

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF CRASTER PARISH COUNCIL
Thursday 18th September 2025 – 6:30pm in Craster Memorial Hall

Councillors present:

Chair: Martin Smith

Parish Council members: Derek Moss, Marjory Taylor, Sophie Heslop and Ann Fettis.

Also present: Adam Shanley (Parish Clerk) and 3 members of the public

The meeting commenced with a two-minute silence in memory of our beloved former colleague and friend Councillor Margaret Brooks, Vice-Chair of the Parish Council.

1. Welcome and apologies for absence

Apologies were received from Councillors A Gregory, R Cornall, I Brown and M Robson as well as County Councillor Wendy Pattison.

2. Declarations of interest

The Clerk highlighted the importance of Members declaring items of interest under discussion on the Agenda. No declarations of interest were received.

3. Confirmation of the minutes for the annual meeting held on Thursday 17th July 2025

The minutes of the meeting held on 17th July 2025 were unanimously agreed as a true and accurate record of proceedings.

4. Matters arising

The Clerk reported that the Parish Council had now received a letter from EE the mobile network operator to state that, at the present time, it is not viable for EE to be included in the Craster mast. Members expressed their disappointment at this outcome and, following a suggestion by the Clerk, agreed to write to NECA about this and also thanked the Clerk for attending the upcoming connectivity conference on 15th October to further lobby EE and Vodafone coming on board at the mast. Vodafone has previously committed to the site but is delayed due to the merger with 3 network.

The Chair also advised that he would like to confirm a date for a Christmas event in the village, to include the usual Christmas light switch-on. The switch-on date was agreed as 6pm on Sunday 30th November 2025 and it was agreed that a small working group should be formed to make a plan for this event.

Councillor D Moss also highlighted that the promised brown sign to Proctors Stead and to the caravan park had not yet been installed. The Clerk offered to follow this up with the highways team.

Councillor A Fettis also advised that NCC is not cutting the path leading down from behind Smithy Court. The Parish Council agreed that a number of approaches had already been made to NCC on this matter with no follow-up action by them. It was therefore agreed that, in the Spring, the Parish Council should ask its contractor Steve to cut this back accordingly.

5. Public participation

A member of the public complained about the poor condition of the portable toilets outside the TIC building in Craster. Members agreed to write to Environmental Health on this matter as it was clear that these toilets are not being cleaned as frequently as they ought to be.

A member of the public also complained about the collapsing wall next to the lifeboat station and asked for the Parish Council to follow this up again with the owner. The Clerk advised that he would follow this up and report back on this.

A member of the public also highlighted that there were some small sycamores growing next to the stones coming into the village and asked for these to be removed as sycamores could cause an issue if allowed to further mature.

6. Election of Vice-Chair of the Parish Council

Councillor D Moss was unanimously elected as Vice-Chair of the Parish Council. Proposed by Councillor M Smith and seconded by Councillor A Fettis. There were no other nominations.

7. Correspondence received to the Parish Council

The Clerk advised that he had now received two complaints from visitor regarding the appalling condition of the portable public toilets outside the TIC building and it was noted that the Council had agreed to follow this up as an Environmental Health issue.

The Clerk also reported that he had received a letter to indicate that application 25/01265/FUL had now been withdrawn by the applicant, noting that this proposal had caused some unhappiness in the village.

8. Report by County Councillor Wendy Pattison

In Councillor Pattison's absence, the Chair highlighted her report and invited any resident or Councillor with any local issues or questions arising from this report to direct these to Councillor Pattison directly.

9. Report from Embleton Joint Burial Committee representative

Councillor D Moss highlighted that there had been no meeting of the Embleton Joint Burial Committee since the last meeting of Full Council and therefore there were no issues to report. The Clerk advised that he would be in contact with the Clerk of the Burial Committee, in order to receive an annual calendar of future meetings.

10. Report from Craster Community Trust representative

Mrs Jackie Reeves highlighted that the old junior swing in the playpark had now been removed and that a replacement swing would be installed next week. In addition, Jackie advised that, following some ground works at the site, there is now some excess soil which is free for any resident who needs or wishes to have some additional top soil.

Jackie also took the opportunity to thank County Councillor Wendy Pattison who had provided £2,000 towards additional playpark equipment for the village.

The Chair thanked Jackie and the CCT for their work on the playpark.

11. Consideration of National Landscape's visitor access and interpretation project

The Clerk reported that the Northumberland Coast National Landscape team had been awarded additional funds for visitor access and interpretation projects, and that they proposed to use part of this funding for improvements in Craster.

The proposal includes renewing the faded information boards on the two stone plinths at the entrance to the Nature Reserve / road up into the Quarry, and refreshing the Craster Village Trail map located to the left of the plinths, all of which are now outdated. The new designs would follow the contemporary style used for the recently installed boards at Beadnell.

