

Chairmans Report 2026

It was a bumpy start to the new election year for the Parish Council. There were not enough Councillors standing for election so the Parish Council was not quorate and had a period of a few weeks where we were not operational. We had to lobby hard to find volunteers to stand for the second round of elections – thanks go to Fiona Hoyle, Will Royal, Carol Carter and John Cruden for enabling Thirston Parish Council to resume thankfully only resulting in a slight delay with the Annual Meetings which we luckily held within days of the 1 June deadline.

John Marshall and Euan Davidson did not stand for election after many years serving on the Parish Council. Huge thanks go to both of them for their years of dedication to the Parish.

Carol Carter resigned from the parish council however Sam Hoyle was coopted onto the Council resulting in 5 parish based councillors. John Cruden, a Felton resident, felt he was then able to stand down as the fate of the Council looked more secure. In February Kate Fenwick was coopted to take the Council up to full capacity. Thanks go to Carol and John and a warm welcome given to our new Councillors.

Planning Issues are always an important part of the Councils work. There has been a number of controversial planning issues this year. The High Park Farm application for a dry paper pulp facility raised objections from a number of Council and locals due to traffic concerns – this application was refused by NCC and went to appeal and the Planning Inspectorate agreed with NCC's decision. Another application is the signage at Pumpkin Pie nursery which has had mixed responses – many residents are in objection however short term nursery users are supporting the signage. NCC has refused the application which has now gone to appeal.

A presentation was given to the Parish Council in relation to a proposed anaerobic digester on the outskirts of the village. No application has been submitted as yet however major concerns have been raised in relation the proposal especially in relation to the vehicle movements into this site just off the A1 – 300 vehicles movements a day at peak times (July and September) and 100 movements a day for the remaining months with 24 hour working hours.

The bus shelters in West Thirston have been repainted and thanks go to the WI for this work – noticeboards are on order for installing in the shelters which will give QR code access to the bus timetables, local business information and numbers for taxis – just in case !

Following speed assessments undertaken through West Thirston a new speed restriction is going to take place reducing the speed through the village to 20mph – this should improve safety especially for the nursery users.

Lastly a few words of thanks. I wanted to thank my fellow Councillors for your diligence and support over this past year. I want to thank our Parish Clerk, Lisa Hamlin, for all her hard work and dedication throughout the year.

Thanks also go to those groups that support the village – Felton CAN, CRAG and the WI.

We look forward to serving the local community in this coming year. We always welcome any ideas from residents as to ways we can further improve this wonderful community in which we live.

Douglas Green

Thirston Parish Council Chairman