

ALLENDALE PARISH COUNCIL

**Agreed minutes of a meeting of Allendale Parish Council will be held at Allendale Village Hall
on Thursday 4 September at 7pm**

Members of the public are invited to attend.

A G E N D A

Present: Present: Cllrs Archer (Chair), Beck, Charlton M, Charlton S, Coulson, Dobson, Dunn, Foster, Jackson, Kirk, White, Mrs Naylor (Clerk)

1 Welcome and councillor news

2 Public participation

There were two members of the public present.

One spoke on behalf of the applicants of planning application 25/03036/FUL noting that it was not new in content - a previous version had been deemed a change of use and had been invalidated by the county council. Since then a biodiversity assessment had been carried out but otherwise the application was the same.

Mr Short noted the length of time it had taken to resolve the question of the allotment water supply. Cllr Archer explained that there will be a proposal to supply a storage tank but that this needed costing and will be discussed in October. Mr Short indicated that the Helen Allison trust may be able to help (contact Chris Bullman).

3 Apologies for absence: Cllrs Swaile and Dalton

4 Declarations of interest

No new declarations of interest. A full list may be found here

<https://northumberlandparishes.uk/allendale/documents?search=declaration&type=All&year%5Bvalue%5D%5Byear%5D=>

5 Planning applications

Application No. 25/02824/FUL Formation of a bund (retrospective) at Allendale Sewage Works Bund Catton NE47 9QH

Cllr Kirk proposed the motion no objection. This was seconded by Cllr Dunn and unanimously carried by the council.

Application No. 25/01023/FUL Introduction of 3no. dwellings within the existing Allendale Inn and associated rear barns via the change of use of the Allendale Inn to 2no. dwellinghouses, and the conversion and extension of 2no. barns to form 1no. dwellinghouse. Reduction in width of main Allendale Inn building by 1.0m and of the eastern barn by 0.5m to facilitate improvement of access road (As Amended 22.04) at The Allendale Inn Market Place Allendale Hexham NE47 9BJ

There was a discussion about the change of use to dwellinghouses and it was noted that there were already two pubs in the village. Cllr Dunn noted that the application altered the historic plot boundaries and thought it could go ahead without the narrowing of the building; she referred to the Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan Nos 1, 2 and 7 (a) bullet point 2, and to the Local Plan ENV 9. Although the overall design, she thought, was an improvement and was more similar to the building design in the 1900s. Cllr Kirk said there was a need to balance the access issues against issues associated with the historic boundary. It was noted that the third dwelling needs access. Cllr Beck noted that there was only one parking place proposed and expressed concerns about that.

In relation to the change of use, the conversion into dwellings, there were ten councillors in favour one abstention.

In relation to the narrowing of the building (widening the access), Cllr White proposed the motion no objection. This was seconded by Cllr Charlton M. Six voted in favour of the motion, three against, two abstained. The motion of no objection was carried.

Application No. 25/03036/FUL Construction of a new double garage, new driveway, access relocation, and a portion of land ownership to be converted into residential curtilage to accommodate the new garage at Hillside Cottage Sinderhope Hexham NE47 9SH.

Cllr Kirk said that this was an improvement on the existing garage which would be demolished as part of the process.

Cllr Kirk proposed the motion to support the application. Cllr Foster seconded. 10 councillors voted in favour, one abstained. Carried.

6 Minutes of the meeting held on 7 August 2025 – approved and signed

7 Matters arising

7.1 County-plan – call for sites [July 10/8.15], due 30 September 2025 [Cllrs Kirk and Swaile] –

Cllr Kirk had reviewed this and the existing SHLAA which seemed to be up to date. There did not seem to be any other suitable sites to offer. There was no action needed on the part of APC.

7.2 Tree bordering allotment [July 10/8.22] – it was agreed that APC do not own the land. Therefore, it was agreed to update the tree plan to take the three trees off in this area.

8 County Councillor and Northumberland County Council update

Co Councillor Horncastle was in attendance and provided the following update.

