

Lesbury Parish Council

**Meeting
Tuesday 23 September 2025**

The Monthly Parish Council Meeting was held this evening at 7.30pm at Lesbury Village Hall.

Present: Cllrs Hodgson (Vice Chair) (AH), Brunger (JB), Knowles (DK), Hall (JuH), Starkey (LS), Wilmshurst (MW) and Wynne (EW).

In attendance: Cllr Franklin (KF) (online - no voting/decisions undertaken), Laura Rowberry (RAF Boulmer), 5 members of the public and Elizabeth Taylor (Clerk) (ET).

	Parish Council Meeting Minutes	ACTION
	<p>Public Questions:</p> <p>Hipsburn Flagpole: Billy McKnight (BM) was in attendance. It was noted a number of complaints had been received about flying the St George Flag. The decision to fly the St George's flag was not politically motivated. It was put up to mark and celebrate the recent successes of the England Women's football team, who won the European Championship, and the England Women's rugby team, who are currently playing in the final of the Rugby World Cup this weekend. The flag is intended as a show of support for these achievements in women's sport. However, the political concern was noted and it was agreed to be taken down after the rugby final has taken place. It was also agreed BM to contact the PC for any future requests to fly a flag for PC approval.</p> <p>Hipsburn Xmas Tree: BM requested permission to purchase Xmas lights @ £29.99. The PC agreed and thanked BM for organising the Xmas tree in Hipsburn each year.</p> <p>High Path: Clive Church reported that the storm damaged fence that ran alongside the High Path had not been fully repaired down the A1068 – there was a large gap where the fence was missing next to the footpath that hadn't been replaced and this could prove dangerous in the winter months. ET confirmed this had been reported to NCC on a number of occasions. Clive Church and other residents to report to NCC FixMyStreet.</p>	
1.	<p>RAF Boulmer Project Works: Laura Rowberry (LR) was in attendance to advise contractors will soon begin work on 2 major building projects at RAF Boulmer: to provide new living and working accommodation across both the Main Site and Operations Site with construction expected to continue into 2027. RAF Boulmer will work closely with contractors to minimise disruption. Residents may notice an increase in construction traffic, particularly through the villages of Lesbury and Longhoughton. A request has been made to avoid peak times. LR is to be the main point of contact and will attend the PC meetings for the duration of the works. It was confirmed large vehicles would enter the site from the A1 and via Longhoughton and it would be mainly smaller vehicles traveling through Lesbury. LR also agreed to liaise with RAF personnel about speeding through the village.</p>	
2.	<p>Apologies: Bendix (Chair) (TB) and County Cllr Wendy Pattison (WP)</p>	
3.	<p>Declarations of Interest: MW advised of a future conflict of interest for any items relating to Northumberland National Landscape Partnership. MW to complete a new pecuniary interest form and send to NCC.</p>	MW
4.	<p>Minutes: It was noted that David Barnes had requested a correction of the July minutes, as follows: "It is unsuitable to progress because of the size of the tennis court and it's restrictive use" The tennis court is a full size tennis court. As outlined in the business plan provided this has been measured and confirmed. The space around the tennis court would not be large enough to host County or National Tennis events but that was never, and has never, been the intention of the tennis club. "The poor condition of the facility and the cost to bring it back to a safe space" The Parish are aware that no request has been made for the PC to fund the tennis club and have been provided with a full business plan reflecting how the tennis club would be funded going forward.</p>	

