

WARK PARISH COUNCIL

Chairman: Mr Edward Jeffrey Contact: clerk.wark@gmail.com

Meeting to be held 11th November 2025 at 7pm in Wark Town Hall

DRAFT MINUTES

- 1. Welcome, declare the meeting is being recorded for the purpose of the minutes:** **PRESENT:** Councillor Edward Jeffrey (EJ) (**chair**), Councillor Judith Weir (JW), Councillor Jason Riches (JR) County Councillor Antonia Azocar-Nevin (AAN) Chris Reid (CR) (Clerk)
- 2. Apologies for Absence:** Councillor Sean Miles (SM), Councillor Lisa Lorraine (LL), Councillor Steve Batey (SB)
- 3. Notification of Other Business** - None
- 4. Declarations of Conflicts of Interest** - None
- 5. Approval of Minutes** - Minutes from 8th September 2025 (already circulated in advance of meeting) – EJ signed.
- 6. Report from County Councillor Antonia Azocar-Neven** - Antonia present and read out report. ANN to send to CR for distribution with minutes.

Wark PC REPORT 11.11.25

- 1) Tree Maintenance. Has there been any tree maintenance in Stonehaugh. I had put on fix my street that some needed to be done.
- 2) Traffic calming measures. I have submitted my LTP suggestions and one of them was to get traffic calming measures on the main road past Stonehaugh which will hopefully lead to more measures put in place for the rest of the village. I stressed that trying to get the necessary signatures would be unfair to ask from such a small village. When I last spoke to officers at my LTP training, they seemed to be interested in perusing this.
- 3) Water deliveries. NCC got back to me on this, asking for more information so they could investigate. I gave them the name Norman Bell. They haven't replied to this.

4) Flooding in Stonehaugh. Unfortunately, the response I received alluded to the fact that there is not immediate risk to properties. Their response was:

Based on an initial review of the Environment Agency's Risk of Flooding from Surface Water (RoFSW) mapping, there does not appear to be residential properties within the mapped surface-water ponding areas at Stonehaugh - please see the extract of the map below. As such, we would not be able to progress a flood alleviation scheme here at this time.

However, if there are areas where multiple properties are at risk from surface water flooding, please do let us know and we can consider them for inclusion in our future programme.

I can't access the picture of the map they have provided. I think I need some more clarity on this so I can reply to NCC with a better understanding of what the area needs.

5) Need some more information on the Forrest's at Wark being my notes are terrible.

6) Bollard. I have put the Bollard situation on Fix my street. And they have seen it, I will let you know of any updates.

7) Parking on the green. Does anyone have any pictures of people parking on the green? NCC have responded siding they will get the pricing for signage so you can decide if it something you would like to pay for.

8) Anne Hutchinson. I received a response but they had misunderstood and though I was referring to someone in need that needed emergency support. I have since emailed back to try and clarify.

7. Public and Police participation (10 mins maximum) - No public or Police in attendance

8. Matters Arising

8.1 Action up date from previous meetings – Wagons speeding on Ward Lane mentioned previously, need to clarify what speed was that and was it timber wagons or tipper wagons, was it related to Forestry England. Speed limit is 60 so they might be going to fast for the road conditions. To be kept an eye on, more information needed.

None payment of the election costs. JR reported that a letter arrived from the debt department of the council, JR contacted them. After discussion of the case a suppression has been put on the account, JR name is attached to the account and it won't be actioned on until an outcome of the complaint.

8.2 NALC website and gov.uk email – Change is needed as from the end of March 2026. ANN informed us that there is an IT person at NCC that is in contact with other Parish Councils about this topic to support them. ANN has emailed them to see how they are going with that and when he replies she will email and see if they can support us. This could be an alternative to going with NALC and Hugofox. Clerk to let NALC know Parish Council is waiting to hear from ANN before making a decision.

8.3 Planning applications – Town Hall solar panels has been passed
Discharge of condition 7, external lighting. More information needed, contact them for more information

8.4 Community Governance Review (CGR) 2025 – questionnaire completed

8.5 Internal Audit, 2025-2026 - Susan Saunders was contacted about carrying out internal audit for 2025-2026, as requested in previous meeting. Susan agreed to do the audit next year, £28 per hr, 4-6hrs to complete. Susan sent through a Letter of Engagement, which EJ signed.

