

HENSHAW PARISH COUNCIL

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HENSHAW PARISH COUNCIL

Minutes of Meeting 26 May 2026 held in the Bardon Mill & Henshaw Village Hall

Present: Cllrs J. Oliver (Chair), Cllr V. Gibson, K. Baron, A. Saunders, L. Welsh, County Cllr A. Sharp, M. A. Smith (Clerk).

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

2. Apologies for Absence Cllrs D. Finlayson & S. Armstrong.

3. Declarations of Interest None received.

4. Public Questions None received.

5. Minutes of the previous meetings held on 27 April 2026 were read and approved.

6. General Amenities

6.1 Footpaths. The footpath next to Benton House is going to be tarmacked by the County Council.

6.2 Seating. Clerk and Cllr Finlayson to arrange for repainting of the seats.

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.

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 updated survey which covers trees on the village greens has been completed with several recommended tree removals and works. It was agreed that given these were urgent (with trees being close to residential properties) that Peter Dodd Contracting be instructed to carry out the work as soon as possible without the need to seek alternative quotes.

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 No planning matters were raised.

8.2 No applications have been received in May.

9. Transport and Highway Matters

9.1 A69. National Highways have removed the litter bins in the laybys and people are simply leaving rubbish by the road. Cllr Sharp is taking this up with National Highways.

9.2 Bardon Mill Station Road Access. Network and Northern Rail have still not responded to a request for funding. The Clerk and Cllr Sharp are continuing press for a decision, and the local MP has been asked to see if he can also contact the Rail Companies.

9.3 Road Maintenance and Potholes. Clerk to continue to report issues on Fix My Street.

10. Redburn Park

10.1 General Maintenance. Work has been carried out to repair the 'Tommy' memorial at the entrance to the park, clearance of the entrance road and grassed areas, and repairs to fencing.

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 and clearance. A felling licence has now been obtained, and a scope of works/agreement has been drafted for issue to contractors. Clerk to progress and report to the next Council meeting.

10.4 Clerk to follow up the request/proposal to install a new donated seat in the park.

11. Bardon Mill & Henshaw Village Hall

11.1 Lease to Village Hall Project Group. The Clerk had drafted an agreement for the Council to take on management of the woodland from the Village Hall Group. This was agreed and signed.

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 Gibson and Saunders.

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 report was presented by the Clerk with funds held being £32,156.07.

14.2 Expenditure and Income to approve/note:

- Peter Dodd Contracting (Tree Report – Village Greens) £630.00
- Mark Watson (Redburn Park Repairs) £858.00
- Arthur J. Gallagher Insurance Broker Ltd (Annual Insurance) £1429.29
- Society of Local Council Clerks (Training Course) £102.00 *Approved but not cleared.*
- NALC (Membership 2026/27) £109.31 *Approved but not cleared.*
- Storey & Dodd (Accountancy Services) £60.00 *Approved but not cleared.*
- Great North Air Ambulance (Monthly Donation) £10.00. *Pre-approved and accounted for.*
- HSBC (Bank Charges) £10.00. *Already accounted for.*
- GoCardless (Website & Email) £2.99 *Pre-approved and accounted for.*
- Bardon Mill Parish Council (Shared Assets contribution) £439.98 (*Income – to note only*).

Estimated balance following above transactions is **£28,967.47** of which £12,467.47 is operating funds and £16,500 is ringfenced for the Capital Programme.

14.3 The Clerk presented a report on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return which had been recently completed and the Members considered and agreed/approved as follows,

14.3.1 Report noted and agreed.

14.3.2 The Internal Audit Report was noted and agreed.

14.3.3 The Annual Governance Statement was approved and signed.

14.3.4 The Accounting Statement was approved and signed.

14.3.5 The Dates of Publication were confirmed.

The unaudited accounts will now be published prior to submission to the External Auditor.

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. No additional matters to those discussed or provided by email.

16.2 Clerks Contract. The Clerk presented a report on the review of the Clerks contract. Following consideration, it was agreed that the rate of pay be SCP16, and annual hours of 350 (including 38 hours holiday) with further reviews to take place in December each year.

16.2 Website and Email Account. New website and the .gov email are now in place.

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

18. Date and time of next meeting. Monday 22 June 2026.

Signed and approved at the Monthly Meeting held on 22 June 2026.....