

## Conserving our Past: Building Our Future

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### Chairman Cllr. Harvey Neve

Minutes of the Parish Meeting held  
Wednesday 11 March 2026 at 7.00pm  
Location: Bishop Middleham Village Hall

**Present:** Cllr. H. Neve (Chair), Cllr. J Brownlee, Cllr. V. Cooke, Cllr. G. Jacobs, Cllr. M. MacCallam, Cllr. E Sparks & Cllr. G. Turner

**Parish Clerk:** Mrs. A. Hall

**County Councillor:** None in attendance

**Members of the Public:** 0

- Notice of Meeting** – Meeting opened at 7.00pm. Public notice confirmed as issued in accordance with Schedule 12 of the LGA 1972.
- Apologies** – Cllr. A. Anderson
- Declarations of Interest** – Members reminded of the need to declare any interests. No new declarations made.
  - **Cllr MacCallam declared an interest in Item 9(c)** (Community Grant – Floristry & Craft Event, June 2026) due to a personal connection with the Church.
  - Cllr MacCallam took no part in the discussion or decision on this item.
  - No other declarations were made.
- Minutes of the Meeting held on 11 February 2026** One correction was noted: a mistaken reference to “Cllr Green” on page 4.  
**RESOLVED:** Minutes approved subject to this amendment.  
**ACTION:** Clerk to amend and present for signature in April.

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### 5. Public Participation

No members of the public were present.

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### 6. County Councillors' Reports

Two written reports were received and circulated.

Key points noted:

- Both councillors are actively progressing local issues.
- Local Network arrangements remain unclear; members wish to follow up.
- No specific actions required at this stage.

**ACTION:** Clerk/Chair to seek clarification on Local Network arrangements.

### 7. PCSO Report

No written report received.

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The PCSO met with the Clerk earlier in the week. Updates included:

- No significant incidents recently.
- Farm Watch work was ongoing
- "Meet Your PCSO" sessions arranged for **April, July, October, and January**, the sessions in April and October would be on a Monday afternoon after the bingo in the Village Hall.
- Members agreed it is beneficial for the PCSO to attend major village events (Michaelmas Fair, Fireworks). PCSO also to be invited to attend the Annual Meeting.

A discussion took place regarding re-establishing a **Farmers' Forum**. Clerk to discuss with PCSO

**ACTION:** Clerk to discuss Farmers' Forum with PCSO to try to arrange.

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## 8. Community & Outdoor Events

### a) Quotation - Bacchanalia Event Services (Michaelmas Fair)

Members discussed the quotation.

Key points:

- Bacchanalia confirmed the **£6,000 budget** includes all their costs.
- Fireworks figure in their document was incorrect; fireworks will continue to be arranged separately.
- They would manage the health and safety and setting up of the event.
- It was important that the local business we currently used for catering, mobile bar, fairground rides are kept.
- They propose moving the event to **early September** for better weather and alignment with end of school holidays.

#### Concerns:

- Avoiding clash with the **Horticultural Show (4-5 September)**.
- Maintaining the event's ethos as a free, community celebration.
- Ensuring local businesses and regular stallholders are protected.

#### RESOLVED:

- Council supports proceeding to the next stage with Bacchanalia.
- A further meeting will be arranged to firm up details,
- To move the date of Michaelmas Fair to Saturday 12 September

**ACTION:** Clerk to arrange follow-up meeting with Bacchanalia

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### b) Security Arrangements at the Park

Clerk reported:

- Automated gates are **not viable** due to compliance requirements, safety systems, emergency access obligations, and power supply issues.
- Alternative options such as councillor rota or paid gatekeeper are impractical or legally problematic.

#### RESOLVED:

- Automated gate project paused.
- Council to explore volunteer rota options via the **Community Makers** group once it is up and working.

**ACTION:** Clerk to add to role to the Community Makers agenda.

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chair) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

### c) Dog Fouling - Update

- Two trail cameras purchased previously cannot be used due to GDPR risks.
- Neighbourhood Warden advised encrypted cameras must be used.
- Cost of compliant encrypted cameras: **£169 each**.
- Wardens have increased patrols and publicised enforcement.
- Additional signage is required.

#### RESOLVED:

- Purchase **two encrypted cameras**.
- Install additional red warning signs around the park.
- Clerk to circulate draft designs for main park signage.

#### ACTIONS:

- Clerk to order cameras and signage.
  - Clerk to prepare signage options for approval.
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### d) Coronation Garden - Contractor Appointment

Two quotes were received:

1. **£2,300** - detailed specification, materials included.
2. **£2,500** - not as detailed.

Members agreed the detailed quote demonstrated understanding and reliability.

#### RESOLVED:

- Contractor offering the **£2,300 detailed quote** appointed.

