

CARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

Parish Council website: <https://carhamparish.org>

Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on Monday 12th May 2025 In St Cuthbert's Church Carham at 6.30p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman P Feerick
Parish Councillors V Poland, M De Fusco, & D Wells
County Councillor M Mather
Clerk I Hunter
8 members of public

Chairman's Annual report 2024/25- The Chairman read out his annual report for 2024/25.
A copy of the Chairman's report is attached to these minutes.

Questions from members of the public:

- 1- **Newsletter-** Please can the pages be numbered and can the newsletter be printed in black & white to show a contrast in colour, as the current set up is difficult to read for residents with impaired vision.
Parish Councillor V Poland said that page one has the title on it and page two is numbered. Only the standing information is black on grey; the main content is always black on white. The newsletter is on the website as a pdf, which can be read by a screen reader or enlarged. That said, she would be happy to produce a plain text version of the newsletter which could be emailed to any resident who requested it and provided an email address.
- 2- **Broadband-** The broadband speed in parts of the parish is not very good.
County Councillor M Mather advised the meeting that it is recognised that there are gaps in the provision across the county, and Northumberland County Council are lobbying for all residents to have the opportunity to access faster broadband.
He agreed to provide an update at the next Parish Council meeting.
- 3- **Bus Services-** Are there any updates on an acceptable bus service for the residents in Carham parish?
County Councillor M Mather reported that Northumberland County Council and Scottish Borders Council are having regular meetings to try to provide a more integrated service. The latest suggestion was not the right offer as neither the connectivity nor the timetable would be suitable for Carham parish.
Both Councils are continuing to work on a timetable to suit the parish. A bus service along the B6350 must go right through from the national border to Cornhill on Tweed, not just to Carham or just to Wark.

Meeting closed at 18.45 p.m.

Chairman_____

Date_____

Ch's Initials_____

CARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 12th May 2025 In St Cuthbert's Church Carham at 6.46p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman P Feerick
Parish Councillors V Poland, M De Fusco, & D Wells
County Councillor M Mather
Clerk I Hunter
8 Members of public

All Parish Councillors present signed a Declaration of Acceptance form and completed a Declaration of Interest form

Min 586- Election of Chairman for 2025/26- Parish Councillor V Poland proposed & Parish Councillor M De Fusco seconded Parish Councillor P Feerick as Chairman for the forthcoming year. This was agreed. Parish Councillor P Feerick accepted the position and signed the Declaration of Acceptance form.

Min 587- Election of Vice-Chairman for 2025/26- The Chairman proposed & Parish Councillor D Wells seconded Parish Councillor M De Fusco as Vice-Chairman for the forthcoming year. This was agreed. Parish Councillor M De Fusco accepted the position and signed the Declaration of Acceptance form.

Min 588- Chairman's Annual Report 2024/25- Parish Councillors noted the Chairman's Annual Report for 2024/25 which had been read out at the Annual Parish Assembly earlier. A copy of the Annual Report is attached to these minutes.

Min 589- Apologies for Absence: Parish Councillors J McGregor & J Chubb

Min 590- Declaration of Interest: Parish Councillor V Poland declared a personal & prejudicial interest in Agenda No 19 – defibrillators as a member of the Parish Defibs Committee.

Min 591- Request for Dispensation

- (i) To receive from members who have a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in any items on the agenda an application for dispensation under section 33 of the Localism Act 2011 to enable members to participate in discussions and voting.
- (ii) To consider requests for dispensation.

Min 592- Minutes of the Meeting: The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 10th March 2025 previously circulated were agreed as a true record, the Chairman signed a hard copy.

Matters arising from the minutes if not already on the agenda- None

Min 593- Parish Council Policies

- Parish Councillors agreed to adopt the previously circulated Code of Conduct
- Parish Councillors agreed to adopt the previously circulated Standing Orders.
- Parish Councillors agreed to adopt the previously circulated Parish Council's Complaints Procedure

Min 594- County Councillor report- County Councillor M Mather provided the following updates:

Highways- Northumberland County Council are awaiting an update from Central Government on the allocation of additional funding for highways. He has asked for the road through Wark to be added to the list of roads to be resurfaced using the additional funding.

We are pushing for more structural repairs when filling potholes. Please keep reporting any road defects on fix my street.

Signage- He will again raise the new signage at Carham and at the border on fix my street as to date the current signage has still not been replaced.

Vegetation- If there are any hedges, trees or vegetation overhanging the highway please report the issue on fix my street. Northumberland County Council have adopted a policy to clarify who is responsible for cutting back any hedges & trees etc overhanging the highway. Therefore, now the local Highway's Inspector is contacting and working with landowners to gain an understanding as to who is responsible for what. The annual verge cutting contracts have been agreed.

Questions: - Parish Councillors raised concerns about the 2 missing chevrons as you enter Wark village stated the issue had been reported several times and still no action.

County Councillor M Mather agreed to investigate the issue.

