

**THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE WHEATLEY HILL PARISH COUNCIL
HELD ON 8 JUNE 2026**

Present: Councillor J Miller (Chair)
Councillors E Carr, N Craggs, J Huntington,
L Johnson, B Miller, L Stewart, C Stogdale

**The Chair asked Members to observe a minute's silence as a mark of respect following the death of
Councillor Joyce Unsworth, Chair of Thornley Parish Council.**

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor L White.

2 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3 The Minutes of the Annual Meeting and Annual Assembly of Electors held on 11 May 2026, copies of which had been circulated to each Member, were approved and signed by the Chair.

4 PUBLIC QUESTIONS

There was no public present at the meeting.

5 POLICE MATTERS

The Clerk reported that extensive damage, caused by quads, at the farm opposite the Jet garage on the A181 had been reported to the Police. The Police had advised that they would view the damage and contact the farm.

The Police had asked for any information related to large wagons dumping soil on land around the Jet garage or the caravan site on the A181.

The Police reported incidents related to youths and adults using catapults with ball bearings to smash windows in Wheatley Hill. Members were advised that the Police had stopped and arrested a male in a vehicle who was in possession of a catapult and ball bearings.

Members reported 3 young children, with no helmets, riding a moped along Wordsworth Avenue and the Front Street.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted and the Police be advised of the children on the moped.

6 COUNTY COUNCILLORS REPORT

County Councillor Craggs provided an update on the following issues.

- Front Street and actions undertaken by Durham County Council.
- Empty homes.
- Issues related to rubbish in the back yards of residential properties.
- Flooding in the vicinity of the Knoll.
- Vehicles parked around the village.

- A new bus shelter had been installed opposite St Godric's School.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

7 CORRESPONDENCE

(1) Requests for Financial Assistance - NeuroAware CIC

The Clerk reported the receipt of a request for financial assistance from NeuroAware CIC, details of which were outlined to Members.

RESOLVED that consideration of this request be deferred and further information be sought from the applicant.

(2) East Durham Action Group

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from County Councillor L Penders who had contacted the Parish Council on behalf of the East Durham Action Group. The group had been formed in response to the increasing number of proposed solar farms and BESS developments across East Durham and had asked if they could present their concerns to the Parish Council.

The Clerk advised that in 2025 the Parish Council considered an application for a proposed Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at land to the northwest of High Crows House, Wheatley Hill. The site was in the Parish of Shadforth, but it was felt that Wheatley Hill could be impacted by the development, and the Parish Council submitted its concerns to Durham County Council.

It was suggested that a presentation on the issue would be better suited to a wider audience, such as a public meeting or as part of a wider public consultation.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted

(3) Heritage Centre

The Clerk reported the receipt of correspondence from M Hedley advising that the County Durham History and Heritage Forum had asked the Heritage Centre to host one of their regional events on 10 June 2026. The Forum hosted approx. 4 regional events a year in various locations throughout the region.

M Hedley was a member of the Forum and would host the event which provided an opportunity to showcase the Heritage Centre and potentially increase footfall.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

8 PLANNING

Application - DM/26/00370/FPA – Erection of animal shelter (retrospective) at woodland to the north of Miners Villas, Wheatley Hill DH6 3PX

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

9 CLERKS REPORT

(1) Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the Year Ending 31 March 2026

The Clerk provided an update on the Annual Governance and Accountability Return for the year ending 31 March 2026.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) Allotments

(i) Allocations

The Clerk reported that the former plot 23 had been divided into 5 individual plots. The following plots had been allocated from the waiting list. Three plots remained vacant.

Plot 23 – Applicant number 1/2026

Plot 27 – Applicant number 2/2026

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(ii) Allotment Sub Committee

Members were advised that an Allotment Sub Committee would be held on 9 July 2026 at 10.30am.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(3) Cuppa with a Copper

The Clerk reported that the next meeting would be held on 18 June 2026 at 1.30pm in Wheatley House.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(4) PACT Meeting

The Clerk reported that the next meeting would be held on 9 July 2026 at 6pm in the Community Centre.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

10 MEMBER ISSUES

(1) Cats – Burns Street/Shakespeare Street

Members reported ongoing problems related to the number of cats around Burns and Shakespeare Street. County Councillor Craggs advised that following the last meeting the issue was reported to the Neighbourhood Wardens.

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted.

(2) Overgrown Hedges

Members reported that the track running adjacent to the primary school field was overgrown with hedges and needed to be cut back.

RESOLVED that the issue be reported.

11 PAYMENTS

The following schedule of payments was circulated together with figures for all income and expenditure at 31 May 2026.

Wheatley Hill Parish Council – 8 June 2026

PAYMENT	TO	DETAIL	COST	VAT	TOTAL
Direct Debit	E-on Next	Gas - Heritage Centre	7.32	0.37	7.69
Direct Debit	E-on Next	Electric - Heritage Centre	3.36	0.17	3.53
Direct Debit	British Gas	Electric - Heritage Centre	23.82	1.19	25.01
Direct Debit	British Gas	Electric - Heritage Centre	27.83	1.39	29.22
Direct Debit	British Gas	Gas - Heritage Centre	36.18	1.81	37.99
Internet Banking	Horns Garden Centre	Hanging Baskets	336.38	67.27	403.65
Internet Banking	Churches Fire Security Ltd	Fire Extinguisher Service	42.00	8.40	50.40
Debit Card	Post Office Ltd	Cemetery - Stamps	14.56		14.56
Debit Card	Amazon	New Hose & Fittings	21.66	4.33	25.99
Debit Card	Amazon	Safety Clothing	19.16	3.83	22.99
Debit Card	Amazon	New Pressure Pump	17.24	3.45	20.69
Internet Banking	L Carr	Reimbursement - New Lock - Allotments	39.87		39.87
Internet Banking	Durham County Council	Trade Waste	1,783.86		1,783.86
Internet Banking	J Thompson	Telephone Allowance	25.00		25.00
Debit Card	Amazon	Safety Clothing	168.07	28.83	196.90
Debit Card	Amazon	Safety Clothing	174.16	28.83	202.99
Internet Banking	Payroll	Wages - June 2026	5,823.54		5,823.54
Internet Banking	HMRC/DCC	PAYE/Pension - June 2026	3,755.85		3,755.85
Internet Banking	JAC's Accountancy Limited	Payroll Services - June 2026	38.75	7.75	46.50
Direct Debit	British Telecom	Telephone/Internet	33.68	6.74	40.42
Invoice 109	Co-Op Bank	Charges	12.95		12.95
TOTAL			12,405.24	164.36	12,569.60

RESOLVED that the information given, be noted and the payments be approved.

12 RISK MANAGEMENT

The Clerk advised that there was nothing to report.

..... Signed

.....Dated