Hurworth Grange has been suggested, and DBC Electoral team did visit and inspect the facility. They deemed it suitable. The meeting had varying views and it was agreed we will respond with a ‘neutral’ letter. **Action Clerk.**
- 3 We have received a letter from All Saints PCC requesting a donation of £250 to help to cover the costs of a Christmas Tree Festival, which will include many of the youth organisations in the parish. Cllr Lennox [proposed a motion to donate £250, Seconded by Cllr Forster. The motion was carried unanimously. **Action Clerk**

b. **New Hurworth Grange lease – Chair**

The Chairman informed the meeting that the draft new 7-year lease between HPC and Hurworth Grange CIO has been sent to Luke Swinhoe, DBC Head of Law Department, for checking the legal correctness and provide confirmation. The Chair has stressed the need for a termination clause, which is a get-out clause with 3 months notice.

c. **Training – Chair**

The Chairman stated that only Cllr Lennox had enrolled in the series of recent Councillor training courses, and suggested that we arrange to hold a Good Councillor course, here at Hurworth Grange. A date to be suggested.

18 Projects 2023-24

a. Beech tree carving project – Cllr Forster reported the progress on the Tree Carving Project.

Tree Stump group - Meeting 21.9.2023

The work station During the country fair at Hurworth Grange, generated interest with suggestions for the tree carving condensed as follows: -

Literary

Fairy door - doorway -grange trail

Lewis Carroll - Cheshire cat, Jabberwocky - Alice

Julia Donaldson

Fantasy - Dragon, Fairies

mythological Beast - Sockburn Wyrn

Local Myths - Hob Headless

Story stump - Nursery rhymes

Historical

WW11 raft building

Anglo Saxon

Historical Figures

Emmerson

Lewis Carroll

Monarchy

Architecture

Alfred Waterhouse (The Grange 1875, Rockcliffe - Market Hall - Clock - Nat History Museum)

Nature

Leave, Beech Nut, Seeds etc

Animals - Fox, Squirrel

Bird - Owl
insect/Bugs - Bees, Dragonfly, Butterfly

Scouts

Beaver, Squirrel, Wolf Cub

Seating in and around the tree - stump seats

Games, Hopscotch

There was a lot of suggestions in the theme of children's fantasy with the tree being next to the children's play area

The following designs were created around this, and using idea of the fairy doors that were placed around the Grange during Covid-



We need to raise funding for this project, and having a link into the story of the fairy doors, that Villagers placed round The Grange during covid, is a good way to create link.

Also discussed was, sponsored plaques, to remember people (like named benches) or slab seats

A circular seat to be placed round the stump
seats in the shape of beach leaves or beach nuts

Some workshops are to be organised for people to come and learn about carving, the tools, the materials, techniques, working methods and of cause to have a go.
depending on interest this could become an ongoing thing.

As there is a lot of history in and around Hurworth and at the moment there is Arts funding available for the North East. So, this could be a catalyst for a longer-term thing.

For example, making the all-weather walk into an Arts and History Journey.

Carving something out of the fallen trunk at the back of the wall. - Villagers carving parts

A carving of a pound sign - Barclays

The roman centurion song poem - Rudyard Kipling

Fairy castle bird houses

Sockburn Wyrn

Mathematical equation

A date for the first workshop is still to be finalised.

b. Fishing platform at Hurworth Place,

In absence of Cllr Russell. There was no report.

c. Emerson Road footpath –

Cllr Oughton proposed constructing a solid pathway from Emerson Road to join up with the pathways around Lime Cottage. A figure of £2000 was put forward as a guide cost. A motion was table by Cllr Oughton, Secorder by Cllr Leigh that the Council undertake this project. The vote was unanimous in favour.

d. Beautiful Village – Chair (resident request)

The Chairman suggested that a small sub-committee be formed to investigate this project, which would include resident inclusion.

1. Accounts for Payment

The Accounts Payable Schedule for 30th September 2023 having been distributed to all Councillors, prior to the meeting, and no queries were raised.

