

CARHAM PARISH COUNCIL

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

Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on Monday 13th July 2026 In St Cuthbert's Church Carham at 6.30 p.m.

PRESENT: Chairman M De Fusco
Parish Councillors J McGregor, J Moore & D Wells
County Councillor M Mather
Clerk I Hunter
6 Members of public

Public Question Time: None

Community Police: The Clerk read out the following report
Since the last meeting on the 11th May there has been no reports of crime within Carham parish. There are no current crime trends that I feel should impact the Carham community.
In relation to anti-social behaviour there have been no reports within the Carham parish over the same period and none in neighbouring areas that I feel should impact the Carham community.

Min 734- New Parish Councillor- Parish Councillor J Moore signed the Declaration of Acceptance form and joined the Parish Council at that point.

Min 735-Chairman's welcome- The Chairman welcomed everyone to the July Parish Council meeting.

Min 736- Apologies for Absence: None

Min 737- Declaration of Interest: Parish Councillors J McGregor & D Wells declared a personal & prejudicial interest in Planning Application No 26/01442/FUL as Trustees of Wark on Tweed Charity.
Parish Councillors J McGregor & D Wells declared a personal & prejudicial interest in Agenda item No 15- Play Area as Trustees of Wark on Tweed Charity.

Min 738- 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.
- Parish Councillor D Wells requested a dispensation in Planning Application No 26/01442/FUL to allow the Parish Council to consider the planning application.
This was granted,

Min 739- Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly: The previously circulated Minutes of the Annual Parish Assembly held on 11th May 2026 were agreed as a true record, the Chairman signed a hard copy.

Min 740- Minutes of the Meeting: The previously circulated Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 11th May 2026 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 741- County Councillor report- County Councillor M Mather provided the following updates:

Road Traffic collision- I am writing a letter of complaint to BT/Openreach in relation to the recent incident where a pole was hit in Wark and a diversion was required. Northumberland County Council put a temporary diversion in place when the incident happened as BT/Openreach had advised Northumberland County Council that they would have staff onsite in 2-4 hours. However, this did not happen which led to vehicles taking unsuitable routes. Northumberland County Council attended the site on the Monday morning and installed an appropriate diversion route. The issue had been logged with the Community Resilience team, and they are chasing for an update when the wifi and fibre optics will be repaired, to date we do not have a switch on date.

Local Plan-Northumberland County Council must deliver 34,000 new houses across Northumberland. Central Government are changing the planning process, there will be less engagement, local area planning committees will be removed, and County Councillors will lose the right to call planning applications into committee. Planning Officers will determine between 95-98% of the planning applications. Northumberland County Council are challenging the changes.

Weeds & grass cutting- North Northumberland now have 2 ATV's to help with the weed spraying which means that officers are now back on track with the grass cutting & weed spraying. If there is an issue with weeds on footpaths, please report the issue on Fix my street. All the verge cutting in the north area has been completed. Northumberland County Council are investigating improving the way weeds are treated in the future, one option is to reduce the £3m budget spent on litter picking by using A1 technology to catch culprits who drop litter because currently it takes 20 operatives 4 nights x2 a year to litter pick a specific road, if this works we aim to use the savings to treat weeds. Northumberland County Council received complaints about the level of litter on the edge of the A1, yes Northumberland County Council have the contract to litter pick the edge of the A1, however, the work needs to be undertaken when National Highways have lane closures, and National highways do not advise Northumberland County Council when they intend to have lane closures.

Dualling A1- At the last Northumberland County Council Full Council meeting a motion to lobby Central Government & National Highways to dual the A1 from Morpeth to the Scottish border was agreed by all political parties. Northumberland County Council have agreed to fund the feasibility studies as part of the evidence gathering as proof the road needs to be dualled.

Roads- Northumberland County Council are catching up on the road resurfacing, there had been an issue with the hot weather and tar not going off in a reasonable time.

Police meeting- All 10 Parish Councils in the Wooler ward were represented at the recent meeting with the Police. The Chief Inspector & Sergeant Duncan Budge represented the Police.

It was agreed to set up a Community Speed Watch for the Wooler ward; we are currently looking for volunteers to be part of a central pool of Community Speed Watch volunteers.

The Chair advised the meeting that the Police meeting was worthwhile and suggested it should be repeated.

County Councillor M Mather replied it is hoped to hold a meeting every 6 months.

Parish Councillor J Moore asked about weed spraying organic land.

County Councillor M Mather replied that Northumberland County Council only weed spray on land they own.

Min 742- Room hire

- Parish Councillors considered the email from St Cuthbert's Church Carham in relation to an annual room hire fee of £190 per year up to 2028 for Parish Council meetings.
- Parish Councillors agreed to accept the annual fee of £190 per year fixed until 2028.

Min 743- Financial Statement

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| • Current Account | £2,483.49 |
| • Instant Access Savings A/c | £2,007.07 |

Min 744- Receipts-

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| • Wark Charity | £ 250.00 | Telephone box area- donation |
| • Bank of Scotland | £ 1.68 | Instant Access Savings A/c- Interest |
| • HMRC | £ 121.64 | VAT Refund |

Min 745- Accounts for Payment

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| • Bank of Scotland | £ 8.50 | Monthly service charge x 2 |
| • E I Hunter | £ 171.16 | Salary 20.5 hours @ £13.91 per hour |
| • HMRC | £ 114.00 | PAYE |
| • Playsafety Ltd | £ 99.60 | Play Area- Annual ROSPA Inspection |

Parish Councillor J McGregor suggested the Parish Council explore changing the Bank Accounts to either Revolut or Wise Bank.

