

**Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting of
Elsdon Parish Council held on Thursday 14 May, 2026 at Elsdon Village Hall**

Present: Councillors Stuchfield, Cook, Bell, Lister and Renton. Clerk Martin Chilvers, Cllr Bolam & Billy Lewins, Graham Underwood & Glen Graham

Apologies: There were no apologies.

1) Election of Officers for 2025-26

Cllr Stuchfield was nominated for Chair by Cllr Renton and seconded by Cllr Bell

Cllr Cook was nominated for Vice-Chair by Cllr Stuchfield and seconded by Cllr Bell

2) Summary of the year's activity and question – Chair:

This is my report as Chair of Elsdon Parish Council summarising the activity over the past 12 months.

GENERAL ORGANISATION AND FINANCE

- The Councillors have considered nine planning applications during the past 12 months.
- The Parish Council agreed to make a donation towards the hiring of First Responders attending the bonfire & fire work event in November.
- Shirley Stuchfield has represented the Parish Council on the Ray Windfunds CIC and Mark Stuchfield is the EPC representative on EPIC.
- The Parish Council has received a grant of £5,796.96 from Cllr Bridgett towards the installation of electricity to part of the village green. Additionally Mr Paul Wright made a donation of £100.00 towards the same project.
- The Councillors agreed to set the 2026-27 precept at £2,000, the same amount as the previous year.

ROADS

- The speed indicator device (SID) has been in place now for 32 months providing data of the traffic entering Elsdon from Otterburn direction. Unfortunately there has not been any significant improvement during this time with the 85%ile averaging at 36.3mph and an average of 52.9% of vehicles passing exceeding the 30mph speed limit.
- NCC is in the process of providing assistance to help reduce the speed of vehicles and some features have been introduced already with more promised.
- This includes the B6341 out of Elsdon towards Rothbury where NCC data has shown the 85%ile in both directions exceeding 40mph and nearly 80% of vehicles exceeding 30mph speed limit.
- The Police have advised that they will look to make regular visits to Elsdon to monitor the speed of traffic but as yet no data has been shared.
- Despite believing there to be a strong argument for the introduction of a 20mph speed limit in Elsdon the Councillors were disappointed that NCC once again declined the Local Transport Programme (LTP) request for this. Comparison had been made to Walton where a 20mph speed limit was introduced and unlike Elsdon there is a wider, straighter road with pedestrian footpaths. It is noticed that recently a 20mph speed limit has also been introduced at West Thirston and it is hoped that the continued campaigning by the Parish Council will soon bring the same speed restrictions to Elsdon.
- The Parish Council also requested as part of the LTP improved signage warning drivers of horse-riders and cyclists on the local roads with particular reference to the Gibbet Road.

- Pot holes still continued to be a problem and annoyance to local residents. There has been some success and residents are encouraged to continue to report pot holes on Fix My Street.

Village Green

- The Parish Council was successful in obtaining a grant from Cllr Bridgett towards the installation of electricity to the area of the village green near the Bird in Bush pub.
- A cabinet box has been installed and Northern Powergrid is scheduled to make the connection in early May. At that stage an electrician will make undertake the final aspects of the work to complete the supply.
- The bonfire and firework display was again held on 5 November. This event received excellent feedback and was well attended. Thanks go to those that helped with the event in particular the bonfire and firework committee and the Elsdon maintenance volunteers who clean up after the event.
- The village fete, organised by EPIC was held on the August Bank Holiday Monday and was a great success. Unfortunately EPIC felt that without further volunteers coming forward it would not be able to run the fete in 2026, but would be supportive of any other group putting on the fete.
- The Parish Council is giving consideration to possible options for repairing the damaged area that is used as an official lay-by near the Bird in Bush pub. Overtime this area has become very muddy and uneven due to vehicles parking on it and has gradually expanded in area.
- Action has also been taken to cordon off an area of the village green that had been damaged by vehicles near the telephone box.
- EPIC purchased a tree to replace one that had fallen during a storm on the village green and a further tree was planted in memory of Jo Gray, in time a plaque will be added.
- Arrangements have been made for a survey to be undertaken on the health of the trees within the boundary of the village green.

VISITORS

- Cllr Sue Bolam, in her capacity on the Rothbury Educational Trust, provided early plans of the Trust to seek planning permission of five properties on the land it owns near the car park.

MISCELLANY

- The Parish Council was been communicating with BT for improvements to be made to the telephone box on the village green.
- The Parish Council has moved to an Org.uk domain and improved website platform. The new email address for contact with the Parish Council is clerk@elsdonpc.org.uk and the website is at <https://www.elsdonpc.org.uk/>
- NCC has made improvements to the bottle banks in the car park so they are now easier for all to use including those with mobility restrictions.
- A new litter bin has been purchased and installed near Starmyers Bridge and thanks are expressed to Billy Lewins and Graham Underwood for this work as well as their other tireless work about the village during the past year.
- The Parish Council has worked with the Church & Community Partnership (CCP) to promote and attract volunteer drivers to assist with the scheme to help vulnerable residents of Redesdale to attend health and other appointments.

- Additionally working with CCP a workshop was held at the village hall and well attended that helped people realise the implications and live with friends and family with dementia.
- The NNPA introduced the 'Dan Burn' walk has proven popular, bringing many people to Elsdon. Whilst this has presented a few challenges in a small, rural location such as Elsdon the popularity of the walk has been good for local businesses.
- Cllr Stuchfield represented the Parish at the Remembrance service in Otterburn.
- Cllr John Bell has resigned during the past 12 months and I thank both for his time and guidance during his tenure.
- The Parish Council welcomes Andy Bell and Julie Lister as Councillors to ensure the Parish Council is working at full capacity again of five Councillors.

THANKS

- My thanks as ever go to my fellow Councillors, for their dedication and support over the past 12 months.
- I would also like to thank Cllr Sue Bolam for giving her support to the work of the Parish Council and to the community as a whole, using her invaluable knowledge and experience to advise us.
- And finally I would like to thank our clerk, Martin, without who EPC would not function as effectively.

3) Financial Report:

The Clerk provided an update on the Parish Council finances. Opening balance on 1 April, 2025 was £6,134.89 and closing balance on 31 March, 2026 was £6,694.66

The precept was maintained at £2,000. Additional income for the year included a grant from Cllr Bridgett of £5,796.96 for the installation of electric to part of the village green. Other income included £122.00 from the firework committee towards the cost of the First Responder attending the event on 5 November. Also a donation of £100.00 from P. Wright towards the electric project and credit interest of £78.99.

Expenditure during the year included £3,716.35 for Northern Powergrid work on the installation of the electric to the village green. Also there was spend totalling £1,362.88 of services and equipment for the same project, Clerk's salary of £1,222.00. Additionally there was spend of £253.03 for the purchase of a new litter bin and £244.00 for the two First Responders at the firework display event.

The Clerk explained that the high budget balance included the residue of the grant from Cllr Bridgett for the remaining work of installing electric on the village green.

4) Review and agreement of the Parish Council Standing Orders, Risk Assessment, Code of Conduct and Safe Guarding policy The Councillors all agreed to adopt the four papers as they were presented.

5) Reports from County Councillor and questions: Cllr Bridgett was not in attendance.

6) Frequency of Ordinary Parish Council meetings: Following discussion it was agreed to keep the frequency as agreed at the previous annual meeting. This would mean Parish Council meetings for 202-27 in May, June, July, August, October, November, January, March and April.

Any other business:

Nothing was raised

Meeting closed at 7.10pm