



ALSTON MOOR PARISH COUNCIL MINUTES

The minutes of the proceedings of the **MONTHLY MEETING** of Alston Moor Parish Council held on **Monday 7th July** at 19:00hrs in the Garrigill Village Hall.

Present:

Councillors:

Cllr. Miller, Cllr. Bondi, Cllr. Martin, Cllr. Davies, Cllr. Grew, Cllr. Robertson, Cllr. Robinson, Cllr. Monk, Cllr. Edgar, Cllr. Hanely, Cllr. Best, Cllr. Crossley, Cllr. Green (arrived 19.03hrs) Cllr. Ho (arrived 19.10hrs).

Clerk/RFO:

Claire Thomson

Also in attendance:

Cllr. Mary Robinson (UC)

Members of the Public: 9

2526/56 To receive **apologies & consider approval of the reasons** given for absence
None.

2526/57 To record all votes on every agenda item by name to make it clear what you vote whether it's for, against or abstain. It will be recorded in the minutes by your name next to what you voted for, this is in our Standing Orders, Section 3 Paragraph 5

2526/59 Minutes of the Last Meeting of Alston Moor Parish Council

The minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on Monday 2nd June 2025 were considered.

Motion: To authorise the chairman to sign, as a correct record, the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 2nd June 2025. Proposer: Cllr. Robinson, Seconder: Cllr. Davis, Vote: Favour - Cllr. Bondi, Cllr. Monk, Cllr. Davies, Cllr. Miller, Cllr. Martin, Cllr. Robertson, Cllr. Grew, Cllr. Green, Cllr. Robinson. Against - None Abstention - Cllr. Hanley, Cllr. Best, Cllr. Crossley.

Resolved: to accept the minutes of the previous meeting

Cllr. Green arrived after voting had taken place.

2526/60 Declarations of interest & requests for Dispensation

1. To receive declarations of interest for agenda items – Cllr. Best regarding payment for approval.
2. To receive dispensation –All Cllrs. have dispensation from May 2025 to April 2027, for any business relating to Alston Town Hall.

Resolved: Recorded in minutes 2526/12.3 that the Council delegates the power to grant dispensations to the Clerk. The power rests with the relevant authority under section 33(1) of the Localism Act 2011 and the basis is set out under section 33(2).

2526/61 Public Participation (Timed item 15 minutes)

1. Sarka-Jo Cole spoke passionately about the Red Squirrels, requesting agreement from Westmorland & Furness Council to catch and dispose of grey squirrels in Alston Cemetery. Westmorland & Furness Council asked Sarka-Jo Cole to speak with Alston Moor Parish Council first, regarding this. It was agreed to be added as an agenda item for next meeting to enable a vote on the proposal.

2. Damon Hall spoke about Alston Heritage, a newly created group, to promote and market the local heritage attractions and businesses to a wider audience to increase the footfall in the area. He showed a copy of a local map

R Miller



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produced to advertise local attractions & businesses. It was asked why it was titled "Alston" rather than "Alston Moor" to which Damon replied, Alston can be found on a map, but Alston Moor is not, therefore to attract new visitors it was thought to name the local map "Alston" to enable location on a standard map easier.

3. Sarah Stamford the Community Development Co-ordinator spoke to the Cllrs. about what she had been doing in the community and going forward what she hopes to achieve. She produced a report that was handed to the Clerk to distribute to Cllrs. at the end of the meeting.

Cllr. Ho arrived during Sarah's talk, disrupting this talk.

2526/62

To note councillor vacancies & review any co-option candidates

One vacancy no candidates received

2526/63

Chair's Report

Firstly, I would like to welcome Judith Crossley to the Parish Council, we have just held the Alston Gala, again a success even though it was a little damp, the good news is the new repositioned gate entrance on Tyne Willows held up in the rain. Now sadly I have had a report from a concerned member of the public about a councillor condemning the council continually saying the council is corrupt, I would like to remind this councillor that by saying this they are also implementing themselves as corrupt, and are disrespecting all other councillors and their families, so be aware that I will not tolerate any accusations or disrespecting of any councillor or the clerk and I will not hesitate to take matters further, if required. May I suggest that you read the codes of conduct and the Nolan principles to remind yourself of why you are a councillor and what your duties to the community are, as clearly you have forgotten, in this instance. On a brighter note, Alston Moor Parish Council & Alston Town Hall has received the decision from Westmorland & Furness Council regarding the stairlift. The decision was to **GRANT** listed building consent for the retention of the stairlift. It's been a long time coming, original permissions requested in April 2024, then retrospective listed building consent in June 2024, then it all went quiet! Lots of backwards and forwards, chasing up the planning department only to discover that the original forms had been mislaid. Copy forms sent in January 2025, along with additional information requested by the planning team in March, April & May 2025. Well done all those involved in getting this through. And just a nod to those within the community who made false and unjustified comments about Alston Moor Parish Council, throwing false and untrue rumours of what had and hadn't been done. Alston Moor Parish Council would like to ask for an apology from those in question but I feel, this will not be forthcoming. I would like to say that Alston Moor Parish Council will continue to serve the wider community to the best of its ability, making improvements to the Moor for those that live here and for those that choose to visit, even though a small number continue to criticise what is being done, broadcasting on social media, false and unjust accusations. To know what is really going on, ask Alston Moor Parish Council.

