

HENSHAW PARISH COUNCIL



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Draft Minutes of Meeting 26 January 2026 held in Bardon Mill & Henshaw Village Hall

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

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

2. Apologies for Absence Cllrs L. Welsh and S. Armstrong.

3. Declarations of Interest None received.

4. Public Questions None received.

5. Minutes of the previous meetings held on 24 November 2025 were read and approved.

6. General Amenities

6.1 Footpaths. The footpath from Benton House to Starbucks, which is regularly muddy and waterlogged, is hopefully going to be tarmacked by the County Council in the near future.

6.2 Seating. Clerk to arrange inspections and repainting as required in the Spring.

6.3 Street Lighting. Nothing to report.

6.4 Verge Maintenance. The recharge for the 2025 contract is expected soon. There would be no charge for 2024 as this was done on a trial basis.

6.5 Litter bins. There are no litter bins on the section between Redburn Park and Broadacres. Clerk to check costs of a new metal bin to be sited near to Springfield Terrace.

6.6 Dog Bag Dispensers. The dispensers will be refilled as soon as possible. There is an additional dispenser which is to be placed near to Bardon Mill Village Green.

7. Village Greens

7.1 Henshaw Village Green. The Chair and Clerk have met on site to look at the potential patch repairs and were arranging for estimates and options and would report back as soon as possible.

7.2 Towhouse Village Green. The 3 cottages at Towhouse on the main road are surrounded by Village Greens. All 3 properties have recently been sold and it was proposed that letters be sent to each owner/occupier to advise that the Parish Council own and manage this land.

7.3 Bardon Mill Village Green. Approval was granted at the November meeting to site a small wooden case/cabinet on the Bardon Mill Village Hall opposite the Village Tearoom which would be filled with books for people to borrow and share etc. Clerk to follow this up to check on progress.

8. Planning Applications and Issues

8.1 The County Council have advised that they are looking at the vehicle access gate installed at a property which backs onto the village green as this is a breach of planning conditions.

8.2 No applications have been received in January.

9. Transport and Highway Matters

9.1 A69. Nothing to report.

9.2 Bardon Mill Station Road Access. Network and Northern Rail are still unwilling to provide match funding for the much needed road resurfacing. Clerk and Cllr Sharp to contact Network and Northern to see if they will reconsider. Clerk to also contact Joe Morris MP on the same matter.

9.3 Road Maintenance and Potholes. No matters were reported but the Chair gave details of potential new methods be tested to repair potholes which last much longer.

9.4 Wellbank, Henshaw. Work has been carried out to remove the cleared soil and debris. Henshaw. The road at Wellbank needs resurfacing as it is not level and the surface water flows away from any of the drains and down onto the A69 junction. Clerk to raise this with the County Council again.

10. Redburn Park

10.1 General Maintenance. This has now been completed until after the winter.

10.2 Monthly Inspections. The reports continue to be circulated to Members and reviewed with any recommended work undertaken.

10.3 Unauthorised Use and Encroachment onto Western Edge of Woodland. The area had been cleared following this being raised at the last meeting. Clerk is obtaining definitive plans for the Land Registry to check the extent of the Parish Council ownership.

11. Bardon Mill & Henshaw Village Hall

11.1 Lease to Village Hall Project Group. Clerk is awaiting legal advice from Solicitors to progress the change to the lease arrangements.

11.2 The Committee have been successful in obtaining grant funding for new heating source and solar panels and these were installed recently. Work to replace the hall floor to be undertaken soon.

12. Northumberland National Park

12.1 A new CEO has been appointed and would be in post shortly.

13. Henshaw School

13.1 No matters to report.

14. Report by Clerk on Financial Matters

14.1 A report was presented by the Clerk with funds held as at 18 January being £26,311.58.

14.2 Expenditure and Income to approve/note:

- Northumberland County Council (Annual Grass Cutting Services) £1,152.38
- Storey & Dodd Ltd (Accountancy Services) £60.00
- Clerk (Wages & Expenses) £878.10 *Approved and paid in December.*
- HMRC (Tax on Wages) £210.00 *Approved and paid in December.*
- Great North Air Ambulance (Monthly Donation) £10.00. *Pre-approved and accounted for.*
- HSBC (Charges) £10.00. *Already accounted for.*
- Northern Powergrid (Wayleave Payment) £21.91 (Income)
- Bowes Leek Club (Donation to Play Park) £150 (Income).

Estimated balance following above transactions is **£25,060.11** of which £7,560.11 is operating funds and £17,500 is ringfenced for the Capital Programme.

14.3 Capital Programme. No update as estimate are awaited to consider projects.

14.4 Precept 2026/27. The Clerk provided a report on the Parish Councils budget, and information from previous years accounts for comparison. Following debate it was agreed that as expected expenditure is likely to exceed income, then the Precept would need to be raised to £19,000. Clerk to submit the Precept return to the County Council on this basis.

15. Northumberland County Council Update

15.1 The County Council were in the process of setting the 2026/27 and were looking to revise budgets as savings were needed as a result of lower than expected central Government allocation. The second 'Bardon Mill' approach sign would be installed in the near future. Changes have been made to the Crow Hall plantation proposals to address local residents concerns.

16. General Matters and Correspondence since last meeting

16.1 Update by Clerk. No matters to report other than those contained on the Agenda.

16.2 Website and Email Account. Arrangements are progressing for the new website and .gov email. It was agreed that spend of £199 be approved to engage consultants to create the new website.

16.3 Town and Parish Conference will take on 5 March with the Chair and Clerk to attend.

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

18. Date and time of next meeting. This will be on Monday 23 February 2026.

The meeting finished at 7.58pm.