

ALLENDALE PARISH COUNCIL

Agreed Minutes of a meeting of Allendale Parish Council will be held at Allendale Village Hall = on Thursday 7 August 2025 at 7pm

Present: Cllrs Archer (Chair), Beck, Charlton M, Coulson, Dalton, Dobson, Dunn, Foster (joined part way through), Kirk, Swaile, White, Mrs Naylor (Clerk)

1 Welcome and councillor news

2 Public participation

There was one member of the public present.

3 Apologies for absence

Apologies received from Cllr Jackson and Charlton S. Cllr Foster joined part way through.

4 Declarations of interest

Cllr Kirk no longer has an interest in Higher Ground, Allendale. Clerk to provide paperwork to update the declarations list which may be found here:

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

5 Planning applications

25/02202/COU Change of use from care home (C2) to restore property back to residential (C3) at Thornley Leazes Thornley Gate Allendale Hexham NE47 9NH

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

25/02203/LBC Listed Building Consent for change of use from care home (C2) to restore property back to residential (C3) at Thornley Leazes Thornley Gate Allendale Hexham NE47 9NH.

This was all internal work. Cllr Kirk proposed the motion no objection. This was seconded by Cllr Coulson and unanimously carried by the council.

25/02373/LBC Listed Building Consent - Conserve and renovate an external stone wall that forms part of the curtilage of a Grade 2 listed building known as "Isaac's Well" comprising securing any loose copingstones with lime-based mortar, raking out cement mortar where it has been used previously to re-point the wall and is now causing damage, and repointing with a lime-based mortar throughout at Isaacs Well (Water Trough) Market Place Allendale

Cllr Beck proposed the motion to support the application. This was seconded by Cllr Swaile and unanimously carried by the council.

25/02578/FUL Proposed extension to existing dwelling to form annex to provide multi-generational living at Knockburn Farm Black Way Sinderhope NE47 9SW

Cllr Dunn said that the application goes against Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan Policy 9 Extensions to Dwellings, bullet points 1 and 2, as the building materials and style were not in keeping with the original style of the building which is stone-built. The building is visible from a right of way nearby.

Cllr Dunn proposed the motion to object to the application on the grounds that it goes against policy 9, points 1 and 2, of the Allendale Neighbourhood Development Plan (Extensions to Dwellings – design, appearance and materials not in keeping). The motion was seconded by Cllr Swaile.

Five councillors supported the motion to object. Five councillors abstained. The motion to object was carried.

6 Minutes of the meeting held on 3 July 2025 – the minutes were approved.

7 **Matters arising**

Re 15.3 Cllr White said that he had been put in touch with Scott Robinson at NCC re the Allenheads septic tank but there had been no news in over three weeks. Clerk to pursue with Co Cllr Horncastle.

Re 15.4 Cllr Dunn questioned, re item 15.4, whether this was a statement of fact, that there had been parking on the village green prior to its formal registration as village green [Commons Registration Act 1965]. It was noted that this minute item was reporting the words of Cllr Kirk at the time.

Re 15.8 Cllr Dunn noted a vote of thanks to Mr Graham for his excellent work on village tidying. All agreed. Clerk to pass on a note of thanks.

8 **County Councillor and Northumberland County Council update**

Co Cllr Horncastle had sent apologies and there was no report, therefore.

9 **Urgent pre-notified business**

9.1 Planning for public consultation re parking on the village green

It had been agreed at the last full council meeting to conduct a public consultation and a document had been circulated by the working party. Cllr Kirk disputed some items in the working party document, questioning whether village green parking was the primary issue that had been raised with the parish council through its official channels (i.e. contacting the parish clerk) and noted that if a 15% return was sought, this equated to around 300 returns. There was a discussion on scope: while it could be a good thing to look at other parking issues, such as street parking, it was agreed that the survey being discussed presently would relate to the Allendale village green.

There was a discussion about method, stakeholders and timing. In terms of **method**, the drop-ins, box in fixed location and online would all use the same questionnaire. The clerk noted a need to avoid duplicate responses which, if not avoided, would skew the results.

In terms of **stakeholders**, the survey needed to encompass residents, businesses, and visitors to the square. There was a discussion as to whether there would be one response per person or per household and the need to accurately reflect the number of cars, without duplicating cars. Cllr Swaile noted that there were different issues for immediate residential parking and visitors to the square. Residents living in a defined area on or close to the market square may be using the square for the regular parking of domestic and work vehicles. For these residents, it was important to know the total number of cars per household (without duplicating this by several people filling in forms for the same cars). Visitors to the square could include residents within the parish boundary coming to the square for shopping or recreation and visitors from outside the parish, such as holiday-makers and day visitors. For visitors to the square, then the number of cars being parked in the square at any one time was key, i.e. a household could have multiple cars but only bring one to the square at any one time. Data would be needed from the hospitality industry in terms of numbers and to assess impact. Cllr Beck outlined the difficulties of anticipating the numbers of cars associated with holiday lets, which were unpredictable and variable in her experience. Different questions would be needed to assess such parking, also the pubs [for funerals see July Minute 15.4].

Cllr Swaile raised concerns about the **timing** being potentially very close to the housing needs survey which is due to be launched on 23 September 2025, although confirmation that this was going ahead was still awaited. Cllr Coulson wished for the parking survey take place after the housing needs survey so as not to detract attention from the latter, which was the result of several years' work by the parish council. If there is not sufficient take up for the housing needs survey then an opportunity for affordable housing in Allendale would be lost. Cllr Foster thought the two could happen concurrently and Cllr Beck raised the possibility of using a second room on 23 September 2025 for parking drop-ins, such that the two might feed from each other.