2526/64

Westmorland & Furness Councillors Report – Cllr. Hanley read out reports concerning EV Infrastructure, Rural Transport, Highways & Lighting Policy which were in a report from Eden Locality Board Highways, Infrastructure and Connectivity Working Group 23.6.25 which was emailed to the Clerk and is attached in appendix 1 of these minutes.

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Cllr. Mary Robinson (UC) reported on the Place Action Group housing survey, which will be ready to go out in the Autumn, delivered & collected by volunteers. Multiple roads closures will be put in force in the area over the next couple of months, primarily to enable resurfacing to be carried out, which is needed. Planning proposals for Alston Primary School (old site) have had some movement, and will be coming back to Alston Moor Parish Council for consultation in the future.

Police Report - The monthly report from Cumbria Police was circulated to all councillors prior to the meeting. The Clerk had sent an invite, but no one was available to attend the meeting.

Nenthead ward meeting update – none

Cemeteries Report by representatives from Westmorland & Furness Council

Apologies were received from Josh McLeod, Bereavement Services Lead but Andrea McCallum attended to represent him along with Kate Clement. Andrea apologised before starting the report, as she had been asked to attend with very short notice and would be reading the notes provided by Josh. The main reason for the report was to work with the "Friends of Alston Cemetery Group" and how to move forward in the future, with the whole community. Two representatives from the Friends of Alston Cemetery were also in attendance. Maintenance of the cemeteries was discussed, Andrea advised that the cemeteries in Alston was subject to 13 cuts per year, these were a "cut & drop" service therefore the grass was not collected but left where it has been cut. Councillors reported that this was not a popular solution as it made the cemeteries look untidy and the grave stones were left covered in cut grass. The council were told that the budget for cemetery services was very small and that's why Alston Cemeteries received the type of service they get. It was asked why they could not have the same service as received by Penrith Cemetery. The response from Andrea was not received well by some councillors as they felt that the local council tax should deliver the same as Penrith regardless of the number of burials that take place on Alston Moor compared to Penrith. Again, Andrea advised that the contract for grass cutting was "fairly local" contractor, but then advised it was a contractor from Penrith, who factors in travel costs in time and travel to and from Alston. Councillors again showed disappointment, as the contractor was not "local" adding additional costs to the already very small budget available. However, it was mentioned that Alston Cemetery had received "The Green Flag" award, which was something to be proud of. The award is based on trees, birds, insects and environmental aspects of the cemetery but takes no account of the maintenance and tidiness of its appearance. It was agreed that this was a welcome achievement and congratulated and thanked the Friends of Alston Cemetery in attendance, they hoped that more people may join them and help push for more care and maintenance. It was suggested that collaboration with the Community Development Co-ordinator may be beneficial. Councillors and Friends of Alston Cemetery still felt that maintenance and tidiness still was an overall requirement for Alston cemeteries. Councillor Mary Robinson (UC) pointed out that budget allocation was a matter for councillors, not officers, and she and Councillor Hanley will take this up.

To consider matters arising and actions required

2526/65 1. Benches for removal/repair/replace/sites for new benches – This process is ongoing, in Garrigill the bench at Tynehead has been completed and

2526/65

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being well used, the bench at the Gin Mill is in progress of being repaired & the metal bench is still to be assessed and looked at.

2526/65 2. IT Software – iPads – Again a request has been sent out to all those councillors that haven't taken up the new email and iPad. The change over to the new email is 11th July and therefore it is vitally important that all councillors engage with the new email address and received the iPad. There is an iPad agreement to be signed by all councillors.

2526/65 3. iPad agreement – It has been decided that as not all councillors have received/read the agreement this will be on next month's agenda for a vote.