It is also proposed that the existing blue metal frame housing the Village Trail map be removed and replaced with a new interpretation board mounted on oak legs. If budget allows, the adjacent blue metal fingerpost sign may also be replaced.

Due to the project's end-of-year completion deadline, the National Landscape team requested Parish Council feedback as soon as possible on this. The Parish Council **agreed** in principle to the proposed refresh of the interpretation boards and Village Trail map, but requested sight of the finished draft designs for approval before any works proceed and this was confirmed.

12. Proposed parking signage for Craster village

Members felt that the proposed signage at the bottom of private gardens advising "no parking" needed some further consideration or consultation with the village.

The Chair highlighted that the "No visitor access to village ahead, please use the Quarry car park" sign remained in his property and he asked Members for their views on where this ought to be located. The Chair advised that one suggested location was on his land at the crossroads coming into Craster, however it was felt that this may be too early in the journey towards Craster and drivers would forget about this.

The Clerk also highlighted that he had been contacted by local residents in the Dunstanburgh Road area asking if the Parish Council might consider a "no left turn" next to Dunstanburgh Road as it was felt that traffic flow in this area was far too high, with visitors believing that they could get vehicular access to the castle. The Clerk suggested that the registered postcode for the castle should be the quarry car park as sat nav systems may then stop taking vehicles down to the castle. Members felt that this was a good idea.

Members **agreed** that the matter of additional signage needed some further discussion and debate and decided to take no further action at this stage beyond the suggestion of the postcode change.

13. Review of the Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way - Informal pre-order consultation – Footpath No 27

Members considered the content of this review in relation to Footpath No 27. Members **noted** that this proposal was to add to the Definitive Map and Statement of Public Rights of Way, a public footpath from a point marked F at the end of existing Footpath No 4 (Parish of Craster) on the Embleton – Craster parish boundary, in a general north easterly direction for a distance of 190 metres, to a point marked G on the existing Bridleway No 16 (Parish of Craster), south of Dunstan Steads.

Members were aware that this proposal had arisen following an application made by Councillor R Cornall and was supported by user evidence from 10 members of the public, 9 of whom claim to have used the path on foot for periods in excess of 20 years. Members unanimously **agreed** to support the application to have this footpath recognised as a Public Right of Way.

14. Correspondence regarding Local Transport Plan (LTP) Capital Programme 2026-27 to 2028/29

The Clerk advised that a letter dated 6 August 2025 was received from Cllr Mark Mather, Portfolio Holder for Roads and Highways at Northumberland County Council, regarding the development of the Local Transport Plan (LTP) Capital Programme for 2026/27 to 2028/29.

The Clerk highlighted that the letter explained that the County Council will be moving from a one-year to a three-year LTP programme, aiming to provide:

- Greater certainty over delivery of local transport priorities;
- Improved engagement and design processes;
- Better value for money and programming efficiency.

Town and Parish Councils will be invited to submit three local priorities for consideration under the new 3-year plan. A series of workshops will also be held during September to explain the updated process and scoring system.

Members noted the contents of the letter and welcomed the more strategic approach being introduced. It was **agreed** that the Council should ensure that future LTP priorities are submitted in line with the revised process once the formal invitation is received.

15. Planning matters:

25/02809/FUL | Proposed extension to existing front porch| 3 Dunstan Square Dunstan Northumberland NE66 3TG. Members **agreed** to note this application.

APP/P2935/W/25/3367376 – appeal against refusal of application for the construction of two holiday lets (Sui Generis) with associated landscaping on Land North and East of Dunstan House Dunstan Northumberland. Members **noted** that this appeal had now been dismissed by the Inspectorate. Local residents thanked the Clerk and the Council for their extensive work on this appeal and the national significance of this decision was noted.

Update on 25/01675/FUL |A small single-story extension to the rear with flat roof and roof lights, single story extension replacing the porch to the front elevation, two dormer windows to front and rear roof elevations as well as additional velux windows |14 Whin Hill Craster Northumberland NE66 3TP. Members **agreed** to write directly to County Councillor Wendy Pattison to request a Ward Member call-in of this application.

Update on 24/04252/FUL | Change of use of existing agricultural building from grain store to livestock building. (additional information received 13.03.2025) | Land North West of Dunstan Steads Farm Embleton Northumberland. Members **noted** that there were no updates on this application.

16. Items for next Agenda

The Chair reminded Members to contact the Parish Clerk should they wish to have an item of business included on the next Agenda in October.

17. Date and time of next meeting

Thursday 16th October 2025 – 6:30pm in Craster Memorial Hall.

There being no further business, the Chair thanked all attendees for their contributions and closed the meeting.

Signed,



**Chair of Craster Parish Council
(16th October 2025)**