

STANHOPE PARISH COUNCIL

At a meeting of the Council held in Eastgate Village Hall on 1st July 2026

PRESENT:

Cllr M Brewin, Cllr Mrs S Thompson, Cllr D Craig, Cllr Mrs S Smart, Cllr Mrs D Sutcliff,

Cllr R Lawrie, Cllr P Turton

Cllr Miss J Carrick – Chairman

Susan Anderson - Clerk

Also Present: County Councillor Mrs Anita Savory

One member of the public

11216

Apologies for Absence

Cllr J Shuttleworth, Cllr Mrs D Wright, Cllr L Blackett, Cllr E Buchanan

11217

To Receive Any Declarations of Interest from Members

None received

11218

Minutes of the meeting held on 3rd June 2026

Minutes were moved as a true and correct record and were signed by the chairman

11219

Matters Arising

- 1. Cowgarth Hill, Stanhope** – The blue P parking sign has been there many years and is usually used when there is a layby. There is a request to have the blue P parking sign removed but the No Through Road to be left there.
- 2. Bondisle Allotments** – The Solicitor has received the Heads of Terms from Savills and we will be sent his report on the Contract documents as soon as they are received. Savills fees are capped at £3500 and the solicitor has kindly kept their fees to £500. The firms terms of business have been received and acknowledged. The Client Declaration form is to be signed by the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman. The Chairman and the Vice-Chairman need documents verified by the solicitor for anti-money laundering purposes for Savills.
- 3. Stone Bridge Camping** – The photographs of the number plates of the cars that have been camping were sent to the local police who have written to the people that have been camping. The weekend of the 20/21 June there was two caravans, a tent and four cars on the grass by the Stone Bridge.

4. **Burnhope Reservoir** – The Waterside Parks Team are happy to accommodate our request for a seat at the top of Burnhope Reservoir.
5. **Stanhope Town Hall** – The panel considered the information provided and it was concluded that the first part of the statutory test has not been met as the building is currently vacant and there is no current non-ancillary use. As the first part of the test has not been met the nomination cannot proceed to part b. The building does not meet the statutory requirements under Section 88 (1). Part 2 of Section 88 states the land is not community value if, in the recent past, a non-ancillary use furthered the social wellbeing or interests of the local community. The panel noted that the building was declared surplus in 2019, with records indicating it was decommissioned in 2016. It was concluded that the last qualifying uses was not within a sufficiently recent timeframe for the purposes of Section 88(2)(a). The building does not meet the requirements of Section 88(2)
6. **Burnfoot Bridge and Middle Blackdene Bridge** -The Strategic Highways Manager can assure that he be doing all he can to progress these two projects as quickly as possible. The Burnfoot Bridge has been ordered and fabricated. Land access has been agreed and DCC are waiting to hear from NWL to see if their water main needs diverting. Waiting to hear if planning permission is needed to demolish the existing bridge with it being a conservation area. It is anticipated works will commence in July.
7. **Bus Shelter, Stanhope** – The bus shelter has been power washed
8. **Proposed Dedication of Land for the proposed new public footpath at St Michaels Church** – There are complex legal issues including securing the consent of all landowners affected by the proposed dedication of the land for the public footpath. This process has not been easy. It has also been complicated by other issues concerning proof of land ownership and planning considerations. An update will be provided on any progress.
9. **Frosterley Play park** – The area is being monitored by the neighbourhood warden
10. **Demolished wall on Graham Street, Stanhope** – As the wall is less than 1m the demolition of part of the wall would be permitted development so DCC cannot request the whole wall is rebuilt. They could look at seeking works to finish the ends of the wall and suggest to them that they consider securing the site to prevent any fly-tipping and putting in measures to screen the site from public view.
11. **Blackdene Bridge** – The footpath under Blackdene bridge is now clear. The debris will be cleared at some point
12. **Cllr new email address** – So far we have three councillors up and running on the new gov.uk address.
13. St Johns Chapel Town Hall would like to thank the Parish Council for the grant money received.
14. **Allotments** – The following sites have been inspected:

CROSSHILL

There was a report that cockerels are crowing very early in the morning

Water supply up to the top at Crosshill – this was discussed but it was felt as there is already a tap there another one is not necessary. It could set a precedence

A complaint about overgrown weeds in some plots

Sheds to be removed if plots are given up by the tenant

Shed and greenhouse to come down for new tenant.