Chairman: _____

Date: _____

	<p>“Safe space for children only tennis” The Parish are aware that the proposal would be to allow all ages, abilities and background to play tennis in the village. With the request for the above corrections by David Barnes noted, the minutes of 29 July 2025 were signed as a true record.</p>	
5.	<p>Matters Arising from Previous Minutes A1068 Roadside Littering: It was agreed to postpone any further decisions on this matter until further comms were received from Harry Humble. JuH to attend a Police Liaison Meeting that Longhoughton PC hold with N'bria Police on 21/10/25. Online Banking: MW still progressing online banking. VMS Signs: No update on Ken Ramsey passing on contact details so that KF could make contact to discuss speeding issues, data collection from the VMS signs, etc. ET confirmed the VMS sign on South View was now on a 3 year maintenance contract with Swarco until 2027. Steppey Lane Footbridge: JuH confirmed the works had still not been signed off as the works had not been undertaken satisfactorily not least the footpath was still in a poor state and the drain remained covered in soil. JuH to contact NCC. Bilton Footpath and Overgrown Hedge: ET advised no further feedback from NCC other than Bob Hodgson had asked NCC Highways to inspect the overgrown hedge at Bilton which was restricting the width of an already narrow footpath. It was agreed concerned residents should also report on NCC FixMyStreet. PC Email: ET progressing and will have a proposal for the next meeting. Blocked Drains: AH to report the drains outside the Coach Inn on FixMyStreet. Community Shop Sign: JuH confirmed planning consent wasn't needed for the sign but advertising consent was required. It was agreed the application to be made by the PC so that no fees are incurred. JuH to circulate for approval.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">MW KF JuH ET AH JuH</p>
6.	<p>Matters Arising:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> a) Conservation of Old Mill Wall – ET confirmed Jonathan Aird had been appointed to replace Peter Manion (who was unable to now carry out the works). Jonathan Aird had matched the quote previously agreed and was now liaising with Jemma Reay, NCC Highways Engineer to progress the necessary paperwork to undertake works. b) The Wynd – care/maintenance proposal – ET had organised a quote from Penny Royale to carry out regular tidying and maintenance works at The Wynd. The area was an important community facility and wasn't being cared for to a satisfactory level by NCC when grass cutting. NCC to continue to cut the grass but Penny Royale to carry out additional works to keep the area looking neat and tidy and a positive asset for the community. The cost will be circa £185 plus waste disposal charges initially and £45 per session thereafter plus waste disposal charges. This was proposed by JuH, 2nd MW, all agreed. c) Alnmouth Train Station Access/Egress: it was noted that WP had flagged a complaint received about parking and congestion at Alnmouth Railway Station and that WP had again suggested a one-way system for Curly Lane and South View. WP had previously suggested this at the May PC meeting after being elected due to concerns from local people. WP had spoken with Robin McCartney of NCC who advised a one-way system could be looked at, however as the PC weren't on board, it hadn't been progressed. JuH confirmed the PC had liaised extensively with Robin McCartney at NCC about the issues of parking and congestion in and around the station and that Robin McCartney had attended the July 2024 PC meeting where he advised all action that NCC thought viable had been now been taken to improve the issues/problems in this area and that no further action/intervention would be taken but that NCC would 	<p style="text-align: center;">ET ET</p>

