

Norham Parish Council

Minutes of meeting held on 22nd September 2025

Bill White (Chair) (BW), Louise Cockburn (Vice) (LC), John Grahamslaw (JG), Moira Graham (MG), Paul Thompson (PT), Catherine Lorigan (CL) and Victoria Mann (VM)

5 Members of Public attended (MOP)

Parish Clerk - Alison Petrie

1. **Apologies for absence** – none
2. **Declarations of Interest** - John Grahamslaw is a Trustee of Norham Recreation Trust / Jubilee Field. Bill White has a personal matter ongoing with Northumbrian Water.
3. **The Minutes of the previous meeting** were approved by the Parish Council – Paul Thompson abstained as he was not present at the July meeting.
4. **County Councillor's Report** – This is a new item to encourage closer links between NCC and the Parish Council.

It was understood that current issues are LNER who are reducing the amount of trains stopping at Berwick – from an hourly service to a two hourly service.

The Structural Engineers report for Norham Castle has been seen by the Councillor and it is relatively damning.

CL suggested that if Cllr. Lambert is not able to attend the meetings, he could give a short resume for circulation.

5. **Community Police Report** – Nothing has been received.
6. **Mobile Phone Signal** – Bill had a Zoom Call with Janet Young (Village Hall Chair), Vodafone/3 and Silvia Pringle (NCC Broadband, Mobile Phones and Rural Lead). Silvia is keen to keep the project going. The plan is to put 3 boosters in the village hall, pointing in different directions, to boost the signal via Vodafone/3. The other providers have not been forthcoming, but when Vodafone/3 makes this move, they could be keen to join in. It is in the hands

of Janet Young, who is taking it to the Village Hall Committee on the 29th September. BW thinks it is our only involvement in it. The Village Hall Committee is leading this project because the equipment would be installed on the hall.

Historically the PC had been trying to get a mast erected, but it has been stalled many times. BW feels it would be better to get something up and running, rather than the current situation. CL feels it is a very good short-term solution, but ultimately the solution is to put pressure on all of the providers to provide a more robust long term solution to provide mobile connectivity for the whole village. How do we keep that initiative going and put pressure on NCC to continue the dialogue? BW – it is through Silvia Pringle NCC. It should not preclude having the mast put up – although that is currently shelved, it is definitely not off the agenda. Vodafone/3 had originally said that the cost of the mast was prohibitive, and they would only be able to do it if the other providers came on board. It is a warm-up. It is vital it remains on our agenda. BW to look at previous minutes/notes to see how far it got. Vodafone/3 are offering residents vouchers to trial it.

7. **Traffic Calming** – nothing further to report on the white lines near the bus stop.

Speeding – no further complaints. BW had got some information on how to get a camera van to sit in the village. Also useful information on how to notify people that there is a van there. PT requests that the signs opposite Beech Hill and the School be made visible with judicious use of clippers.

8. **Sewage and water issues** – BW still in discussion, and there have been further emails about the smells down near the sewage farm. Partially dealt with by Northumberland Water emptying the tanks of sludge. NW suggested they were farm-yard smells, but not in this case. BW is trying to get hold of Steve Robson, not having much joy so will go higher up the management team, to find out what is happening.

9. **Parish Council Website** – The existing website is being upgraded and updated., It is very much in line with our thoughts for a new website. There is the Norham Community Website Association, (Rev. Rob Kelsey, Janet and Tory Craig). LC has joined the group. The new website will go live in mid-October, it will be more inclusive. The website is owned by NDT.

The Parish Council, Church and Village Hall will have their own pages. We need to agree on headings with an introductory page. Have looked at some others to see what documents we need. It will still be called 'Norham Life'.

NPC will have access to the Website and be able to update information on our own page, which will be a big improvement. We are only required to have 5 years of financial information displayed and 2 years of approved minutes. Do not have to keep them all on the website. Hopefully it will be a lot simpler. LC would appreciate additional help on the website. CL asked if there was a fee. LC says that the PC makes a donation of £75pa. The Church and village hall also pay towards the website. It is free for local businesses to add a small business logo. NDT are also paying in from money they held from donations prior to them focusing on the Renewable Energy Scheme.

10. **Village Board Map** – BW is meeting Osprey Maps on Wednesday 24th to look at adding village services such as shops and pubs to the map, Also possibility of putting ‘advertising’ in the 2 blank spaces, which will be explored further.

11. **Play areas** – timbers on the swings are cracked because of the dry weather. We have a new seat for Ubbanford, so it will be fitted. Looking for someone with a mobile welder to fix the swing, (which is outside the remit of ROSPA report because of the age of the swing). Needs to be kept in working order.