BONDISLE

The footpath next to the Railway Line needs weeding

Netting or a grid over the ponds on two plots

Path from Solicitors bank needs some hardcore putting down for a mobility scooter

Bushes need cutting back

Skip needed for rest of the rubbish

Unusable polytunnel needs fresh plastic on (two lads working both plots willing to take the plots over if Weardale Transport don't want it anymore)

OLD HALL

The plot that can only be let for hens is shoulder height in nettles and is making the site look untidy. A tenant who is keeping hens was wondering if he could run his hens into the plot. He would strim the nettles down and keep the plot looking tidy. It isn't a very big plot and used to be part of his plot. A discussion took place regarding the problem of removing old sheds and rubbish on allotment plots. The Parish Council cannot keep hiring skips when we have six allotment sites. Tenants must take any rubbish themselves to the recycling which is held once a fortnight at Frosterley. The other option will have to be a rent increase. A notice to go up at all the allotment sites

- 15. Fire cadets** – A member of the public is very upset concerning the defunding of the fire cadets in Stanhope. This is a County wide situation and cuts have been made County wide. The cadets have helped his son gain confidence, social ability, skill sets and experience for his CV. It is just more cuts in Weardale and the young people are suffering. There is nothing left for them to do. The Fire Cadet programme helped with anti-social behaviour in the towns. It promoted good behaviour, activities and to respect their elders. The councillors wondered if the Local Network would be allowed to fund it. **Resolved:** Clerk to write to Chief Fire Officer, Chair of the Fire Authority and MP

11220

Correspondence Received

1. Cllr Mrs Thompson reported that there was a tree blocking the Weardale Way footpath near Blackdene Bridge. Also, there was a loose stone on the bridge in Ireshopeburn and the road needed sweeping in Ireshopeburn. All were reported to DCC.
2. Cllr Mrs Burdis reported that the suckers on The Lime Trees on The Green at Frosterley need cutting back. The back road from Stanhope to Westgate needs the overhanging branches cut back as the wagon drivers are complaining.
3. A tenant from Westgate allotments would like permission to keep 6 to 10 hens on their plot. The chicken coop will be 2m x 2m and 1.8m high. The hen run will be 8.2m x 3.54 and 1.8m in height. **Resolved:** This will be looked at by Cllr Miss Carrick and Cllr R Lawrie when the inspections take place to see if they agree to it
4. S Makepeace has inspected the play areas and has sent the report. Repairs are required. All areas generally in good condition but attention to comments will ensure they remain so.
Burtreeford – matting play surface id suffering from shrinkage and may need attention in the future on the two swings and climbing frame. Basket Ball net needs replacing. **Daddy Shield** – Play top needs pressure washing, small section of stone wall needs rebuilding. **Westgate** – Wet pour surface needs repairs around the swings, swings need painting, rabbits have done under the play top so needs repairing, needs pressure washing. **Crawleyside**- Overgrown

bushes need cutting back, surface needs pressure washing. **Bondisle**- Safety surface needs pressure washing, repair to the wet pour surface. **Ashcroft** – Trampoline needs repairing, long log is starting to rot. **Resolved:** Councillors agreed to have the work done. Cllr Mrs Smart queried why there was no mention of the small park at Eastgate. Back in 2007 the playparks in the dale were taken over from WVDC. At the time WVDC had the lease on Eastgate from the Hilyards which came to an end in March 2007. In paperwork found the Hilyards wanted to gift the play area to the people of Eastgate. Mrs K Hutchinson was on the Village Hall Committee at the time and would have dealt with this.

5. Weardale Renewable Energy are holding meetings in the dale the email was sent to the councillors. There is a meeting at Stanhope Community Centre on 2nd July between 10am -12 noon
6. The residents from numbers 1,2,3, and 6 School Close in St Johns Chapel are complaining about the height of the school hedge which is taking the light away. The hedge is approx. 15 feet high and needs cutting back to at least 6 feet. **Resolved:** Clerk to contact the school
7. DCC is preparing a new County Durham Plan which will guide development and investment across the County over the coming years. Views are welcome from 22nd June to 17th August. The consultation documents are on line at <https://letstalkcountydurham.co.uk/localplan> If councillors would like to read it then it can go onto the agenda for another month to be discussed.
8. We have had a report that Ashcroft Play Park is not looking at its best. **Resolved:** Clerk to look into this
9. Cllr Blackett reported to the clerk that there is a light burning all the time up at Slitt Wood next to the pipes which is also covered in ivy. This is one of the Parish Councils lights. An order has been sent to DCC to have repaired. Also, there is a light on Crawleyside near to the entrance to Hope Level this has been reported to DCC
10. A tenant from Willard Grove has hired their own skip which will come in the morning and be collected in the afternoon.
11. Mr K Young from Heritage 100 would like to attend our August meeting. He is looking to create 100 walks in the dale and has started at Wolsingham. **Resolved:** Clerk to ask Mr Young to the August meeting
12. A resident on West Terrace has written to the school for the bushes to be cut back as it is a safety issue when trying to cross the road. She has written to the school without any reply. **Resolved:** Clerk to contact the school