Chairman: _____

Date: _____

	<p>continually monitor and review the situation. ET also confirmed an email dated 28/5/25 had been sent to Robin McCartney following on from WP's suggestion at the May PC meeting of a one-way system advising that the PC had considered that suggestion but instead requested NCC highways undertake a further review of the access/egress to the train station and, in particular, a review of the bad junctions, the parking issues and access/egress problems in that area. It was hoped that following this further review, NCC highways could propose any further suitable/viable remedial actions that it can undertake to help. Robin McCartney had replied on 18/6/25 to advise that he had passed the issue to NCC Improvements team, they will consider the issues once they have availability in their programmes and will respond once this has been reviewed.</p> <p>Hipsburn School: it was noted that the solution by NCC Highways to install the traffic calming was not working satisfactorily and cars were now speeding off the roundabout to get past the traffic calming rather than it reducing their speed. EW also flagged concern about the lack of signage that vehicles were travelling near/past a school.</p> <p>d) Lesbury Neighbourhood Plan Review: JuH had contacted Vanessa Clark at NCC to review the policies in the NDP to ensure it is still relevant and fit for purpose for the future. NCC to undertake a review and to advise of any suggested amendments/changes in time for the October PC meeting.</p>	JuH
7.	<p>County Councillor Wendy Pattison – Northumberland County Council Update WP had previously circulated a report.</p> <p>Local Markets/Shopping Local: NCC is encouraging residents and visitors alike to support local markets and high streets as part of a wider drive to boost the county's economy. To find your nearest market/opening times: https://nland.uk/NCCMarkets2025</p> <p>N'land Data Centre: A multi-billion pound data centre at Cambois was granted planning permission in March and represents a significant inward investment of up to £10 billion. It will be one of the largest in the UK and will deliver hundreds of long-term jobs to operate the centres, plus 1,200 long-term construction jobs over several years of construction and could support up to 2,700 indirect/induced jobs.</p> <p>Bird Flu: All bird keepers are encouraged to be vigilant for signs of ill health in their birds following increased cases of avian influenza. The guidance applies to anyone keeping birds, whether it's a few hens in a back garden, rearing game birds or a large commercial farm. If you keep captive birds such as poultry, including as pets, and you suspect avian influenza you must report this to DEFRA on 0300 0200 301. More details at: https://www.gov.uk/guidance/avian-influenza-bird-flu</p> <p>High Hedge Complaints: If you have been unable to resolve a high hedge dispute with your neighbour you can request NCC look into your complaint under Part 8 of the Anti-social Behaviour Act 2003. NCC charge £400 to investigate a high hedge complaint. NCC's role is not to mediate or negotiate between the complainant and the hedge owner but to decide whether the hedge is adversely affecting the complainants' reasonable enjoyment of their property. All high hedge complaints are made available on our Public Access Planning Register. Visit www.northumberland.gov.uk and use the advanced search and pick High Hedge Complaint from the drop-down application type list.</p> <p>Council Tax Scam: NCC residents are being warned to be on their guard following another spate of Council Tax scams.</p>	
8.	<p>Planning</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 25/02998/FUL – demolition of rear single storey bathroom, entrance, utility extensions and remove mineral flat roof section on main pitched roof. Replace 	

Chairman: _____

Date: _____

	<p>with single, two storey rear extension, extend main roof to form natural slate roof and add new window opening to south elevation - Par 3 Cottage, Foxton Hall, Foxton Drive, Alnmouth, NE66 3BE – application had just been received but the PC were mindful to object due to raising the roof to a two storey extension, which will negatively impact on a neighbouring property blocking out the natural light.</p>	
9.	<p>Correspondence Received</p> <p>a) NCC – Local Transport Plan (LTP) Capital Programme 2026/27 to 2028/29 – Top 3 Priorities - ET confirmed NCC had agreed to an extension to the deadline for submission after the October PC meeting to enable AH to attend the meeting on 29/9/25 and report back to the PC on 28/10/25.</p> <p>b) NCC Budget and Corporate Priorities Meeting – 9/10/25 – noted</p> <p>c) Alnwick Town Council - Alnwick & District NDP Review – Pre-Submissin Draft Consultation – noted and best wishes for a successful plan extended.</p> <p>d) N'land Coast National Landscape – Management Plan Review – EW had circulated the response by Longhoughton PC to the plan. It was agreed the PC wouldn't respond but asked ET to write to Adrian Hinchcliffe to advise that the PC agreed with all the points Longhoughton made supported/endorsed their comments/feedback. The PC also asked ET to thank Adrian for the valuable representation he makes for our parish as our Southern Area representative.</p> <p>e) Clive Church – Lesbury Tennis Club – noted. Clive Church spoke further about the Lesbury Tennis Club proposal and his feelings on the matter. The PC noted his position and Clive noted the PCs position; that it was not in favour of reinstating the old tennis court at its current location. The PC is not the leaseholder and therefore cannot make a determination; that falls to the Village Hall Committee and the Bowls Club. However, the PC remain open to future discussions, particularly those focused on collaborative opportunities to enhance sporting activities for all residents in Lesbury.</p> <p>f) David Barnes – Lesbury Tennis Club – noted. See item 4 above.</p> <p>g) Andrew Martin – Hipsburn Flagpole – noted – see public questions above.</p> <p>h) Mark Thackara – Allotment Enquiry – ET had responded to advise the PC does not own any allotments but had suggested local alternatives such as joining the gardeners group, the community orchard team, the cricket club maintenance team, Alnwick Garden Volunteers. Mark was in attendance at the meeting.</p> <p>i) NCC – Thriving Together Newsletter July #2, Aug #1 and #2 and Sept - noted</p> <p>j) NALC Update – August and September 2025 – noted</p> <p>k) Friends of Alnmouth Station: Congratulations were offered to the Friends for being awarded their 4th consecutive Gold award at Northumbria in Bloom 2025. The PC extended warm thanks to all involved in making our station look so attractive, warm and welcoming for residents and visitors alike.</p> <p>l) NCC Community Governance Review (CGR): It was noted that NCC has given notice that they are to conduct a CGR. This takes place every 10-15 years to review PCs to see if they require changes and are viable. The full consultation will take place between February-September 2026, but the PC are being invited to submit a Pre-Consultation Questionnaire. It was agreed the PC is happy with: the current number of Parish Councillors (10); the current warding arrangement (none); the current Grouping of Parishes (ie not grouped); the Parish Boundary. ET to respond.</p> <p>m) NCC Polling District & Polling Places Review – no action required as the PC was happy with Lesbury Village Hall being used as the Polling Station.</p> <p>n) Mark Church – Pond Field Play Area: it was reported an area of ground near the swing is particularly boggy. This area over the years is often very wet but</p>	<p>AH</p> <p>ET</p> <p>ET</p> <p>ET</p>