8.6 MOP request for memorial seating – MOP requested a seat to be placed in Stonehaugh, which was agreed in previous meeting. MOP has seat picture of the seating he would like to make. Agreed to contact them offer to meet them to talk about placement of seat and how it will be constructed and secured when in place(health and safety)

8.7 Parking from the Drs down to the school – councillor has been contacted about the difficulty of school transport accessing the school because to the cars park on the road leading to the school entrance. Discussed if NCC could put signs up say please do not park during the hours of 8.30am - 9am and 2.45pm - 3.30, like the signs outside Bellingham schools. ANN will look into getting some signs and costs. Alternative parking opposite the Battlesteads could be used as this is WPC land.

9. Financial Matters

9.1 Wark PC Financial Forecast meeting – 13th October 2025

Financial Forecast spreadsheet was shared

This is the highlights from the sheet.

2025/26 Financial Year Amount remaining is forecast to be £325.09

2025/26 Financial Year No allowance was made for any Donations in 2025/26

2025/26 Financial Year from the remaining amount a donation of £100 to the Snr Citizens xmas meal - It was agreed to wait until the end of the financial year before deciding on donations

No allowance for repairs to Star Gazing roof assumes if work required obtain grant-

No allowance for work to star gazing floor

2026/2027 Financial Year Amount remaining is forecast to be £1210.18

2026/2027 Financial Year Precept to increase by 15% to cover expected costs

No allowance for asset replacement or maintenance do we include a figure for 2026/27?

No allowances for any purchases or events not detailed on sheet

Tree maintenance was discussed as a quote has been received for the horse chestnut tree in Wark, quote is £350 plus VAT, which is within the amount on the spread sheet.

It was agreed to wait until the end of the financial year to see how much money is remaining before deciding on any work that needs to be done and donations to charities.

- 9.2 Accounts and Approve Payment Schedule – circulated at meeting and cheques were signed.
- 9.3 Accounts and Cash Flow Forecast – was shared in 9.1
- 9.4 Precept forms for 2026-2027 – to discuss at next meeting when more councillors are present

10. Reports from Representatives to Other Bodies (Wark Town Hall, Stonehaugh Community Hall and Giles Heron Trust)

Wark Town Hall, going very well full program of activities from hall hire, music events, parties and quiz and bingo nights have been very well attended. Solar panelling is progressing. Just had the entrance decorated and waiting for the library room to get insulated and decorated. Snooker room to get painted and relaunch planned for using the snooker.

Stonehaugh Community Hall, the repairs on the main room have been completed and are happy with the results. Continuing to raise more funds for more repairs.

Giles Heron Trust, have a meeting tomorrow(12th November) moving on well, new people in the farm are happy, busy doing extra work around, its progressing ok

11. Highway Matters – a few people have been complaining about the pot holes around the green (Wark) JR has told people to contact the Clerk with their concerns to collect proof. Pot holes are getting really deep. Wondering if the PC could do anything, push NCC, Fix My Street can't be used as it's not NCC responsibility its is WPC and residents' responsibility. West Northumberland highways officer said he would look at putting pressed plainings down but that was as and when they were available, we are on a list but it is getting dangerous. JR asked ANN if there was anything she could do, ANN did say that anything the NCC were to assists with would involve payment from WPC, WRC don't have the finances. JR is willing to find out which residents/home owners are will to contribute if he knew how much repairs were going to cost. Something needs to be done.

12. Other Business – Not for Decision – Wark AED was sent back as the battery was faulty it took about 3 weeks to be returned and now has 2 bars at the minute. Stonehaugh AED has 2 bars which is enough to work effectively.

One of the moving vertical signs on the north end of the village wasn't working, fault was reported and it has now been fixed.

13. Items for Discussion at Future Meetings – Precept for 2026-2027

JR Complaints about people parking on the grass in Westacers and churning up the grass and not getting cut in the summer. Who maintains it? Possibly report on fix my street

ANN has been contacted by someone about homes owned by Sanctuary who recently changed the heating system. Concerned the bills are ridiculous, tenant not using the heating, being cold and affecting their health. ANN asked does anyone know any other houses that belong to Sanctuary or tenants that are going through the same thing?

14. Dates for Next Meeting - Tuesday 6th January 2026, 7pm Wark town Hall, JW will book

Meeting closed 20.35hrs

Chris Reid

Clerk to Wark Parish Council