11221

Planning Matters

Cllr Mrs Savory declared an interest as she is on the South West Planning Committee

DM/26/01187/FPA

Single storey extension to rear

2 Earnwell

Ireshopeburn

DM/26/01195/PA56

Erection of an agricultural general purpose infill building to create a covered yard area

Follow up to DM/26/00598/PNA

Burtreeford

Cowshill

DM/26/01124/FPA & DM/26/01125/LB
Proposed barn conversion and single storey side extension
Miln House Farm
White Kirkley
Frosterley

DM/26/01555/TPO
Tree 1 – Ash- Crown lift to remove the epicormic growth from the main stem and prune back the overhang on the garden side by 2-3m to maintain clearance from property
Tree 2 – Ash- fell TPO- WVDC – 7-1988
8 Kirk Rise
Frosterley

Planning Decision June 2026

DM/25/02027/FPA
Far Place Sidehead
Siting of ground mounted solar panels together with the associated creation of hardstanding

The Planning Inspectorate has dismissed the planning appeal for the above. The benefits that would arise would not outweigh the harm caused by the proposal. The proposal conflicts with the development plan when taken as a whole and there are no material considerations to outweigh this conflict.

11222 Finance

1. Bank reconciliation figures for 31st May 2026 were sent to the councillors.

11223 Accounts for Payment

Makepeace Motors Westgate Allotments	£540.00
WJPS Emails	£374.40
JRB Enterprise Ltd	£555.84
S Anderson Salary	£923.35
HM REV	£117.12
S Anderson Home as Office	£35.00
Direct Debits	
Bank charges	£22.80
EE	£31.80

11224**New matters for discussion**

1. Cllr Brewin mentioned the trees on Church Lane, Frosterley that there is nothing wrong with them.
2. Cllr Brewin reported that some bricks had been delivered to some land where there is no planning permission. This will be kept an eye on. **Resolved:** Cllr Mrs Savory will look into this
3. Cllr Craig mentioned that the recent Clay Pigeon Shoot had raised £15,000 for St Cuthberts Hospice. The tractor run raised £7000 for St Cuthberts Hospice. Apparently, the Americans have a share in Cooks in Stanhope which will be great for the business.
4. Cllr Mrs Savory commented that she would look into the problem with the dog fouling at Frosterley Play Park. It's not good that the Tri-responders are going as they did a lot of work for the police. The Local Networks there isn't nothing firmed up with them yet. The grass verges are only going to be cut once which does raise safety issues. The planters in Stanhope should have been planted as the County Councillors gave a substantial sum of money for the flower planting. There are three tubs at St Johns Chapel that Cllr Miss Carrick has planted herself.
5. Cllr Turton mentioned B4RN and that not many are signed up.
6. Cllr Mrs Thompson mentioned that the Ambulance Station must be kept an eye. Also there had been a dreadful smell from Cooks that was on the main street in Stanhope.
7. Cllr Miss Carrick would like the Lime Trees cutting back in Stanhope. **Resolved:** Clerk to report to D Hunt
8. The weeds from the Church to the Dales centre to the car park need pulling out.
Resolved: Clerk to contact D Hunt
9. Cllr Mrs Thompson mentioned all the villages are so untidy with weeds growing everywhere.
10. On a positive note, the red poppies growing in Frosterley look lovely.
11. Progress is taking place at the swimming pool and they are fund raising. Also, the MS shop is back open.

11225**Clerks business**

Nothing to report

Meeting closed at 8.26pm

Date of next meeting Wednesday 5th August 2026 at Eastgate Village Hall commencing at 7pm

-----Signed-----Date