Chairman: _____

Date: _____

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	ET to contact Penny Royale to enquire whether it might be an opportunity to plant to help soak up the water and make a small feature area. o) NCC – North N’land Community Partnership meeting – 25.9.25 - noted	ET
10.	Parish Financial Matters a) NCC (Precept) - £8,500 – CREDIT - noted b) Swarco (South View 3 yr Maintenance Contract to 31/6/28) - £691.36 – noted c) A J Mears Unstumpable (Storm Floris Tree Damage The Wynd) - £150 – noted d) Lloyds Bank (Bank Charges May/June/July £4.25 per month) - £12.75 - agreed e) Info Commissioners Office (GDPR) - £52 - agreed f) Clerk (September Wages) - £545.16 - agreed g) HMRC (Sept £129.80 PAYE and £34.79 Employers NI) - £164.59 - agreed h) Penny Royale (Lesbury Works) - £53.22 - agreed i) Multiutillis (Graffiti at Curly Lane Bus Stop) - £33.49 - agreed j) N’land Estates (Rent Pond Field £100 / Memorial Garden £40) - £140 - agreed k) Penny Royale (Lesbury Works) - £70.34 – agreed l) Multiutillis (Clear-up broken glass A1068 bus stop) - £27.50 agreed	
11.	Pond Field Play Area: As instructed at the July PC meeting, ET had obtained and circulated the cost for Playdale to inspect the swing and other issues raised in the RoSPA Play Safety report from the annual inspection in July 2025. Playdale advised they can carry out onsite inspections and discuss all options and quote for repairs where necessary, the cost is £150.00 +VAT. ET reported Playdale also offer an annual maintenance package at £650 + VAT per annum which includes an annual inspection and 3 operation inspections during which the playground inspector will thoroughly check the playground for you and then we can quote for any repairs required. It was agreed the PC doesn’t have the expertise and therefore needs to contract a specialist. All the equipment in the play area is Playdale therefore it makes sense they carry out the inspections/repairs. Proposed DK, 2 nd JuH, all agreed.	ET
12.	Any Other Matters for Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smashed Bus Shelter Glass A1068: It was noted following the last repair, Clear Channel had advised the bus shelter was decommissioned and therefore getting replacement glass was difficult. AH to get a quote for Perspex. • Newsletter: JuH advised the Autumn newsletter would soon be ready for distribution and volunteers would be needed. 	AH ALL
13.	NEXT MEETING: 7.30pm – Tuesday 28 October 2025 – Lesbury Village Hall	ALL

The meeting concluded at 9.08pm

Chairman: _____

Date: _____