

# THIRSTON PARISH COUNCIL

At the Parish Council Meeting held via Zoom on Thursday 30 April 2020.

**Present:** Cllrs S Allan, E Davidson, T Jackson, H Lindley and J Marshall.  
The Parish Clerk in attendance – Mrs L Hamlin  
One member of public

**108 Apologies for absence** – Councillor D Green (unable to link into Zoom on the night), County Councillor Sanderson.

**109 Declarations of interest in items on the Agenda** – None

**110 Public Questions (max 5 mins per person) –**

Concerns were raised about the helicopters now being allowed to use Eshott Airfield. They are the most disruptive craft and they do not use the dedicated helipad. They cause major noise disturbance and debris. They are also frightening for animals and children. There are also concerns about refuelling beside residential properties and adjoining landowners. Reports have been made to NCC about these issues and no response has been received.

Cllr Marshall stated the PC is waiting planning application feedback – a point of note being that the usage of the airfield has fundamentally changed with larger planes and the increase of helicopters. The PC is opposing the extension of hours and will make NCC aware of the different usage and how this impacts on residents.

Clerk

Cllr Lindley stated this demonstrates that there is still nowhere that members of the public can go to make a complaint within NCC.

Cllr Jackson feels strongly that the residents and Parish Council are being ignored in relation to the issues relating to the airfield and request that a meeting of the Chief Executive be arranged. Clerk to contact NCC to see what arrangements can be made for this due to social distancing.

Clerk

**112 The minutes of the meeting 23 January 2020** were agreed as a true record, to be signed at a later date due to Covid-19.

**113 Matters Arising therefrom:**

- a) Street light in Eshott Village - outstanding
- b) Road to Longhorsley to Burgham complaint - outstanding
- c) Wintrick Junction – white lines request – completed and letter of thanks from Wintrick residents received.
- d) Steep Bank – slippery surface – NCC has assessed the footpath and have requested it be cleaned. The Clerk stated this was not what was requested and a resurface should take place.
- e) Repairs to drain close to Glenshotton - outstanding
- f) Ditch on the Burgham Park Road blocked - outstanding
- g) Potholes on the road to Eshottheugh – these have been filled.
- h) Households not connected to electricity – homeowner responded to state they are on a generator and this information has been forwarded to NALC for their survey.
- i) Litter Pick – postponed due to Covid-19. It was suggested that NCC be contacted to see if litter pickers can be provided for residents who wish to pick whilst on daily exercise and Clerk to ask if this is possible can collected rubbish be left with residents black bin.
- j) Update on fires request to police – At this time all the reports of arson have been closed down pending any new information to identify the offenders. There haven't been any reports recently of fires in the parish.
- k) Shooting Ground update – Cllr Green attended a meeting with the shooting ground operator, NCC has refused one application due to noise disturbance to residents and will not allow an extra day of shooting. The resident who raised concerns has been responded to by the Clerk.

Clerk

**114 Report by County Councillor Sanderson**  
Email update from CC Sanderson stating:

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Things are ticking over with Council activities – waste recycling areas will now open on Monday 4 May with restrictions.

Essential work continues pretty much as usual - litter picking grass cutting etc.

I'll know more about planning meetings starting again at our weekly catch up meetings this week but it looks like there now might be one at the end of May but with - hopefully - nothing too controversial on the agenda.

## 115 Report back from Meetings and Representations on behalf of TPC

A Recreation Field meeting was called for a Friday night with 2 days notice. No one from Thirston PC was able to attend. Clerk to check with Felton Parish Clerk if this meeting went ahead and if so can a copy of the minutes be provided.

Clerk

## 116 Potential Projects

a) Footpaths/Rights of Way – Cllr Marshall reported that the seat on the riverside walk has been moved back from the edge of the river bank where the land had slipped away and is securely fixed and looks good.

b) Landscaping – The rockery has a number of weeds in it. The Clerk reported that at present the contractor is only cutting grass and had furloughed his staff. Hopefully in the coming weeks this situation may change.

c) Neighbourhood Plan Update – Responses have been received following the consultation however due to Covid-19 all consultations have to cease and be restarted once the situation improves. The Clerk has confirmed with NCC that any feedback already received can be incorporated into the plan so when it goes out to consultation again any issues raised will have already been addressed so this should speed up the process. Number of responses have been received and the Clerk to circulate the responses to the Neighbourhood Plan Group.

Clerk

## 117 Planning:

### To report on any planning decisions:

18/03534/FUL - Bywell Shooting Range - retro - retention of ground butt – REFUSED due to noise disturbance to residents.