Accounts for Payment - September 2023

<u>Name</u>	<u>Cheque No.</u>	<u>Details</u>	<u>Amount</u>
G Wylie	103906	Newsletter exs	12.90
WAVE	103907	Allotment water	171.57
Hurworth Albion,	103908	Loan and section 137 Award	3000.00
Johnston Trees	103909	Treework	220.50
G Wylie	103910	Posters	15.58
HCA	103911	Newsletter exs	60.00
P Robinson	103912	Salary	627.05
P D Allan	103913	Salary	1220.80
Inland Revenue	103914	PAYE	380.60
P D Allan	103915	Admin exs	46.67
BT	DD	Communications	203.38
Total Expenditure for September 2023			<u>5959.05</u>

The Clerk informed the meeting that new signatories are required to sign cheques and monitor the bank accounts.

It was agreed that Cllr Andrew Leigh and Cllr Peter Willis will be registered with Barclay's Bank. **Action Clerk**

19. Financial Report

The Financial report to 30th September 2023 having been distributed to all Councillors, prior to the meeting, and no queries were raised.

Financial Report to 30th September 2023

BLUE=Allocated BLUE=Allocated

Ringfenced funds £11,689

	<u>Apr-23</u>	<u>May-23</u>	<u>Jun-23</u>	<u>Jul-23</u>	<u>Aug-23</u>	<u>Sep-23</u>	<u>Oct-23</u>	<u>Nov-23</u>	<u>Dec-23</u>	<u>Jan-24</u>	<u>Feb-24</u>	<u>Mar-24</u>
Revenue												
Precept	59000											
VAT & Litter Picker refund	114	2097			2897						3100	
Rent & Interest	20		220	0		236	100		120		120	
Grants												
Allotment rent										1160		
Total Revenue	59134	2097	220	0	2897	236	100	0	120	1160	3220	
Expenditure												
Salaries & NHI	2089	2088	2228	2088	2087	2229	2100	2100	2400	2200	2200	
Gen. Admin Expenses	352	1165	1374	67	424	217	3150	340	300	300	350	
Trees						220	270	800	560	435	400	

Open Spaces	218	52	794		265		250	100	480	200	400	37
Section 137	382		1230	400	400	500	500	1500	500	500	300	50
Projects	1459		120	254			500	3000	1500	800	600	
Repairs, Maint & Training	867		750				200	80	180	0	0	30
Newsletters & Posters	60	95		12	659	86	850	60		240	60	85
Youth Activities								500		300		20
Paths/ Grit/ Heritage Trail					403		0	100		320		25
Allotments			137	200		171		420			300	
Highways & Defibs	234		30				4000	500	500			
Handyman	130	150					200	100	200	100	100	10
Rights of Way & Parish Walks								200	200			
Capital Expend & Ringfenced					259	2500	0			259		
VAT	146	6	109	60	118	36						
Total Expenses	5937	3556	6772	3081	4615	5959	12020	9800	6820	5654	4710	592
Funds in Hand less ringed	65106	118303	116844	110292	107211	105493	99770	87850	78050	71350	66856	6530
Revenue less expenses	53197	-1459	-6552	-3081	-1718	-5723	-11920	-9800	-6700	-4494	-1490	-537
Funds in Hand	118,303	116,844	110,292	107,211	105,493	99,770	87,850	78,050	71,350	66,856	65,366	59,99

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

19. Association Reports

a. Hurworth Village Hall –

No report

b. HCA –Councillor Probert, reported: -

September has been an excellent month, with several weddings and, of course, the Country Fair.

As we move into winter, the Tributes nights have been booked, and tickets are selling well.

The Christmas Fair will be held on 2nd December and as last year was very successful, this should be a good event.

Booking at the Grange for 2024 are high, with most weekends booked, and many are also booked for 2025.

One comment was acknowledged: The Tribute Nights need a change, with new groups being booked.

c. Hurworth Albion – Cllr Leigh reported: -

All the arrangements are in hand for the Firework Night on 4th November. Hot and cold refreshments will be available and 1000 people are expected to attend.

20. Any Other Business (Non-Financial)

There were no topics raised.

The Chairman closed the meeting at 8.40pm