Min 595- Annual Governance and Accountability Return for 2024/25

- 12.1 Parish Councillors considered and agreed that no actions had been raised from the report of the internal auditor.
- 12.2 Parish Councillors approved the Annual Governance Statement.
- 12.3 Parish Councillors approved the draft annual accounts for 2024/25
- 12.4 Parish Councillors approved the Accounting Statement and Explanation of Variances.

Parish Councillor V Poland reminded the meeting that the Parish Council had 2 speed warning signs, of which 1 had been funded via the previous County Councillor.

The Clerk agreed to update the Asset Register as of 1st April the value of the speed warning sign will be £1 as the Parish Council did not purchase it.

- 12.5 Parish Councillors agreed the Chairman & Clerk sign the Certification of Exemption ahead of submission.
- 12.6 Parish Councillors agreed to give a vote of thanks to the Internal Auditor.

Min 596- Financial Statement- Bank Balance £ 1913.66 as at 31st March 2025

Min 597- Receipts-

- Northumberland CC £ 1250.00 ½ Annual precept

Min 598- Accounts for Payment

- ICO £ 47.00 Annual Data Protection fee D/D
- John Lauder £ 217.77 Play Park- Repair fence
- P Feerick £ 22.46 Telephone box – toughened glass

Min 599- Annual Insurance Premium

- The Chairman advised the meeting that the current Insurance provider Hiscox had quoted £523.64 for the 2025/26 Annual Insurance Premium. He contacted Zurich Municipal for an alternative quote for the Annual Insurance Premium, and they have quoted £333 for the 2025/26 Annual Insurance Premium.
- Parish Councillors asked the Chairman to obtain clarity from Zurich Municipal on the All Risks cover & Liability cover for Parish Councillors within the policy.
- Parish Councillors agreed in principle that if the All Risks cover & Liability cover for Parish Councillors in the Zurich Municipal policy meet the needs of Carham Parish Council then the Chairman organise the payment of £333 to Zurich Municipal. The final decision to be agreed via email and ratified at the July Parish Council meeting.

Min 600- Telephone box

- Parish Councillors noted the damage to the telephone box in Wark.
- Parish Councillors ratified the payment of £22.46 to the Chairman for the purchase of toughened glass to repair the telephone box.
- Parish Councillors accepted the offer of plants for the area next to the telephone box. The Chairman advised the meeting that he had contacted the residents who were offering the plants free of charge, which will be planted in the autumn.
- Parish Councillors gave a vote of thanks to 2 volunteers who had undertaken work on the retaining wall etc in this area.

Min 601- Play Area- Parish Councillors ratified the placing of the order with Playsafety for the Annual ROSPA inspection of the Wark play area.

Min 602- Defibrillator- Parish Councillor V Poland provided the following updates:

- Carham Parish Defibs had held their 1st AGM
 - 2 new funding events had been organised.
 - The committee will provide a donation to Carham Parish Council to help the Parish Council to purchase 2 defibrillators, suggesting 1 defibrillator could be installed in Carham & the other one could be installed near Wark play area.
- We are investigating if Northumberland County Council will allow access to the appropriate streetlight to enable power to be provided for the defibrillator cabinets. County Councillor M Mather advised the meeting that there may be alternative options for the defibrillator cabinets if the power supply is an issue and said he would support training sessions once the defibrillators are installed.

Min 603- Speed Warning Sign-

- Parish Councillors noted the correspondence received from a resident
- Parish Councillors confirmed that the speed warning sign at Wark is not working correctly, and Parish Councillor J McGregor is in dialogue with the provider and trying to find a resolution.

Min 604- Parish Council noticeboard- Parish Councillor V Poland raised concerns about the state of the Parish Council noticeboard.

Parish Councillors agreed that the local Men's Shed group could be asked to look at the noticeboard to see if it can be repaired. Parish Councillor D Wells to be the lead Parish Councillor for this project.

Min 605- Bank Account- Parish Councillors noted the current bank signatory list and agreed to amend the signatory list to add the new Clerk.

Min 606- HMRC/PAYE- Parish Councillors agreed the Clerk register Carham Parish Council with HMRC to allow a PAYE Account to be set up.

Min 607- Parish Council meeting dates for 2025/26- Parish Councillors agreed the previously circulated Parish Council meeting dates for 2025/26.

Any Other Business.

Min 608- Local issues- Parish Councillors agreed the Clerk contact Northumberland County Council asking if there is any guidance as to what residents can and cannot do in relation to feeding birds and wildlife especially in the rural areas.

Min 609- Community Police Report- The following report was received on 8th May.

I was made aware of some damage caused to the telephone kiosk in Wark in March where a pane of glass was damaged. There have not been any further similar reports, and I have not yet received full information regarding who owns the kiosk and when the crime has occurred to create a specific crime report. Fortunately, it appears as if other similar kiosks in the surrounding hamlets have not been affected. There have been no other reports of anti-social behaviour or crimes that would be relevant for the Parish Council since the last meeting in March, and no further issues to report.

Date of the next Parish Council Meeting will be on 14th July 2025 at 6.30p.m.
in St Cuthbert's Church Carham

Meeting closed at 19.25 p.m.

Chairman_____

Ch's Initials_____