

Belsay Parish Council

Minutes of the Annual Meeting of Belsay Parish Council held on Wednesday, 24 September 2025 Sir Stephen Middleton Memorial Hall, Belsay First School

Present:

Chair: Cllr Roe

Cllrs: Common, Storey, Straughan

In attendance:

Clerk: Annie Howliston

County Cllr: Richard Dodd

Belsay School Headteacher: Craig Shaw

Climate Action Officer (CAIRN): Anna Revell

15. Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence received from Cllr Mole. Excused absence was approved by the full council for Cllr Sadler.

16. Declarations of Interest

None received.

17. Public Questions (Maximum 5 minutes per person)

There were no members of the public present.

18. Declarations of Acceptance of Office and Register of Members' Interests

a) Declarations of Acceptance of Office

Signed by Cllr Storey in the presence of the Clerk and members.

b) Registers of Members Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Registerable Interests

Provided to Cllr Storey for completion and submission at the next meeting.

19. Minutes of the Previous Meeting of Belsay Council held on 21 May 2025

Confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

20. Matters Arising from the Previous Meeting

a) Emergency Resilience Base

The Chair welcomed Belsay School Headteacher Craig Shaw and CAIRN Climate Action Officer Anna Revell to the meeting.

The Headteacher agreed that it would be sensible for the school hall to be used as a resilience base. Due to existing arrangements, a direct approach would be made to Belsay Estates to initiate discussions regarding its use and the possibility of the installation of a generator, which could also jointly benefit the school.

As the school has received support from RayWindFund, an approach would be made to Ray Estates by the Headteacher to enquire about grant availability as a joint community base.

Anna explained that her role at CAIRN is to support rural communities within Northumberland with particular focus on helping to reduce overall village energy costs and carbon footprint. She would approach a colleague who has governance and funding expertise to ask some questions about heating and lighting of resilience hubs and report back to the Clerk.

b) School Defibrillator

It was confirmed that the pads had been replaced by Belsay school. To avoid confusion or delay with who to contact after its use, details will be added to the defibrillator unit for the school.

It was agreed that the Clerk would request keycode access and alarm details for the school in the event of emergency access.

21. Highways Matters

a) Gateways

County Cllr Dodd confirmed that he was still to receive a response from Neil Snowdon at NCC and would contact him again.

b) Overhanging Branches and Hedges

It was noted that some attempt at hedge trimming had been conducted in the Wallridge area, but it was not known by whom. County Cllr Dodd agreed to raise this issue again with NCC officers as we are out of the nesting season.

c) School Parking

It was agreed to monitor the road safety situation outside of the school.

22. Planning Matters

a) Previous applications detailed on the agenda had been circulated to members with nothing to report.

23. Financial Matters

a) Payments

Members approved the following payments:

Tynedale Hospice at Home - Donation	£200.00
Hall Hire Mar 2025	£20.00
HMRC (Jun 2025)	£43.50
HMRC (Jul, Aug, Sep 2025)	£130.00
Clerk Salary (Jun, Jul, Aug, Sep 2025)	£693.44
Insurance (2025/2026) late agenda item	£384.60

b) Monthly Bank Reconciliation Report

Circulated to members by the Clerk with no comments.

c) Bank Account Signatories

To ensure approval of payments can be made without delay, **it was agreed** that all members of the council should be able to act as a signatory for cheques. The requirement for two signatures would remain, with the Chair or (if absent) the Vice Chair being one of the signatories. The Clerk will obtain the appropriate paperwork for this to be actioned at the next meeting.

d) Grant Applications

Grant applications received from Northumberland Citizens Advice and Bolam Church will be considered at the November meeting during the setting of the budget.

24. Correspondence Received

a) Belsay Village Playground Equipment

It was noted that Belsay Estates had removed the playground equipment next to Belsay garage.

b) Parish Website

A briefing note was circulated in advance of the meeting by the Clerk, highlighting the legal requirement to publish information on its website that follows the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines. **It was agreed** that the Parish Council will move to NALC's new website provider, HugoFox, on 1 April 2026. The Clerk will confirm this agreement with NALC.

c) Parish.gov.uk Email Address

On 1 April 2026, all Parish Councils must also have an official.gov.uk or similar authority owned address for external audit purposes. HugoFox has an option to include this within their website package. **It was agreed** that the Clerk will request a generic.gov.uk email address for the Parish Council through HugoFox and move from its current Hotmail account.

25. Any Other Business

a) Clerk Qualifications

The Clerk informed members that she had recently undertaken and passed ILCA and FILCA qualifications and would be looking to study towards the Certificate in Local Council Administration in 2026.

b) Grants and Donations Policy

The Clerk will recirculate details on a proposed new Grants and Donations Policy with a view to being discussed and agreed at the next meeting.

c) Budget and Precept Setting


The Clerk advised members to be mindful that members will need to consider any priorities for the next financial year to allow the budget to be set and consider the precept demand at the next meeting.

26. Date and time of Next Meeting

Confirmed as Wednesday 26 November at 7:00pm. The Chair thanked everyone for their attendance and closed the meeting.

These minutes will remain as draft until approval at the next Parish Council Meeting

Chair Signature:



Date:

26th November 2025