In terms of possible solutions, Cllr Kirk noted that the costs of any alternative parking provision would fall on the parish council. Cllr Kirk requested that the word 'viable' be inserted in front of the word 'solutions' in survey questions. It was noted that while it seemed to be a good idea to ask residents for ideas about solutions, these would not be binding on the parish council, who would have to

decide a way forward at a subsequent full council meeting. Cllr Swaile was concerned that expectations may be raised, noting that the parish council was very constrained in what it could actually do to resolve this issue. Parking is not permitted, as a default legal position, on village greens, and the powers of any potential regulation were unclear at this time. Cllr Beck saw the consultations as an opportunity for information to be provided, such as maps of the village green and re how limited the powers of the parish council are. Jared Dunn had written to the parish council to offer to help with the survey on a voluntary basis, based on his relevant professional background. The following motion was proposed by Cllr Archer, seconded by Cllr Foster. To take Mr Dunn up on his offer to help and to ask him if he was able to provide a draft survey by 28 August 2025 (one week before the September meeting). Ten voted in favour of this, with one abstention. Clerk to contact Mr Dunn.

Assuming the above timeframe works for Mr Dunn, the draft survey wording would be circulated to councillors by the clerk in advance of the September meeting, at which it would be discussed and either approved or revisions suggested. It was therefore noted that the proposed dates in September [17, 18 & 20 September] for the drop-ins were not set in stone, but that the provisional bookings with the church hall be retained if possible. A decision on time-frame would also be made at the September meeting, including a cut-off date for the boxes. Publicity for the events would therefore be done after the September meeting by the working party, once the survey content and the drop-in dates were agreed. Cllr Coulson noted that this gave only limited time to publicise the consultation. Printing of e.g. 300 copies of the survey could be done at the Co-op, Fawside, VistaPrint or by one of the councillors.

9.2 [agenda item 9.3] RoSPA reports – the reports for Denefields and Allenfields had been circulated to councillors and reviewed. The surfacing issues raised were low risk. ‘No dogs’ signs should be considered. The identified trip hazard at Denefields needs to be addressed with the steps and paths refilled with hoggin. Mark Armstrong had quoted for the work (see below). Re the Allenfields gate closure issue, Cllr Foster reported the gate is not closing currently at all. Cllr Foster to look at the gate and try to set it to the minimum closure time noted in the report.

9.3 [agenda item 9.2] Repairs at Denefields – a quote from Mark Armstrong had been circulated at £450 plus VAT. It was unanimously agreed to go ahead with this. Clerk to contact.

10 Correspondence

8.2 Bishopside woodland management – the parish council noted the correspondence.

8.7 Forge planter – photograph received from Cllr Jackson was circulated – all agreed that the Forge could add a planter where shown.

8.9 Ms White – although the tree was not on parish council land, Cllr Archer had been in touch with Karbon Homes who have been out to see the tree. Cllr Archer has visited Ms White and she is now happy.

8.10 Miss Fairless - broken seat – this was a memorial bench related to Cllr Archer’s family and is being replaced by D Archer from Stone Stile Farm.

8.14 Sandhill – Cllrs Kirk and Foster had visited the site. There is a nest of brambles at the top of the steps growing under the wall into the garden and an old stump inside them. Matty Gilbertson had been asked for a quote to dig out the brambles, after which time the stump can be assessed. To be discussed further at next meeting. Cllr Dunn suggested that this area be added to the NCC weedkilling list – agreed. Clerk to contact NCC.

8.15 County-wide local plan - Cllrs Kirk and Swaile offered to review this and bring proposals to the September meeting (response deadline 30 September). Clerk to circulate the work that had been done previously on the SHLAA to all councillors.

8.22 Tree near allotment -The tree concerned was not on allotment land and its ownership was unknown. The tree plan to be looked at by councillors and the item be discussed next month.

11 Finance

11.1 Accounts for payment/Bank reconciliation

Cllr Kirk proposed to approve the listed payments. This was seconded by Cllr Coulson and unanimously carried by the council. It was agreed to pay Mr Graham by cheque which was written out and signed in the meeting by councillors.

Community account balance as of 30.6.25 = £11,691.13

Commercial Instant Access Account as of 30.6.25 = £17,059.86

Public Sector Deposit Fund of CCLA balance as of 30.6.25 = £45,000.00

12 Matters for future agendas

Thursday 4 September:

Update on transfer to own-domain website/email (Cllr Kirk)

County-wide plan site proposals (Cllrs Kirk and Swaile)

Allotments – update re water supply/meeting of tenants; to confirm annual rental rate; and to look at quotes for hedge work

Affordable housing – update re housing needs survey and launch (23 September)

Towns and Villages – parking on village green, review of draft survey and decision on that and timeline; update re path to school re site visit (Cllr Foster); review of parish council memorial bench policy; to discuss use of telephone kiosk and visit by electrician; dropped kerbs in market place; traffic priorities for NCC traffic plan; mowing contract, extension and/or renewal; litter-picking contract; planters for Shield Street and Bullring; Sandhill brambles quote and stump assessment; tree near allotments.

Finance – small grant applications; clerk salary review

Thursday 2 October:

Review of council policy re listed buildings

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

Provision of further bus shelters

Budget planning request for initial bids from sub committees.

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

There were no items.

14 Next Parish Council Meeting: Thursday 4 September 7pm, Allendale Village Hall

The meeting ended at 8.30pm