19/04134/FUL – 7 Bridge End, West Thirston – Conversion of garage to form habitable room. Remove garage door and replace with timber wall and sash window – GRANTED

19/04826/FUL – Briggend, 6 Bridge End, West Thirston – replace timber doors to front elevation with 3 glazed bi-folds, infilling or rear opening with 3 pace glazed bi-folds - objections to full glazed bi-folds. Application was amended and GRANTED

19/04921/VARYCO – Crematorium, Woodland Burial Site, Bockenfield – Vary Condition 2 to update drawings. - GRANTED

20/00359/FUL – Oakdale, Burgham Park – part single storey, part two storey rear extension and installation of 2 heat pumps – GRANTED

20/00477/FUL – Sunningdale, Burgham Park – proposed works for rear extension – GRANTED

### Planning applications pending:

18/03736/FUL - Felmoor Park, East of A1 - 24 lodges, 10 caravans, miniature golf – Site visit undertaken – no objections

19/00300/PREAPP – Burgham Park Golf Cub – Erection of 56 dwellings and improvements to course and club house – objections submitted and request for inclusion in pre-app discussions.

19/03659/VARYCO – Eshott Airfield – make temporary hours of 7am to 11pm permanent – objections submitted. The Clerk has written to Mr Horsman to ascertain that should the application be permitted for another temporary hour agreement for assessment that this does not take place until the Covid-19 situation is resolved otherwise it will not give a true reflection of the running of the airfield in normal operational times as while people are still be required to socially distance then training and experience flights will not be able to take place which are the main activities of the airfield. Mr Horsman responded stating *“I note the comments of the Parish Council regarding the monitoring period and will consider these further in drafting any future recommendation to the committee. Matters will hopefully become clearer over the next few weeks in terms of what lockdown restrictions are to be eased.”*

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19/00669/PREAPP – Plot 4, Eshottheugh – Holiday leisure park comprising 24 single story chalets and 19 two story chalets – objections submitted

19/05017/OUT – Land East of Greycroft – proposed 9 residential dwellings – objection submitted. Comments are still to be received from NCC Building Conservation Team, these will be put online when received. The Planning Officer states “*If we are to recommend approval, it will be a committee application but at this current time we don't have any committees schedule due to current circumstances. If we are to recommend refusal, I imagine it will remain under delegated powers.*”

20/00764/FUL - Pethfoot House, West Thirston - Repairs, maintenance, refurbishment, alteration and minor extension works – no objections

20/00933/LBC - The Granary 2 East Thirston Farm Steading – ground floor extension to rear of property. Proposed internal door to be removed and blocked up – on circulation

20/00954/FUL - 8 Burgham Park, Burgham - Single storey extension to increase size of kitchen, works to re-site oil storage tank and wheelie bin enclosure and works to garages to provide games room, gym and garden store – no objections

20/00742/FUL - Oakdale 4 Burgham Park – installation of wind turbine – on circulation

APP/01348/VARYCO – The Old Farm Byre, East Thirston – removal of conditions 10 (Highways), 11 (Permitted Development), 15 (Permitted Development), 16 (Permitted Development) pursuant to permission 13/01837/FUL

## Planning Issues

**New Beer Garden – Northumberland Arms – retrospective planning application** - The application is still invalid and NCC are liaising with the site owner directly, rather than The Northumberland Arms, in an attempt to resolve the issue of the invalid application. Whilst this is outstanding, NCC were told that the area previously used as a 'beer garden' had now ceased and NCC undertook a site visit last Tuesday which confirmed this was this case, with all outdoor seating and the marquee having also been removed and therefore, at this time, the site is not considered to be a breach of planning control. NCC state remains to be seen whether the owner will pursue the application to use this area for outdoor seating/a beer garden, but it has been put to the Northumberland Arms that this area should not recommence as an outdoor seating area until planning permission has been sought and approved.

**Dog Training Centre** – construction of compound – NCC were waiting on further information from the complainant – as none has been forthcoming they have closed the case.

**Tree Felling behind Northumberland Arms** – NCC has stated it was agreed that 3 trees would be replanted. NCC are not aware of any agreed timescales for the trees to be replanted. We are coming to the end of the planting season so this needs to be monitored to ensure it is not overlooked.

## 118 Requested Agenda Items:

- Donation request for VE Day – this is now not going ahead.
- Wall damage by Northumberland Arms – a car hit the wall beside the bus stop and two coping stones came off. This has been repaired by NCC.
- Road at Bywell Shooting Ground – the Clerk has put a request into NCC to have the road outside Bywell to be patched due to the amount of potholes. This work was due to take place imminently then Covid-19 hit and the Clerk has not had confirmation that this has undertaken and has not driven along to check due to restrictions.
- Pot Hole on road to Eshott – This has now been repaired.
- Street lights outside Pumpkin Pie Nursery – two lights were not working outside the Nursery. These were reported and NCC stated they had repaired them however the resident who reported them stated this was not the case. Cllr Lindley offered to check the situation.
- Reports of public defecation – reports have been received that due to lack of toilet facilities between Berwick and Newcastle for lorry drivers some are using local layby's and not

Cllr  
Lindley

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cleaning up after themselves. The Clerk reported this to NCC who state they do not have a byelaw in place to make it illegal for people to defecate in public. NCC has agreed to try to come out and clean this up.

