

Shilbottle Parish Council

Minutes of a meeting of Shilbottle Parish Council held on
Wednesday 08 October 2025 at 18.30
In The Haven Community Room

Public Speaking

- 1.1. There was no public speaking.

2. Welcome by Chair

- 2.1. The Chair welcomed all the attendees.
- 2.2. Chair has sent a letter to The Duke of Northumberland covering various issues being encountered with his staff acting for The Northumberland Estates.
- 2.3. Chair has met with new Headteacher of the Primary School, Mr. C. Shaw, and welcomed him to the village.
- 2.4. Welfare Roundabout removed after being highlighted as a hazard. This has provided many years' service stretching back decades
- 2.5. Lettings for The Haven Community Rooms – Cllr Smith volunteered to undertake letting schedule and take bookings.
- 2.6. Recently deceased resident of The Haven's daughter would like to give bench to Shilbottle. The location was discussed and several ideas were tabled. Suggested location in front of The Haven Community Room. Proposed Cllr Smith, seconded Cllr Anderson, vote unanimous.
- 2.7. Newsletter – These are ready for distribution.
- 2.8. Councillors put forward a suggestion to send a card for Friendly Frogs for the outstanding level of service they provide. Clerk to arrange for next meeting where councillors can add their names to card before sending.

3. Those Present

- 3.1. Councillors Y. Douglas, A Brewis, H Smith, J. Hallal, R. Anderson, and The Chair Cllr Mrs Haddow. Clerk P. Burns and County Cllr Trevor Thorne.

4. Apologies for Absence

Councillors, H. Mills, S. Elliott, K. McCann.

5. Minutes of meeting held 10 September 2025

- 5.1. The Minutes were presented for approval.
- 5.2. Minutes were discussed with updates on various points raised since last meeting.
- 5.3. Minutes proposed Cllr Brewis and seconded by Cllr Hallal. Unanimously approved.

6. Matters arising for discussion

- 6.1. Newsletter deliveries are in hand.
- 6.2. Welfare grass cutting. Revised discounted bill received. It was agreed to pay this revised figure. Consideration as to the way forward for 2026 to be discussed ahead of the growing season.

- 6.3. Empty garages at Lee Ave. Cllr Thorne to ask to have demolished with a target of alleviating parking issues in and around Lee Ave where paring has been a major ongoing problem
- 6.4. Surgery – repeat prescription requests are taken by calling using telephone via automated system. Feedback is that the automated system fails to confirm if a requested has been accepted or otherwise by the patient before hanging up. Chair will write another letter to the surgery concerning this issue.

7. Declaration of interest

- 7.1. The following Councillors withdrew from the meeting at the point where The Shilbottle Village Forum letter received was discussed. The following councillors declared and interest on this topic; Councillors Haddow Douglas and Anderson.

8. Correspondence

- 8.1. NALC – AGM (15th November, 10:00am at County Hall)
- 8.2. NCC Elections - County-wide Community Governance Review.
- 8.3. NCC - Polling District and Polling Place Review 2025
- 8.4. NCC - Shilbottle - Letting of Housing Issues
- 8.5. GMS – Welfare Field Grass Cutting - revised invoice
- 8.6. Citizens Advice Northumberland Annual General Meeting 12 noon, Monday 1st December 2025 at Newbiggin-by-the-Sea
- 8.7. Newton on the Moor and Swarland PC – Neighbourhood Plan
- 8.8. Northumberland Society of Local Council Clerks - County-wide Community Governance Review
- 8.9. NALC – Newsletter
- 8.10. NCC Planning – Enforcement 25/00997/BRCOND - Grange Road Development Towerburn View, Shilbottle - Concern over Tiered site construction and Food Risk Assessment impact.
- 8.11. NALC - Website changeover
- 8.12. Shilbottle Village Forum – The Haven refurbishment. A request for a donation of £1,000 was requested from the Parish Council to enable completion of the refurbishment works. This was discussed and a proposal made to proceed with a donation was made by Cllr Smith. This was seconded by Cllr Brewis. Vote was unanimous. Clerk to arrange supporting letter to accompany cheque in readiness for the next meeting.
- 8.13. NCC Highways - LTP Workshop Presentation Slides
- 8.14. Resident – Welfare Roundabout failure
- 8.15. NCC Elections – Co-option of councillor
- 8.16. NCC/SPC – Correspondence "Public Open Space" adjacent to No 1 Farriers Rise.
- 8.17. Northumbria Police – monthly report
- 8.18. NCC - Shilbottle Glass Bring Site - Clerk actioned to ascertain precisely what the "Health and Safety issues"