2526/65 4. Garrigill carpark tarmac area needs weeding – Cllr. Grew requested the parish handy person assist in getting this area ready for tarmacking during his duties in Garrigill. Also asked what the best way to remove the weeds was, suggested using salt & vinegar but not to use pesticides or harmful products. Agreed that this could be arranged, weather permitting.

2526/65 5. Fairhill pavilion toilet access discussion – Cllr. Best reported that the access to the toilets at the pavilion at Fairhill were not always open for use. Cllr. Best was advised to contact the committee at Fairhill as Alston Parish Council have no jurisdiction at Fairhill.

2526/65 6. Sign on Tyne Willows/Removal of cars – Cllr. Davies confirmed that the no overnight parking signs have arrived and weather permitting they would be put up on Tyne Willows car park area; one to be added to the sign already there and the other to be positioned further up the carpark entrance. The Clerk has been looking at getting those vehicles that have been parked on the grass area to the left of the Gym to be removed as part of the improvements being made at Tyne Willows. Thankfully several vehicles have been removed already, and the Clerk is very grateful to the owners. There are two left, one has been SORNed and the other has no tax or MOT. Both owners have been contacted, and efforts are being made by all those involved to have the vehicles moved in a timely matter. There is a vehicle parked there by a resident of Station Road, who has been asked to move their vehicle to outside their own home. They were not happy to do so and very vocal about it. It was explained the reasons why the vehicle needs to be removed but was still vocal. The Clerk has arranged to meet the Police to discuss what options the Parish Council has.

2526/65 7. Policies to review & approve – ongoing progress.

2526/65 8. Media Report (Facebook) to continue? – After receiving negative feedback from a select few of the members of the public it was decided that the benefit to the wider community outweighed this negative feedback. It provides the wider community a snapshot of what was discussed in the council meeting, while the complete minutes provide the more formal version, in a draft form until the next meeting, where they are voted on, by councillors, as being a true and correct representation of the previous meeting. In the past a reporter from the Cumberland & Westmorland Herald would attend the meetings and write such reports for information, as this no longer happens it is down to the council to provide such a report.

Motion: To continue to provide and post on Alston Moor Parish Council's Facebook page, an informal report of the latest parish council meeting.

Proposer: Cllr. Robertson, Seconder: Cllr. Davis, Vote: Favour - Cllr. Crossley, Cllr. Monk, Cllr. Davies, Cllr. Miller, Cllr. Martin, Cllr. Robertson, Cllr. Grew, Cllr.

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*Edgar, Cllr. Green, Cllr. Robinson, Cllr. Hanley, Cllr. Best. Against - None
Abstention – Cllr. Ho, Cllr. Bondi.*

Resolved: to continue the informal Facebook report

It was noted that the formal minutes also result in online criticism and council members expressed their support of the Clerk and the work she carries out. Cllr. Edgar noted and commented on unpleasant reactions to these statements from one member of the public in attendance. This member of the public then began to become very vocal, shouting at councillors, disrupting the meeting for a short time, after being asked several times to stop interrupting the meeting by the Chair, the Chair asked them to leave the meeting, as they continued to be disruptive, but they refused. The Chair mentioned contacting the Police to have them removed, the Clerk then asked them politely to be quiet, and they eventually quietened down and the meeting could continue.

2526/66

Committees, working groups & consider any actions required

2526/66.1 Committee – Development, Governance & Personnel (DGP) – which includes staffing – discuss in closed meeting

2526/66.2 Group Representatives

Alston Moor Partnership – The next meeting is tomorrow afternoon (8th July)

Alston Moor Traffic Management Group – Cllr. Grew gave a brief account of the last meeting on 1st July. Lots of road closures/rolling closures for road resurfacing. The Butts parking issue regarding emergency vehicle access, looking at solutions, 40mph limit on A689 to be assessed and implemented 2026/2027, if needed. Emergency yellow lines to be implemented on Station Road & past Fire Station to junction for Nenthead. Bollards to be moved nearer road edge outside Co-op to protect the path, to look at parking from Spar to Alston House, to investigate if yellow lines are required.

NWAS Alston Moor Working Group – Cllr. Monk & Cllr. Grew updated the council following the Gala Day. Rhonda has extended the dates for applicants to 25th April. Unfortunately, they are unable to attend the next meeting as previously arranged so a further 2 dates have been suggested and we await a response.

Alston & Fellside Planning Action Group – Next meeting is 4th September 2025

Tyne Willows Management – No update

AMERG – No update

Hospital Group – No update

Alston Community Transport – No update.

