

Dalton Piercy Parish Council

Meeting Minutes 12th June 2025

Present: Cllrs Middleton (Chair), Grylls, Noble, Patrick, Savage

In attendance: C Porritt (Clerk), and three members of the public.

1. **Apologies:** Cllrs M. Ireland and A. Timothy. Ward Clls Andrew Martin-Wells.
2. **Declaration of Interests:** Cllrs Noble and Patrick – Item 11.
3. **Minutes of 17th April 2025:** Item 8.3: Removal of the word “maintenance” to read “resident to be reimbursed £90.00 for past years planting of the cart and three pots”. Accepted with amendment.
4. **Matters Arising:** None.
5. **Ward Councillor’s Report:** None received.
6. **Chair’s Report:** None received from Cllr Ireland (previous Chair).
Cllr Noble reported that Hartlepool Borough Council (HBC) have received money from UK Government to fund infrastructure projects, particularly the Elwick by-pass.
7. **Personnel Report:** Nothing to report.
8. **Village Maintenance:**
 1. **Pots:** Summer planting completed by Meadowfields. Cllrs are pleased with quality and look of the work.
 2. **Dene Garth:** Chippings were left in the car park by a new resident but were removed same-day once spoken to. **Decision:** All Dalton residents to be reminded of village standing order policy. **Action:** Cllr Noble to include in her next contribution to ‘Village Life’ magazine; Clerk to post to DPPC website and Facebook page.
 3. **Allotments:** Tenant has requested reported rotten fencing and requested replacement. Quote for replacement received for £2000. Cllrs have seen current fence and believe that it is secure; replacement deferred due to cost. **Action:** Clerk to write to tenant informing them of decision.
9. **The Batts Maintenance:** Contractor has done good work in sowing seeds as part of routine maintenance plan. Upcoming Path work is planned to improve access. Contractor believes that grass in the Orchard needs more frequent cuts than the current bi-annual schedule; suggests 10-12 per year. **Action:** Clerk and Cllr Middleton to cost out maintenance schedule recommended in Batts report previously produced in conjunction with Tees Wildlife Trust.
10. **Parking and vehicle access surrounding Village Green:**

Parking: Cllrs Ireland and Timothy not present to give update on parking bays plan.

Traffic Calming Scheme: Currently under consultation by HBC; residents have until 20th June to respond. Cllrs unsure of full spec. of materials to be used but anticipate receiving further details after consultation concludes.
11. **Dalton Piercy Village Hall Trustees Report:** DPVHT thanked DPPC for the £30,000 donation towards the new hall. Demolition expected to start on 26th June 2025 and last for one month.
12. **Finance Report:** Transactions for 15.04.25 – 05.06.25

Receipts	£
HBC Precept, Concurrent & Grant	16,870.00
Allotment Rent	237.00
Grant for Play Area Pathwork	1,180.00

TOTAL:	18,287.00
Payments	£
Cart Plants reimbursement	90.00
Clerk Salary (April)	301.60
Media Allowance (April)	20.00
Tree Work	1,000.00
Grass Cutting (Four cuts)	1,080.00
Tree Care	980.00
Water Bill	33.29
Annual Insurance Premium	527.91
TOTAL:	4032.80

Also presented were Actual against budget (AAB) reports for April and May 2025, including Bank reconciliation. Clerk identified transposition errors in May's AAB and will re-do it. "Cart maintenance" reworded to "cart plants" at Cllr Noble's request. Transactions and April's AAB were **accepted**. Invoices from R. Caygell for work completed are not received, but expected. **Action:** Clerk to add April's AAB and transactions to website, and recalculate May's AAB for approval at July's meeting.

- 13. Audit:** AGAR has returned from the internal auditor with some minor discrepancies in assets register, as well as a payment made in April 2024 being both accounted for in 2023/2024 accounts as well as 2024/2025 accounts. AGAR approved by all councillors and signed. **Action:** Clerk to submit 2024/2025 AGAR by 30th June with advisory letter to explain any inconsistencies.

14. Matters of Concern to Councillors:

- Suspected Planning breach:** Councillors reported suspected breach of planning regulations to HBC in 2024 under previous Clerk and have received no follow-up. Wish to know what actions HBC have taken. **Action:** Cllr Noble to forward original submission information to clerk for investigation.
- Sign Replacement:** There are currently no English Heritage grants available to fund replacement signs. **Action:** Cllr Noble to check for any available with National Lottery Community Fund.

- 15. Correspondence:** Clerk had some time off in April and May due to illness; not all correspondence has been dealt with promptly from that period, causing difficulties. This was acknowledged by clerk and councillors.

- Village Green:** Residents of a property emailed DPPC in April to inform they would be carrying out work to level part of the village green; no permission was requested or granted, and DPPC understand this work has now taken place. **Action:** DPPC to send letter to residents.
- Fencing:** A resident requested that a broken fence baton be replaced. **Action:** Cllrs will ask Meryl Gardens to fix.
- Fruit Tree:** The resident previously requesting to plant a memorial fruit tree has accepted all terms set out by DPPC. Resident has purchased the tree but wishes to wait until end of summer to plant. Unanimously agreed. **Action:** Clerk will email resident and inform.
- Village Hall:** Clerk shared letter received from Village Hall Trustees thanking them for the £30,000 donation.
- Training Events:** Clerk shared details of upcoming training events for councillors. **Action:** clerk will circulate to councillors for undertaking.
- Northern Power:** Cllr Noble believes that correspondence should have been received regarding permission for a wayleave. **Action:** Clerk to re-check emails.

16. Public Forum:

- The Batts:** Resident concerned with maintenance work in the Orchard and The Meadow; they believe the current work is drying out Orchard soil causing damage, as well as windbreakers being removed which has caused damage to an apple tree. Resident stated it was their opinion that DPPC are destroying what they have in the meadow and that they need to treat the wild meadow as such by leaving it alone. Resident also informed DPPC that when he leaves the meeting, he will be making a Police report against DPPC for illegally killing Orchids with a rotavator. Resident left meeting.

2. **Financial Resources:** Another resident feels that more money ought to be spent on maintaining the village, and a balance of funding needed. Resident was informed DPPC is trying to be prudent with finances in 2024/2025 as reserves need to be increased. Resident then brought up example of £30,000 Village Hall donation as a DPPC expense but was informed that this donation was funded by a £35,000 land swap of DPPC land, not by residents via the precept, which Dalton residents will benefit from. DPPC also benefited from the remaining £5,000 being spent on village maintenance.
3. **Complaint:** Resident felt that they were not being shown appropriate respect by DPPC; they also felt Cllrs had acted verbally aggressive during their request for further maintenance funding. **Action:** Clerk to supply residents with copy of complaint procedure. All remaining residents left meeting.

17. Planning Applications:

1. **H/2025/0062** – No objection to variation
2. **H/2025/0159** – No objection

18. Date of Next Meeting:

Thursday 10th July 2025: 7:00pm; Elwick WI Hall, TS27 3EF