9. **Finance (for September 2025)**

OUTGOINGS (for September 2025)

Storey and Son Landscape Gardening	Service Level Agreement	£2,575.49
Storey and Son Landscape Gardening	Maintenance (dog bin install Leatherland Rd)	£190.00
Shilbottle Children's & Young People Project	Donation	£300.00
Kidd Garden Design	Play Area Maintenance	£120.00
Shelley Signs Limited	Maintenance – Replacement history sign	£1,734.00
HP Instant Ink	Inks (Aug 25)	£13.49
HP Instant Ink	Inks (Sep 25)	£13.49
Lloyds Bank	Bank charges	£7.25
SPC Clerk	Wages	£735.00

INCOMINGS (for September 2025)

NCC	Precept	£18, 576.00
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- 9.1. Finance for month of September 2025 was offered for acceptance. Proposed Cllr Brewis, seconded Cllr Anderson. Accepted unanimously.
- 9.2. AGAR 2024/25 – Forvis Mazars the Smaller Authorities' Audit Appointments auditors issued completion notice which has now been published (noticeboard and web) by the statutory date of 30 September. Only 1 minor observation identified.
- 9.3. Clerk will now instigate VAT returns submissions for 2024/25.
- 9.4. Clerk distributed Q2 24/25 and Q2 25/26 account balance comparisons for councillors' perusal/comments.
- 9.5. Finance report given by Clerk was proposed by Cllr Smith and seconded by Cllr Douglas. Passed unanimously

10. **Planning – Clerk advised the following feedback over month:**

- 10.1. Farriers Rise Development A/2001/0096 – Pant at St James Road/Farne Road– Section 106 Agreement.
 - 10.1.1. Following last meeting the Clerk as instructed reviewed the current status of correspondence with NCC in relation to this issue.
 - 10.1.2. Study of the NCC published Enforcement Strategy highlighted areas where it appeared that the process had not been followed and as such the Clerk compiled an email resulting in the generation of 3 specific questions requiring answers from NCC Enforcement.
 - 10.1.3. Although previously implied it has been confirmed that no Enforcement Notice has been issued. A “letter” requiring vacation of the land was issued

on or around 02 August 2025 with a deadline date of 05 September 2025 to vacate.

- 10.1.4. Non-compliance with the deadline date as per the Enforcement Strategy procedure (section 2.11) states “if not undertaken within the required timescale enforcement action will be taken.”
- 10.1.5. One month after the 05 September 2025 deadline no enforcement action has been initiated. The Parish Council has requested copy of the “letter” and awaits a response. Dependent on the response reasons for failing to initiate Enforcement will be requested.
- 10.1.6. NCC have confirmed that they have granted The Northumberland Estates the privilege to request retrospective planning permission against the 106 Agreement of June 2002. This would appear to be out with procedure/process/legislation for this defined Public Open Space. The Northumberland Estates had no authority to unilaterally lease public open space to a private individual. This action has yet to be justified by NCC Enforcement.
- 10.1.7. Note that legislation does not allow for POS to be “sold off” unless a set procedure is undertaken. This has not been adhered to and as such The Northumberland Estates and NCC are compromised here.
- 10.1.8. This issue remains ongoing. The Clerk was ordered to write to Mr. Murfin of NCC. Councillors were concerned that the assigned Enforcement Officer is known to have been involved in personal property transactions with The Northumberland Estates where certain favourable arrangements were noted. This has the potential for a conflict of interest and as such this Officer should recuse themselves from the process and another Officer assigned. Clerk will compile an email collating necessary information to bring these to NCC’s attention and ask for a response before our November meeting.
- 10.1.9. The Clerk will continue with the Chair and our County Councillor to maintain pressure on NCC Enforcement to revert to the status quo and report back to our November meeting.

10.2. NCC Planning – Enforcement 25/00997/BRCOND - Grange Road Development Towerburn View, Shilbottle - Concern over Tiered site construction and Flood Risk Assessment impact.