2526/67

Planning Applications & Decisions

2526/67.1 Applications received

2025/1083/HOU Hazelcroft House, Dykeheads, Nenthead, CA9 3PY

Extension of existing double garage & addition of 1st floor level above.

Motion: to approve the extension & 1st floor level.

Proposer: Cllr. Green Seconder: Cllr. Davies

*Vote: Favour - Cllr. Miller, Cllr. Robinson, Cllr. Best, Cllr. Crossley, Cllr. Davies, Cllr. Robertson, Cllr. Edgar, Cllr. Bondi, Cllr. Green, Cllr. Martin. Against – None
Abstain – Cllr. Grew, Cllr. Monk, Cllr. Ho, Cllr. Hanley.*

Resolved: to approve the extension to garage & 1st floor level.

2025/1189/FPA Broadpot Hill, Potters Loaning, Alston CA9 3AD

Proposed new dwelling.

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Motion: to approve new dwelling.

Proposed: Cllr. Robertson Seconded Cllr. Martin Vote: Favour - Cllr. Grew, Cllr. Crossley, Cllr. Miller, Cllr. Robinson, Cllr. Robertson, Cllr. Monk, Cllr. Edgar, Cllr. Davies, Cllr. Bondi, Cllr. Ho, Cllr. Martin. Against – None Abstain – Cllr. Hanley, Cllr. Green.

Resolved: to approve new dwelling.

2526/68

Finance Reports & Accounts

The finance reports & accounts were circulated prior to the meeting.

2526/68 1. Current Balance of the Community Account as at 30/06/2025
£147985.81

2526/68 2. Consider payments for approval – see Appendix 2

Motion: to approve payments.

Proposed: Cllr. Miller Seconded: Cllr. Davies

Vote: Favour - Cllr. Grew, Cllr. Miller, Cllr. Ho, Cllr. Robertson, Cllr. Robinson, Cllr. Edgar, Cllr. Monk, Cllr. Crossley, Cllr. Hanley, Cllr. Bondi, Cllr. Green, Cllr. Davies, Cllr. Martin. Against – none Abstain – Cllr. Best.

Resolved: to approve payments

Grant approval – Alston Heritage Community Grant Application

Motion: to approve grant

Proposed: Cllr. Grew Seconded: Cllr. Best

Vote: Favour – Cllr. Miller, Cllr. Davies, Cllr. Best, Cllr. Robertson, Cllr. Robinson, Cllr. Monk, Cllr. Grew, Cllr. Ho, Cllr. Bondi, Cllr. Crossley, Cllr. Martin, Cllr. Hanley, Cllr. Green. Against – None. Abstain – Cllr. Edgar.

Resolved: to approve grant application

2526/68 3. Approve any payments required between meetings

Clerk advised that she is waiting for the builder's invoice for the improvements at the pavilion, the final invoice from J.C Brown for the workhouse field & invoice for cutting Tyne Willows.

Motion: to approve payments if they come in before the next meeting.

Proposed: Cllr. Miller Seconded: Cllr. Davies

Vote: Favour - Cllr. Grew, Cllr. Miller, Cllr. Monk, Cllr. Robertson, Cllr. Robinson, Cllr. Edgar, Cllr. Bondi, Cllr. Green, Cllr. Davies, Cllr. Martin. Against – None Abstain – Cllr. Ho.

Resolved: to approve payments if required.

2526/69

Note the status of assets & consider any action required

Tyne Willows Playing Field – grass cutting contract has started

Firs Woodland Walk - path under Brewery Bridge has been repaired on the Spar side, The Firs side requires further attention.

Pavilion – works have been 98% completed, Alston Moor Fitness are happy with what has been done, a new boiler providing hot & cold water to the sink in the boiler room for keeping the Gym clean, 2 new toilets (1 is an accessible toilet) with hand dryers & sinks with hot & cold running water. Alston Moor Parish Council have reinstated the facility of providing water & electricity for those hiring Tyne Willows for events, after it was removed several years ago by the Gym when the pipes burst.

Village Benches – Handyperson is working their way round the benches, assessing and carrying out repairs as required, ongoing project.

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Bus shelters - ongoing, repainting is to commence, weather permitting, on the bus shelters at Nentsberry & Nenthead. The 2 shelters in Alston fall in the conservation area and permission has been sought from Westmorland & Furness Council, clerk is awaiting a response to this.

Notice Boards – nothing to report.

