HENSHAW PARISH COUNCIL

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HENSHAW PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting 22 June 2026 held in the Bardon Mill & Henshaw Village Hall

Present: Cllrs J. Oliver (Chair), K. Baron, A. Saunders, D. Finlayson, County Cllr A. Sharp, M. A. Smith (Clerk), 1 Member of the Public.

1. Introduction and Welcome The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting.

2. Apologies for Absence Cllrs V. Gibson, L. Welsh & S. Armstrong.

3. Declarations of Interest Cllrs J. Oliver & D. Finlayson (Item 11.1).

4. Public Questions None received**.**

5. Minutes of the previous meetings held on 26 May 2026 were read and approved.

6. General Amenities

6.1 Footpaths. The path at Benton House is overgrown. Clerk to contact the County Council.
6.2 Seating. The paint for repainting the Parish Council owned seats is on order from the suppliers.
6.3 Street Lighting. Nothing to report.
6.4 Verge Maintenance. Cuts have improved following a meeting with the County Council.
6.5 Litter bins. The Clerk to progress the request for a new bin near to Hawthorn Terrace. Cllr Finlayson agreed to speak to the owners of the adjoining property.
6.6 Dog Bag Dispensers. The dispensers will be refilled as soon as possible.

7. Village Greens

7.1 Henshaw Village Green. Awaiting estimates for the resurfacing of the central access road.
7.2 Village Green update. No matters were raised.
7.3 Tree Survey. The work to fell or cut back the trees on the greens and Towhouse woodland has been done but the Clerk to review the work before the invoice is paid.
7.4 Bardon Mill Village Green. A local tradesman is making a library cabinet to be sited on the green.

8. Planning Applications and Issues

8.1 An enforcement notice is to be issued for the unauthorised gate at Green View, Towhouse.
8.2 No applications have been received in May or June.

9. Transport and Highway Matters

9.1 A69. A letter has been sent to National Highways regarding the removal of the lay-by bins and a response has been received to state they do not intend to replace them. The Clerk was asked to write to National Highways again and to also refer the matter to the local MP.
9.2 Bardon Mill Station Road Access. Network and Northern Rail have still not responded to a request for funding. Joe Morris MP has contacted them on the matter, but they are still considering whether to provide match funding. Clerk to write again.
9.3 Road Maintenance and Potholes. A letter has been sent to the County Council regarding resurfacing works on Park Lane and from Henshaw School to Bardon Mill. Cllr Sharp advised Park Lane was scheduled for early July. Clerk to chase up a response on this and other highway works.
9.4 Speed Warning Sign. Chair agreed to arrange for a replacement battery for the sign.

10. Redburn Park

10.1 General Maintenance. The ‘Tommy’ memorial has been vandalised for a second time and a local tradesman is to arrange for repairs. The Council will then consider potential alternatives for where it is sited. The annual RoSPA report has been received and will be circulated and reviewed with recommended works arranged as soon as possible.
10.2 Monthly Inspections. Reports received each month with any recommended work undertaken.

10.3 Woodland Improvements. The Clerk updated Members on the proposals to carry out woodland thinning. The scope has been issued to 3 contractors for quotes and once all these are received a decision can be made on whether the project is viable. The Clerk has also started making enquiries about external funding and potentially undertaking a joint scheme with the Village Hall.
10.4 A donation has been received to fund the purchase of a Memorial Seat for the play park. It was agreed the Clerk proceed with the purchase and installation of the seat.

11. Bardon Mill & Henshaw Village Hall

11.1 Lease to Village Hall Project Group. The Management Agreement for the Parish Council to manage and maintain the woodland was agreed at the May meeting and this has now been signed by the Village Hall Group. It was now signed on behalf of the Parish Council and concluded.
11.2 Update on Activities and Events. The Hall is now operating as normal following the closure to install a new floor with all groups and classes returning.

12. Northumberland National Park

12.1 An update was given on general matters by Cllrs Sharp and Saunders.
12.2 The NNPA AGM is on the 30 June with Cllrs Sharp and Saunders attending.

13. Henshaw School

13.1 Cllr Sharp has raised the issues by Members that the community and Council don't seem to be involved in events and activities at the school as they used to.

14. Report by Clerk on Financial Matters

14.1 A draft report was presented by the Clerk (to be updated once the bank statement is received) with estimated funds held being £28,967.47.
14.2 Expenditure and Income to approve/note:

- Society of Local Council Clerks (Membership) £116.00.
- Playsafety Limited (Annual RoSPA Report for Redburn Park) £162.00
- Clerk (Wages £1907.45 and Expenses £120.80) £2028.25
- HMRC (Tax £470.80 and National Insurance £170.14) £646.94
- Great North Air Ambulance (Monthly Donation) £10.00. *Pre-approved*.
- HSBC (Bank Charges) £5.00*. Estimated*.
- GoCardless (Website & Email) £2.99 *Pre-approved.*

Estimated balance following above transactions is **£25,9996.29** of which £9,496.29 is operating funds and £16,500 is ringfenced for the Capital Programme.
14.3 The Clerk advised that the unaudited Annual Governance and Accountability Return has been published and will be submitted to the External Auditor by no later than 30 June.
14.4 Capital Programme. The main projects in the programme are the resurfacing of the access road at Henshaw (west-end village green), woodland clearance and extension to the Pitman's Trail.

15. Northumberland County Council Update

15.1 Cllr Sharp had provided updates throughout the meeting.

16. General Matters and Correspondence since last meeting

16.1 Update by Clerk. The Clerk outlined all the matters that Joe Morris MP has agreed to look into.
16.2 Clerks Contract. The Clerk presented an update on the review of the Clerks contract. The agreed pay rate of SCP16, and annual hours of 350 (including 38 hours holiday) would be included in an amended contract. This would be presented for agreement and signing at the next meeting.
16.3 Website. Clerk has booked training to learn how to update and manage the new website.
16.4 Community Governance Review. Stakeholder comments on possible change to Local Council set-up had been provided by the County Council. Clerk to respond.

17. Items to be included on the next Agenda. Nothing raised**.**

18. Date and time of next meeting. Monday 27 July 2026.

Signed and approved at the Meeting held on 27 July 2026……