Parish Councillors agreed the Clerk investigate the criteria of bank suggested banks.

Parish Councillor J McGregor declared a personal & prejudicial interest in the following planning application as he was the applicant. He did not take part in the debate or vote.

Min 746- Planning Application

26/01442/FUL-Construction of single storey building for use as a village hall for the local and surrounding community-Wark Play area Wark

Parish J McGregor explained the background to the planning application.

He did not take part in the debate or vote.

Parish Councillors considered the planning application and agreed to submit no comments to the planning application.

4 members of the public raised concerns that they were unable to hear Parish Councillors, thanked County Councillors M Mather for the updated bus timetables and left the meeting at that point.

Min 747- Play Area-

- Parish Councillor J McGregor provided a verbal update on the Expression of Interest for the land to be transferred to Carham Parish Council from Northumberland County Council.
Parish Councillors were unable to consider this agenda item as the Parish Council did not have a quorum of Parish Councillors who did have a conflict of interest.
Parish Councillors agreed to consider the draft Expression of Interest form via email.
- Parish Councillors deferred the consideration of a lead Parish Councillor & lead member of Wark-on-Tweed Charity to work on the terms of reference for the transfer if the Parish Council agreed to proceed with the transfer as the Parish Council did not have a quorum of Parish Councillors who did have a conflict of interest.
- Parish Councillors received the Annual ROSPA inspection report of the play area.
- Parish Councillors agreed Parish Councillor J McGregor ask J Lauder to undertake works identified as high amber within the ROSPA report.
Parish Councillors allocated a £200 budget for works.
- Parish Councillors agreed the payment of £99.60 to Playsafety Ltd for the Annual ROSPA Inspection for the play area.

Min 748- Public Rights of Way- Parish Councillors agreed to defer this agenda item until the September meeting as Parish Councillor J Chubb was not in attendance.

Min 749- Trees- Parish Councillor J McGregor advised the meeting that he had spoken to former Parish Councillor V Poland and provided a verbal update about replacing the plaques on the trees at 3 locations within the parish known as “The Queens Green Canopy 2022”.
Parish Councillors agreed to receive a further update from Parish Councillor J McGregor at the September Parish Council meeting ahead of making any decisions.

Min 750- Speed Warning Sign- Parish Councillor J McGregor advised the meeting that the speed warning sign at Wark is not working again.
Parish Councillors agreed the Clerk contact Swarco asking for a cost to repair the sign.

Min 751- Wark Telephone box area

- Parish Councillor J McGregor proposed that the Parish Council advertise in The Fourum for volunteers to undertake the ground maintenance at the Wark telephone box.
- Parish Councillors agreed that the Clerk place an advert in The Fourum for volunteers.
- Parish Councillor J McGregor proposed installing a seat near the telephone box area for people waiting on the bus.
- Parish Councillors agreed the Clerk obtain a quote for a seat; Parish Councillors J McGregor & D Wells provide photos of possible locations.

Min 752- Local issues

- Parish Councillor J McGregor advised the meeting that Wark farm is up for sale which includes the identification of 2 plots for possible residential development.
- County Councillor M Mather advised the meeting that any landowner can put their land up for sale for housing. Also, Northumberland County Council as part of the review of the Local Plan had put out a call for sites for development.
- Parish Councillors noted the information.

Min 753- Correspondence

- NCC- Email- Update from Cabinet Member for Highways.
- NCC- Email- Feedback on the Parish Council's 3 priorities for the Local Transport Plan programme.
- **North Northumberland Voluntary Forum-** Email- Request for nominations for Voluntary & Community Awards 2026 by 31st July
- NCC- Email- Digital switchover update.

Any Other Business.

Min 754- Road diversions- Parish Councillor D Wells asked if in future there needs to be a diversion in the Wark area can it be a diversion suitable for all vehicles and could the speed limit be reduced to 20mph.
County Councillor M Mather advised the meeting that Northumberland County Council Streetworks would access any diversion, however, if the issue is a utility issue, then that utility company will be responsible for the diversion. Also, 20mph limits are only placed outside schools, as DfT states that 30mph is a safe speed limit. However, I do recognise it is difficult to have a diversion around Wark.

Date of the next Parish Council Meeting will be on 7th September 2026 at 6.30p.m.
in St Cuthbert's Church Carham

EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Parish Councillors passed the following resolution:

The Council may be recommended to pass a resolution under the Public Bodies (Admission to Meetings) Act 1960 to exclude the media and public from the discussion of the following business on the basis that public discussion may prejudice the Council's position and/or staffing issues may be discussed.

The members of the public left the meeting at this point

Min 755- Confidential Minutes of the Annual Parish Council Meeting held on 11th May 2026

The previously circulated Minutes of the Confidential Annual Parish Council meeting held on 11th May 2026 were agreed as a true record, the Chairman signed a hard copy.

Chairman_____