

Hepple Parish Council responsibilities

A Parish Council must hold an annual meeting and at least three other meetings in a year.

A Parish Council consists of the chairman and not fewer than five elected Parish councillors, and a quorum of the main council committee is at least one-third of the members, or three members, whichever is the greater. Every meeting is open to the public, who are encouraged to attend, except for those items where the Council formally resolves to exclude the public and press on the grounds that publicity would be prejudicial to the public interest. This would have to be due to the confidential nature of the business.

Procedures for the conduct of meetings are set out in Schedule 12 of the Local Government Act 1972, and where this is not overridden by legislation, by the standing orders of the Council. Hepple Parish Council adopted the [National Association of Local Councils](#) (NALC) model standing orders on

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Councillors are expected to adhere to the ["Nolan principles" of conduct in public life](#)

Their activities fall into three main categories:

1. representing the local community,
2. delivering services to meet local needs,
3. and improving quality of life and community well-being.

Parish councils are funded by levying a "precept" collected from within the council tax paid by the residents of the parish. Parish councils are made up of unpaid councillors who are elected to serve for four years. A casual vacancy may be filled by by-election or co-option.

Parish councils have the power to tax their residents to support their operations and to carry out local projects. Although there is no limit to the amount that can be raised, the money can only be raised for a limited number of purposes, defined in the 1994 Act and subsequent legislation. The "General Power of Competence" is a power awarded in 2012 to eligible councils. The exercise of powers is at the discretion of the council, but they are legally obliged to exercise duties.

The duty of Hepple Parish Council is to endeavour to facilitate the affairs of the parish in the best interest of the parishioners.

- The Parish currently has an annual precept of about £1,200 half of which is accounted for by administration. Details of accounts are on our website, and are presented at every meeting. Audited accounts are published each year on the notice board and on the website.
- The Parish agrees to look kindly on requests for assistance from within the parish, e.g. Village Hall and occasionally will consider requests outside the Parish but for the benefit of the Parish.
- The Parish Council meets at least four times a year. It is required by law to hold annually a Parish meeting to give account of their work during the year, to listen to the concerns of the parishioners and to answer questions. All Parish Council meetings are advertised on the notice boards in the parish.
- Any member of the Parish is welcome to attend but they may only speak when invited by the Chair usually because they have specific knowledge about a relevant issue listed on the agenda.
- The Parish Council scrutinises planning applications for new buildings and building alterations in the parish and makes comments to the relevant planning authority i.e. Northumberland National Park, Northumberland County Council. The Parish Council will submit comments on all applications, usually after having a site visit/meeting with the applicant – although the Parish Council must adhere to all planning rules, local and national policy.
- Hepple Parish Council does not own or manage any land, buildings, parks, roads, paths, structures or similar.

The following issues on Safeguarding are the responsibility of Northumberland County Council:

- Make essential arrangements to protect vulnerable people
- Create safeguarding policies covering care plans and additional knowledge, training or facilities required for adequate support
- Conduct a safeguarding review if the adult or child cannot do so themselves
- Work with all their care partners to deliver the best support
- Conduct inquiries into any safeguarding issues, update policies if required and alert the police if a crime has been committed

For more information on this subject please go to:

[Northumberland Safeguarding Adults Board Procedures](#)

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Children.aspx>

Reporting an adult at risk form:

<https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Health-and-social-care/northumberland-safeguarding-adults-multi-agency-enquiry-form-updated-june-22.pdf>

Parish councils have a variety of powers and duties, all of which impact directly on the community.

The following are all under the remit of local councils:

1. *Drainage – of ditches and ponds*
2. *Footpaths - Rights of Way – footpath and bridleway maintenance*
3. *General Spending – parish councils can spend a limited amount of money on anything they deem of benefit to the community that is not covered by the other specific responsibilities described in this list*
4. *Gifts – parish councils may accept gifts*
5. *Highways – lighting, parking places, right to enter into discussions about new roads and road widening, consent of parish council required for diversion or discontinuation of highway, traffic signs and other notices, tree planting and verge maintenance*
6. *Legal proceedings – power to prosecute and defend any legal proceedings in the interests of the community, power to take part in any public enquiry*
7. *Litter - provision of litter-bins and support for any anti-litter campaigns*
8. *Planning – parish councils may be notified of any planning applications for the area*
9. *Signs – danger signs, place names and bus stops signs*
10. *Traffic Calming*

(Please note that the above powers and duties takes substantial funding that comes from the Parish precept)