Allenheads septic tank – an email with some legal information had been sent by Co Cllr Horncastle and circulated by the Clerk. He stated that NCC owns the toilet block and the legal information showed that they have the right to repair the tank, but were not under obligation to repair it. Documentation had been requested of the Allenheads Trust. Cllr White noted that no documentation had been found by the Allenheads Trust. It seemed from his investigations to have been Tynedale District Council who had installed the tank. Co Cllr Horncastle to continue to pursue this matter.

Allendale toilets – NCC had been back since the vandalism and the men's toilets were open again.

Allenheads toilets – had been improved, the painting and the jet-washing had been done. Cllr White confirmed that the urinals have been replaced and said that the WCs need destaining on an urgent basis.

Dropped kerbs and other matters Neil Snowdon will be making a site visit towards at end of month to look at: dropped kerbs, road markings on Station Road, parking on the corner near the school at drop off times. He noted that £18,000 had already been spent on Catton traffic matters and on the Station Road markings. In relation to the latter, Cllr Archer noted that traffic had slowed down.

School path - Cllr Foster reported that Mr Vincent was looking into a gate and approaching NCC to extend the path across that. Cllr Foster would keep Co Cllr Horncastle updated.

Co Cllr Horncastle stated that he would be contributing £4000 to the Village Hall fund-raising.

County

Call for sites – Although the NCC Local Plan is only three years old and was to last for the next 25 years, new housing targets meant that the Local Plan needs to be revised (the previous target of 550 houses per year had been increased to 1650 per year). He also noted that NCC are now going to have to look at greenbelt for allocation to housing. While this would not directly affect Allendale because it is in an AONB, there could be an impact in terms of traffic flow on roads between Hexham and Allendale, e.g. a better junction onto the A69 could be needed. Cllr Beck noted that Allendale would be impacted in terms of availability of school places at Hexham school. Cllr Kirk queried whether the unsuitable SHLAA sites in Allendale parish be revisited (e.g. those encroaching on ancient woodland or outside a settlement boundary). Co Cllr said that he would report back after the review of sites had taken place. Finally, Cllr Horncastle noted that the upcoming NCC budget would need 10 to 20 million cuts – because of council tax cap and the amount of the government settlement.

9 Council general

9.1 Update on transfer to own-domain website/email [Cllr Kirk]

Cllr Kirk had looked at all the available designated suppliers for parish council websites (29), some were eliminated based on geography, being hardware suppliers, or being too expensive. APC were looking for an off the shelf solution to meet statutory requirements in a cost effective way. This left 10 suppliers. The leader is the NALC recommended supplier Hugo Fox, both for the first year and ongoing

annual costs. NALC will subsidize year one with this supplier. The website plus one email address (for the Clerk) would have an annual cost of £150 pa. He recommended taking the 30 day free trial and we would then go ahead provided the trial is satisfactory. All agreed to set this up. List of existing sample websites by Hugo Fox to be circulated to Cllrs.

9.2 To discuss laying a wreath on Remembrance Sunday at the Lych Gate and purchase of same, approx. cost £19.99 – Cllr White proposed to accept this. Seconded by Cllr Dunn. 10 voted in favour, one abstained. Carried.

10 Small grant applications

To review small grant applications and agree grant funding (LGA s137).

Ten applications has been received. The application from Meet and Eat had been withdrawn shortly before the meeting by a telephone call to the Clerk from Mrs Crellin on behalf of the committee. The Clerk had advised that they were very welcome to reapply in the next round of funding

The first discussion was as to whether to make an award to the various applicants. The second discussion was as to amount. Cllrs with an interest in the applicant entities did not vote in the votes for that applicant. It was agreed by the council to make the following awards, proposed by Cllr White and seconded by Cllr Beck.

Applicant	Award
Allendale Film Club/Tynedale Film	£100
Allendale Youth Ambition	£250
Floral Society	£350
Higher Ground	£350
MayFair	£500
Allen Valley Red Squirrels	£250
Tynedale Talking Newspaper	£100

The council agreed not to make an award to Sport Tynedale or Burnlaw Centre because there did not appear to be sufficient benefit within the wider community within the parish. In relation to the application from Sport Tynedale it was also noted that the council is barred by the Local Government Act from making grants that benefit an individual. It was suggested to invite the Burnlaw Centre to come to talk about their work at a future event. Although the grant application paperwork refers to community benefit, it would be revised to make it clear that this excluded benefit to an individual.