## 119 Correspondence emailed to Councillors:

- NCC – Public Spaces Protection Order – alcohol consumption – for comment
- NCC – Public Spaces Protection Order for the Control of Dogs – confirmed adopted
- NCC – Confirmation of Cemetery Double Charge payment of £75 to the PC
- NCC – Neighbourhood Services Update – for information
- NCC – Household Waste Recovery Centres – reopening from Monday 4 May however this is only for waste materials that cannot be stored at home without causing risk or injury or harm to health. Strict social distancing will be required, residents may be asked to leave and come back later should lengthy queues form.
- Felton & Thirston Fair – invitation to become involved - Cancelled
- Email from Felton PC re Northumberland Day Flag Relay – Postponed to 2021
- 6 emails of complaint relating to Eshott Airfield
- Email re hawthorn cuttings and debris on lanes – this was noted and the Clerk to state to the resident that the PC will raise in future discussions and make NCC aware of the issues.
- Copy email re Traffic Calming at Bridge End
- NALC Summary of website hits
- NCC - Response to Covid 19 - Letter from Cllr Glen Sanderson
- Email update from Cllr Glen Sanderson re bridge repairs
- Defib email re renewal of pads – there was some confusion over whether more pads are required but this has now been resolved by the Stephen Carey Fund and they will inform the Clerk when more pads are needing to be ordered.
- NALC circulars
- CAN News

Clerk

## 120 Finance

(a) **Financial Summary** was reviewed with no issues and the current balance stands at £14,242.18

(b) **Payments** - The following list was put before members and was approved:

Payments in March when meeting was cancelled due to Covid-19:		
IB83	L Hamlin Salary and Expenses 40 hours for PC, 16 hours for Neighbourhood Plan Postage for Neighbourhood plan (£20.12) Home working allowance (£22.18)	£793.38
IB84	Ludman Planning – Neighbourhood Plan	£500.00
IB85	HMRC – Employer and Employee NI	£13.77
IB86	Felton PC – Rec Field (£1101.33) War Memorial (£6.29)	£1,107.62
IB87	Viking Direct – Stationery	£126.49

Payments this meeting:		
IB88	L Hamlin Salary and Expenses 16 Hours for PC Zoom Conferencing (£14.39) Microsoft Office Annual Subs (£79.99) Home Working Allowance (£11.09)	£337.47
IB89	Viking Direct – Stationery	£41.98
IB90	NALC membership and Website fee	£225.29
IB91	Zurich Insurance	£361.41

(c) **Receipts** – NCC Precept £4,425.00, HMRC VAT refund £140.10

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- (d) **Audit** – It was agreed that a Certificate of Exemption be completed for the PC s the income and expenditure did not exceed £20k which means an external audit is not required. The paperwork for this will be signed when the Chairman and Clerk can agree a time and location taking into account social distancing. The year end finances have already been circulated to the Councillors for any comments/concerns to be raised. As there were no issues the Clerk will see if the internal auditor is happy to go ahead with the audit under the current circumstances. The external auditors have extended the time period by two months but would rather have response from PCs within the normal timescales. Cllr Lindley/  
Clerk
- (e) **Insurance** – The PC to continue with Zurich Insurance who offer the best option for small councils and it was agreed to pay the renewal following this meeting.

## 121 Urgent Items

PROW through West Thirston – a resident has raised concerns that on the PROW as they attempting to do a circuit around West Thirston ... to Eshott, East Farm, Shaw, The Brocks, East Thirston and back to West Thirston but there were a number of issues with landowners blocking access to the footpath and removing signs. This has been reported to NCC however due to Covid-19 NCC are unable to progress the complaint but can look to work with the landowner in the future, NCC can help them with identifying the line and provide assistance with waymarking etc.. It was agreed the Clerk write to the landowners to request they remove any obstructions and that NCC Footpath Officer will be in touch when the current situation improves. Clerk

Two issues of flytipping have been reported – one in Bockenfield layby which is the responsibility of NCC and one in the burn beside Wintrick which is Environment Agencies issue but they are currently not undertaking such works, NCC will look at the burn issue. *[Since the meeting both areas have been cleaned up by NCC]*

Cllr Lindley also reported flytipping by the glass waste bins – Clerk to report. This will be cleared by NCC but would be better if this was done asap to stop further dumping of waste here. Clerk

Cllr Jackson asked why the car parks at Druridge Bay are not open for the public to park there for their daily exercise now the Government has changed the rules to state if the time of your journey is shorter than you one hour exercise permitted then you can drive to a location. This is not being allowed at Druridge Bay which is a big open park. Why is it closed? Clerk to ask CC Sanderson on this issue. Clerk

## 122 Items for next agenda – None at present

### Resolution to exclude public and press

**The Parish Council passed a resolution under Section 1(2) of the Public Bodies (Admissions to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude public and press due to the confidential nature of the business to be discussed, which includes discussion of personal data.**

- 123 The Clerk informed the Councillors that a solicitors' letter has been received for a claim of alleged slander. A response is required by Monday 18 May. Clerk

Chairman closed the meeting at 9.15pm

Date of Next meeting: 11 June 2020 – due to Covid-19 there are no Annual Parish Meetings this year.