12. **Jubilee Field** – The hedge needs cutting by the pigeon club shed. It is encroaching onto the road. BW to contact Sheila Hume.

LC asked if JG had contacted George Straughan and Jim Greenwood about remaining as Trustees.

The fallen tree has been made safe. JG and BW have done some work on the footbridge over Millburn. Philp Bradley (NCC Footpaths’ officer) needs to be contacted. Temporary measures have been carried out, but further work is needed to prevent further dilapidation.

13. **War Memorial** – BW has been to Horncliffe to look at their refurbished memorial. They have a plinth on the rear which has been inscribed with names from the First World War. Paid for by a donation by the Berwick Trust. Not too dissimilar to what the previous PC’s were looking at. It will be quite expensive to have the plates made, and put on the cross. It has been measured, but it needs further discussion and fundraising. It is an important part of the Village

14. **Fisher’s Walk** - John Foreman has cut the grass back. There are plans to level out the solus of the path. Issues as to who has the right to cut the grass back / alter the levels. No one is sure who owns it. Thought to be the church

is on one side and Bruce Martin on the other, although Simon Orpwood was also mentioned. Rev Kelsey asked by email if the PC were allowed to improve the Path. Philip Bradley (NCC Path's office) thinks it sounds like an improvement and will come out and have a look at it.

15. **Planning Applications** – 41 West Street – replacement of flat roof with sedum roof and roof light, and solar panels on the south side of the property. It has had the listed building consent application added. No objections.

An email has been received asking to put a Starlink dish on the Doctor's surgery to improve connectivity and efficiency within the NHS. Norham is not connected to the fibre service. The disk would be on the back of the building. LC stated that they need to apply through the normal channels for planning permission for the dish and involve the conservation element of the application. The Clerk will be in touch with all the relevant people.

16. Finances

Community Account

21/7/2025	Opening Balance	£6,474.19
-----------	-----------------	-----------

Payments

11/8/2025	HMRC (Tory Craig)	£198.63
-----------	-------------------	---------

12/8/2025	William White Reimbursement for NPC Computer	£463.99
-----------	--	---------

09/9/2025	Donation to Church for maintenance of the church yard	£200.00
-----------	---	---------

£862.62

£5,611.57

Income

08/9/2025	NCC Payment (2 nd tranche)	£3,400.00
-----------	---------------------------------------	-----------

22/9/2025	Closing Balance	£9,011.57
-----------	-----------------	------------------

Business Account

21/7/2025	Opening Balance		£620.24
8/9/2025	Interest	£2.06	
22/9/25	Closing Balance		£622.30

NPC are asking for bank details of payees so that all payments can be made by BACS.

The Business Account will be kept separate, it could be part of the war memorial fund / other fundraising.

We are not longer receiving donations from Paton and Co

17. **Donations** – Parish Church, Citizen's advice (£100). The others will be done as they come round. Norham in Bloom, the Village Hall, News Round and Website (2 for NDT).

18. General Correspondence / AOB

Paper work received on the Community Governance Review (CGR) 2025 from NCC. We have until 30th November to respond. A county wide exercise, aiming to be finalised by the 2029 Election. BW or AP to reply. It is a fact-finding exercise.

Rev Kelsey and William Jackson wanted to talk to the PC about a Church renewable scheme. They were already at another meeting, so arrangements for a later date will be considered.

MG – Barbeque down by the river, not ideal in the very dry conditions. This had been reported by the public.

When does the bottle bank get emptied, as it was overflowing? Council organises regular emptying.

There is a rotten seat on the green.

A post outside the village hall is not fixed.

Clean up on the road in front of the church. BW has spoken to George about the insurance and it is covered under the Parish Council Insurance.

Who is the first aider on the Parish Council?

Swanfold pavement has been patched.

Big hole onside of road up by Morris Hall, where tyres were popped. Tractors had destroyed earlier concrete fixing. **Fix my Street contacted.** VM has also contacted them for the one by the Bus stop. This is a useful NCC facility. BW awaiting response for footpath between bridge and castle.

LC / MOP – motor home parked outside a house in West Street for a couple of days. It was referred to the police who said it was a county council issue. Need to research bylaws for the future, in light of Norham being involved in the East Coast Route. It could become a problem on the road and down by the river. CL stated that it is a problem all the way down the coast. By-laws are pointless if not enforceable. CL is concerned that it will happen more in Norham.

(MOP says there is an emergency team at the County Council, further enquiries to be made).

MP's visit to the Parish Council is the 8th October 1.30 to 2.30.

The Meeting was officially closed.

Date of Next Meeting - November 24th at 7pm