11 Allotments

11.1 To confirm the annual rental of £25 per plot and £15 per half plot and confirm content of tenancy agreements – carried over to October

11.2 Update on water supply – meeting of tenants – carried on to October

11.3 To consider quotes for hedge work

Cllr Kirk enquired as to why the parish council was cutting the hedge rather than the tenants. Cllr Archer stated that the idea was to get the hedges down to a reasonable size and then the allotment holders would cut them going forward. Cllr Kirk also noted that there was no budget for this work and that substantial sums had been spent on improvements to the allotments in recent years.

The following quotes had been received for the work to the bottom and internal internal allotment hedges: Quote A £1430; Quote B £1350. It was agreed to accept quote B, from Matty Robson as it was the lowest bid. It was suggested (by Mr Short, a member of the public) that the waste be piled up and used for the Tar Barls who would collect it. It agreed to ask for a reduction in price on this basis. The work would need to be done toward the end of November and stored in the corner of the allotments. Cllr Archer would speak to Mr Hutchinson re the hedge bordering his property.

Affordable Housing

12 Update re housing needs survey and launch (23 September 2025)

The survey event would take place in the Village Hall from 1 to 6pm, with councillors available after that time.

The survey had been sent out to households with a submission date of 3 October 2025. There will also be publicity on social media and leafleting in the centre of the village. Cllrs are asked to drop in at the event and to help publicise the survey and the event and to encourage local residents to fill it in.

13 Cemetery

No items

14 Rights of Way & Access

No items

15 Environment & Climate Change

No items

16 Towns and Villages

16.1 Parking on village green – review of draft survey, decision on that and on time-line.

A draft survey had been received from Mr Dunn, on behalf of the working group, and circulated by the Clerk to councillors.

Cllr Kirk said he did not agree with the content, he believed that there was bias in the questions towards an assertion that there is a problem rather than finding out if there was a problem, also there were other questions that had been raised in the past which were not covered. He also noted that the content refers to the Market Square and not the Village Green as previously agreed. Not all of the Market Square is Village Green and areas such as Arnison Terrace are Village Green. Cllr Coulson said that the correct wording was needed and the official Village Green Map should be included and referred to. It was proposed to go ahead with the wording changed, from Market Square to Allendale Village Green, to include the map and to refer to it. Eight in favour, one against, two abstained. Carried.

In relation to the timeline proposed by the working group and documented in the draft, seven agreed, with four abstentions. Carried.

16.2 Public toilets Allendale – update on repairs and cleaning; to note vandalism - see Item 8

16.3 Public toilets Allenheads - update on repairs and cleaning - see Item 8

16.4 Septic tank Allenheads - see Item 8

16.5 Traffic priorities for NCC traffic plan (three) – to be discussed at October meeting (response deadline 17 October 2025). It was noted that the system is now on a three year basis rather than one year – so three priorities for the next three years. All Cllrs to review the circulated guidance letter. Meeting to which Cllrs are invited Monday 15 September 6pm Hexham Mart.

16.6 To discuss mowing contract, extension and/or renewal – the current arrangement ends on 6 October. It was unanimously agreed to ask Mr Gilbertson to mow for another month (October) at the same rate of pay. The contract was only issued for one year. MG had indicated to Cllr Kirk that he would be willing in principle to continue in 2026 for one year for an uplift of £1000. It was agreed to ask for a formal quote, also for a further two-year period (of six months pa).

16.7 To discuss litter-picking contract – Cllr Archer proposed to continue the litter-picking arrangement with Natural Ability, which is currently charged at £120 per month for two picks per month, £60 per pick. It was noted that there will be price uplift in April in view of minimal wage requirements. The contract needs revising to reflect current payment arrangements. It was agreed to roll this on, with a reviewed contract.