**ACTION:** Clerk to confirm appointment and schedule works.

Additional notes:

- Bug hotel and nature features to be added separately.
  - Opening event provisionally planned for **18 July 2026**.
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### e) Changing Rooms Renovation Group - Update

Meeting held with football teams. Key points:

- Teams prefer to retain **showers** (currently unusable).
- Storage is insufficient.
- A sponsor involved with the club (a builder) has offered to assist.
- Options include refurbishment or a **new modular building**.
- Football Foundation funding available up to **£25,000** for new builds (not refurbishments of containers).
- DCC permission required for any new structure; Clerk has initiated this process.

Location discussion:

- Preferred site is the **tree area between the MUGA and car park**, where an unsafe tree has recently been removed.

#### RESOLVED:

- Chair and Clerk to meet with the builder see what they can offer and support.
  - Continue discussions with DCC regarding siting and permissions.
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### f) Traffic Assessment

Awaiting report from DCC.

**ACTION:** Clerk to follow up with Cllr Catchpole.

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Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chair) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## 9. Finance

### a) Payments & Invoices

All payments since 11 February were approved.

<b>Bishop Middleham Parish Council - 11.2.26 - 10.3.26</b>		
<b>Who To</b>	<b>What For</b>	<b>Amount (inc VAT)</b>
Amazon	SD Card Reader	£5.41
Caspian	Stress Testing - hanging baskets	£100.00
BMVH	February - Youth Club	£90.00
Amazon	Purchase of wildlife cameras	£113.04
Durham County Council	Playground Inspections 25/26	£358.28
IQ Electrical	EICR report from Aug 26	£358.80
Phoenix	M'soft account	£10.63
Bishop Middleham Village Hall	Room hire - meetings in february	£54.00
SE Landscaping	Grounds Jan 26	£2,937.32
SE Landscaping	Grounds Feb 26	£2,937.32
Eon	Elec Jan 2026	£42.22
Wages		£586.23
Pension / NI, PAYE		£394.24
Bank charges		£6.00
BACS charges		£16.70
O2	Mobile Phone	£20.64
Anglian Water		£522.48

### b) Policy Reviews

Council reviewed:

- Data Protection Policy (General)
- Data Protection HR Policy
- IT Policy
- Freedom of Information Policy
- Document Retention & Destruction Policy
- Publication Scheme

Discussion:

- WhatsApp use must be clarified; it is a formal communication channel but must not be used for decision-making.
- For security purposes, messages should auto-delete after one month.
- IT Policy requires minor amendments.

#### **RESOLVED:**

- All policies approved **except the IT Policy**, which will return in April with updated wording

**ACTION:** Clerk to amend IT Policy and WhatsApp wording.

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### c) Community Grant - Floristry & Craft Event (June 2026)

**Cllr MacCallam took no part in this item due to a declared interest.**

- Application received for **£215** to support a community craft/heritage event in June 2026.
- Members noted the low cost and strong community benefit.
- Organisers may return for additional support later.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chair) Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**RESOLVED:** Grant approved in full.

**ACTION:** Clerk to contact requested and process payment.

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## 10. Health & Safety

Key items:

- **Lamp column stress testing:**
  - Previously £377; now DCC require use of their contractor at **£1,250**.
  - Members expressed strong concern at the increase.

**ACTION:** Clerk to write formally to DCC and Cllr Catchpole seeking explanation and review.

- **Hanging basket columns:**
  - Tested for £100
  - One column at Mainsforth requires re-fixing and securing as it is leaning. The company recommend these columns are tested annually.

**ACTION:** Clerk to arrange works..

- **Water usage:**
    - Recent bill unusually high due to leak (now repaired).
    - Ongoing monitoring required.
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## 11. Correspondence

Two emails from Mainsforth residents:

1. **Shrub beds at village entrance** - looking untidy.
  - Scott to tidy and consider additional planting.
2. **Annual request for Christmas lights** - noted.
  - Members requested that the Clerk contact the resident to thank them for their correspondence and explain the regulation issues that prevent different lights in Mainsforth. It should also be reported that we have a cllr in Mainsforth and give them the contact details or offer a meeting with the Clerk and the Chair.

**ACTION:** Clerk to reply to the residents

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## 12. Planning - DM/26/00456/FPA (48 dwellings, Sedgfield)

Members reviewed the application.

**RESOLVED:**

- Council to **object**, referencing the previous objection to the Beaconsfield development and highlighting cumulative impact on services and settlement character.

**ACTION:** Clerk to submit objection.

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## 13. Member Sharing

Items raised:

- **Speeding** continues to worsen on the top road.
  - **Quarry wagons** observed using restricted routes; Chair to raise with quarry management.
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## 13. Date of Next Meeting

**Wednesday 8<sup>th</sup> April 2026 at 6pm**, Bishop Middleham Village Hall.

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ (Chair) Date: \_\_\_\_\_