- 10.2.1. NCC have confirmed receipt of our email of 17 September 2025 highlighting that tiered structures (using GeoRoc is a Mechanically Stabilised Earth wall system) were not included in the planning application being granted and as such not considered within the Flood Risk Assessment/Flood Routing Plan which ultimately resulted in the granting of the development.
- 10.2.2. This issue remains ongoing and the Clerk will report back to our November meeting

11. **Feedback on play areas - Councillors Hallal, Mills, Smith, McCann**

- 11.1. Welfare Field Grass Cutting. GMS have issued an invoice for revised value taking account of objections raised. See section 6.2 above.
- 11.2. Roundabout has been removed from Welfare playpark. Replacement to be considered.

12. **Liaison with NCC** County Councillor Thorne/ Councillor Haddow

- 12.1. Cllr Thorne advised the meeting of a review of Local Plan and the impact of central government policy to increase number of houses to build from 550 to 1500 per annum. A call for sites for housebuilders to assign for this increase is being asked throughout the county. Rural areas have been inundated with housebuilding in recent years. For example, Longframlington, Felton, Shilbottle. New corridor on the recently opened rail link from Ashington to Newcastle should be considered as this is now a feasible transport link and could readily support housing increase along the line.
- 12.2. NCC are formulating a new local transport plan – does Shilbottle have any ideas? One ongoing issue relates to the bus to Newcastle. The furthest east pick up in the village is only at the Church and does not go to the east end of the village where the bus turning circle exists at Coquet View. This has been raised previously without any action. There is a bus turning circle ready for this. Cllr Thorne stated Roads and Highway improvements are top of the list. A further issue highlighted is that cars are speeding at Hampeth. Interactive speed signs are suggested by Cllr Thorne at Hampeth Beacon Road to combat this speeding.
Chair also raise the issue of speeding at Northside and the budget for 2026/27 should consider incorporating funding to install in next financial year.
- 12.3. Cemetery path from Percy Road - Andrew Robson of The Northumberland Estates has provided 2 x 1 tonne red gravel bags. Cllr Thorne has started to weed path before bags of gravel used to top path. Shilbottle Parish Council will match The Northumberland Estates and buy two bags additional bags for this path. Chair asked is NCC could lay since this is a registered Public Right of Way. Cllr Thorne to investigate.
- 12.4. Retaining tiered walls at Grange Road development. Cllr Thorne to raise with NCC Rob Murfin to investigate.
- 12.5. Local NCC meeting tomorrow evening at Belford 18:00-19:30.

13. **Liaison with Police** - Councillors Douglas, H. Smith.

- 13.1. Cllr's Smith and Douglas are to plan to have a meeting with the Police to discuss general issues in the village.

14. **Bus Shelters** - Councillor Elliott.

- 14.1. Chair to arrange with local contractor Mr Davis, to install replacement Perspex on bus shelter at the Church in similar fashion as he has performed previously.

15. **Cemeteries** - Councillors Elliott, Brewis, Haddow

- 15.1. Nothing reported this month.

16. **Dog fouling/Litter** - Update by all Councillors for designated areas

- 16.1. Please be vigilant in the dark nights.

17. **NCC Housing and Public Protection** - Councillors Haddow, Hallal and Mills

- 17.1. Meeting with Homes for Northumberland. Aim for Parish Council to have meeting with Head of Housing in the near future.
- 17.2. Empty Houses – We have been advised that some have asbestos which needs to be removed before they can be re-let.

18. **Environment & Sustainability** - Councillor Brewis
 - 18.1. No feedback this month.
19. **Liaising with School and Church** - Councillor McCann and Douglas
 - 19.1. Nothing reported this month.
20. **Community Hall** - Councillor Haddow, Anderson
 - 20.1. Clerk to email Hall to request if Cllr Anderson could be supported by Cllr Haddow until Cllr Anderson is familiar with proceedings.
21. **Remembrance Sunday** - All Councillors
 - 21.1. Chair requested assistance towards the remembrance service the week before Sunday 9 November 2025 which is this year's Remembrance Sunday.
22. **Unveiling of Plaque** - All Councillors
 - 22.1. Heritage Board at the Pit is to be unveiled 28 October 2025 in the afternoon.
23. **Further items at discretion of the Chair**
 - 23.1. No additional comments from attendees.
24. **Date of next meeting:**
 - 24.1. The date of the next meeting is Wednesday 12 November 2025 at 18:30 in The Haven Community Room
 - 24.2. Meeting ended 19:55