16.8 To consider quotes to dig out brambles at Sandhill; to discuss a solution to weed-killing; to agree approach to stump assessment.

All agreed to accept the quote from Matty Gilbertson for £100 to dig out the brambles. Once brambles are done someone else to assess stump.

In relation to the Sandhill weedkilling, it was noted that NCC will not weedkill there. Various solutions were discussed. Hoeing would dig up the tarmac. Burning was suggested. Cllr Archer would look into

what was needed for a licence to spray chemicals and in terms of the purchase of the chemicals (Cllr Coulson noted that the licence to spray does not necessarily give permission to purchase the chemicals).

16.9 Update re path to school from Denefields re site visit [Cllr Foster] - see Item 8

16.10 Review of parish council memorial bench policy – there are 43 benches, which could be surveyed during the winter to determine refurbishment needs. It was unanimously agreed that Cllr Dunn could discuss this with Hilton Graham and find out a price.

In terms of the benches, Cllr Dunn expressed the view that in the conservation area, the benches should be wooden benches of a certain design. Cllr Beck asked about stone benches. Cllr Kirk noted that the reason for including recycled plastic had been that it lasts longer and is less costly to maintain. Cllr Charlton M said in her view it was the style of the recycled benches that was inconsistent. In a vote that benches in conservation area be wooden: five voted in favour, two against, four abstained. Carried. It was agreed to honour the request for a recycled bench, the maintenance fee for which had already been paid for by Ms Renton. The Clerk clarified that £150 had been paid for maintenance in this case because the maintenance costs were less than for a wooden one.

16.11 Planters for Shield Street and Bullring – Cllr Dunn noted that at the cost of £29.99ea, three wooden planters (replicating the tar barrels), two for Shield Street and one Bullring, were needed. She would also explore financial donations for the planters and report back on donations at next meeting. A vote of thanks to Cllr Mandy Charlton was expressed for planting up the planters as well as to the children who helped in the Village. In addition a vote of thanks was noted for George Armstrong for his strimming work and to Heather Stoelk for tidying up the allotment path. Clerk to write.

16.12 Dropped kerbs in the market place update following Cllr Dunn's discussions with Co Cllr Horncastle – awaiting site visit – see Item 8.

16.13 To arrange visit by electrician and discuss use of telephone kiosk - carry over to October.

17 Correspondence

9.11 Allen House - it was noted that the parish council do not have the deeds for the Hearse House. Cllr Dunn believed it had been donated by Lord Allendale for community use, via St Cuthbert's Church, in the 1800s.

9.17 Sign on Village Green in Catton – an estate agent sign had been installed on the Catton Village Green without consent of the parish council. It was agreed to discuss this at the next meeting as the communication had arrived only shortly before the meeting and more time was needed.

Separately, the Clerk would write to Gibson's to obtain an inventory of the documents they hold for APC.

18 Finance

Accounts for payment/Bank reconciliation

Community account balance as of 31.7.25 = £2849.68

Commercial Instant Access Account as of 31.8.25 = £17,070.66

Public Sector Deposit Fund of CCLA balance as of 31.8.25 = £45,000.00

Cllr Kirk noted that the invoice for the election costs was more than NCC's estimate but that they had said at the time that counting venue costs would be added.

Cllr Kirk proposed the motion to approve the listed payments. This was seconded by Cllr White and unanimously carried by the council

Clerk salary review – carried over to October meeting. There will be 3.2 percent rise back-dated to April, the salary is contractually linked to the national government scale.

It was also noted that the precept monies should be received next week.

19 Matters for 2 October 2025 Agenda

Review of council policy re listed buildings and conservation area

To discuss refreshing the Annual Parish Meeting and agree a date (between 1 March and 1 June 2025)

Provision for further bus shelters

Budget planning – to hear from from Cllr Kirk re need for initial bids from sub committees

Plus items carried over and noted above.

20 Private session/Confidential item(s) [Council only]

There were none.

21 Next Parish Council Meeting: Thursday 2 October 7 pm, Allendale Village Hall

The meeting ended at: 9.40pm