Defibrillators – new defibrillator & pads have been received and are in the process of being replaced in Garrigill.

Nenthead Fountain – the fountain has been repainted and looks fantastic, well done to all involved, something that Nenthead can be proud of. Cllr. Robertson read out a statement detailing what has been done, permitted to do under the Listed Building Regulations. Unfortunately, a complaint has been made, accusing the Parish Council of not applying for Listed Building Consent. The Clerk has received an email from the Enforcement Officer asking to provide evidence. Both the Enforcement Officer & Conservation Officer have been invited by Alston Moor Parish Council to have a site visit so any queries/questions can be answered and visually seen. Clerk is awaiting a reply from them before proceeding further.

Christmas Trees & Lights – Alston Moor Parish Council is intending on putting up the Christmas lights/trees in time for the Christmas Fayre in late November. It was mentioned by Cllr. Robinson that the flag is looking tired and could do with being replaced. This is to be added to the next agenda to discuss/vote.

2526/70

Note status of Open Spaces/ Trees & consider any action – Nothing to report

Cllr. Green left the meeting at 21.08hrs

2526/71

Correspondence – Received

1. **Nentsberry Community Group regarding Horse & Wagon Caravan Park** – an email has been received regarding the persistent failure to replace the screening. This has now been escalated to Assistant Director responsible for planning and enforcement & Chief Executive
2. **Environment Agency** – they have launched the new “Report an environmental problem service” on GOV.UK. It's an online service 24/7 and it enables anyone to report **water & odour pollution** instantly, whether you're in the office or out enjoying England's natural spaces.
3. **The Firs Playpark** – Eden Housing have contacted Alston Moor Parish Council to advise the playpark has been inspected and is now not in the best of conditions and coming to the end of its life. They have asked if it is still needed in the area and if there are any plans for new play areas nearby along with assistance with funding this. The playpark is the responsibility of Eden Housing not the Parish Council, Cllr. Robinson (UC) confirmed this and suggested that there may be grant funding available from W&F Council.
4. **Commons Registration Service** – deadlines for applications to correct non-registration or mistaken registration of common land and village greens is 15th March 2027.
5. **Local Lettings Policy** – Eden Housing have sent a draft review of the lettings policy that relates to Alston Moor. They have asked for councillors to provide feedback. Cllr. Robinson (UC) suggested they need to contact Judith Derbyshire at W&F Council regarding this.

Cllr. Best left the meeting 21.20hrs

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2526/72

Items for the Next Meeting of the Parish Council

- Red Squirrels in Alston Cemetery
- Memorial bench request
- Nenthead group opposing water treatment works, Ian Grey attending the next meeting to answer any questions
- Flag
- Map of housing sites available "Local Plan"
- Progress with Nenthead Fountain

2526/73

To consider any councillor or officer training

2526/74

Date and Time of Next Meeting

The next **PARISH COUNCIL** meeting to be held on Monday 4th August 2025 at 7.00pm. Meeting to be held Alston Town Hall (no Wifi available at Nenthead Village Hall)

2526/75

Exclusion of public & press (Public Bodies Admission to Meetings Act 1960)

Resolve to close the meeting at 21.27hrs

2526/76

Close Parish Council Meeting

Meeting closed 21.34hrs

2526/77

Open Fairhill Charity Meeting

2526/78

Close Fairhill Charity Meeting

Cllr. Miller closed the meeting at 21.48 hrs

Please note: all Parish Council meetings are open to members of the Public.

Chair Signature:

R Miller

Date:

4/8/25

Clerk Signature:

Clare Thomas

Date:

4/8/25

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Date	PO	Status	Total	Description	Supplier	Inv No
05.07.2025	272	Outstanding	£39.59	amazon	Claire Thoms	Multiple
05.07.2025	271	OverDue	£240.00	Payroll	The Books Acc	8428
05.07.2025	270	Outstanding	£6,588.31	Maintenance	JC Brown	404
05.07.2025	269	Outstanding	£720.00	Tyne Willows	Procut Groun	3414
05.07.2025	268	Outstanding	£429.82	Calc Members Calc		Annual subscr
05.07.2025	267	Outstanding	£1,440.00	Tyne Willows	Procut Groun	3368
05.07.2025	266	Outstanding	£229.00	Maintenance	BIP Joinery	Invoice
05.07.2025	264	Outstanding	£30.00	Room Hire	Garrigill Villag	441

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Handy person invoice £910.00 (June 2nd - July 5th).

Tyne willows Pavilion improvements £16874.38

£ 4200.00

£21074.38