

Minutes for the Monthly Parish Meeting of Croxdale and Hett Parish Council
Wednesday 24 June 2026, 7.00 pm
Croxdale Community Centre

Parish Council Members Present:

Councillor L Griffiths (Chair), Councillor I Clark, Councillor G Hollingsworth, Councillor P Kerrison, Councillor D Pyle, Councillor M Walker and Councillor I Watt.

20/26. Apologies for Absence:

Apologies of absence was received from Councillors A Smith and County Councillors Blakey, Genner and Hutchinson.

21/26. Declarations of Interest:

Councillor Pyle declared an interest in the agenda item in relation to allotments.

22/26. Policing:

The Clerk shared Policing crime stats: 4 incidents being recorded for the period April 2026 within the Parish. The next PACT Meeting is on Wednesday 15 July 2026, 10.30 am, Croxdale Community Centre.

Councillor Clark questioned if June's PACT Meeting took place as there was no Police presence in attendance.

Resolved: For Members' Information. Clerk to confirm with PCSO if June's PACT meeting took place on a revised date than scheduled.

23/26. Public Participation:

There were no members of the public in attendance.

24/26. Minutes:

The Minutes of the meeting held on the 27 May 2026 were agreed as a true record and signed by the Chairman.

25/26. Parish Clerk's Report:

i. Hett Litter Pick:

DCC have yet to confirm the date of June's litter pick.

Resolved: For Members' information.

ii. Abandoned Vehicle at Salvin Street:

The reported vehicle is still present; Neighbourhood Warden has been away from the office. An update to be received in due course.

Resolved: For Members' information.

iii. Tree Maintenance, Sunderland Bridge:

Clerk confirmed there was no record of the tree in question having tree works undertaken previously. The tree is believed to be on PC land which will require a Tree Preservation Order (TPO) with being in a conservation area.

Resolved: Clerk to arrange for a quotation to be sourced for the tree works and arrange for a TPO via DCC.

iv. Hett Road Planings:

Were delivered to Hett Village Hall on 22 June 2026.

Resolved: For Members' information.

v. Fencing at 20 Front Street, Croxdale:

Notification was received from DCC on 10 June 2026, confirming that the fencing has now been reduced to 1 meter in height. As a result, the development is considered permitted development and no longer constitutes a breach of planning control. No update has yet to be received regarding number 21 Front Street.

Resolved: For Members' information.

vi. Fencing at 1 Front Street, Croxdale:

A request was received from the homeowner on 19 June 2026 for the PC to reconsider the fence height restriction applicable and grant permission for a fence height of approximately 6 feet to their property.

Resolved: This matter falls within the remit of the Planning Department at DCC rather than the PC. Clerk to inform resident accordingly.

vii. Email Accounts Fee:

The PC email account provider has confirmed an increase in the cost of email accounts due to rising server and hosting charges. With effect from 1 July 2026, the annual cost per email account will increase to £10, compared with the previous charges of £8 and £4 per account.

Resolved: For Members' information. Clerk to arrange for a review of email management hosting for comparison/value for money in due course.

26/26. Financial Matters:

(i) Financial Report for the Period 1 April – 31 May 2026:

A financial update prepared by the Clerk was circulated to Members which included a detailed schedule of receipts and payments for the financial year to date and bank reconciliation to 31 May 2026. The current net bank balances totalled £67,591.34.

The following payments were approved for the period June 2026:

Parish Clerk	Clerk's Wages – June 2026	£487.70
HMRC	Tax Contributions	£122.00
Dave Dove	GDPR Email Accounts Fee – Monthly Charge	£32.00
Bishop Middleham	Allotment Skip Hire	£360.00
Curry's Plc	Parish Clerk Laptop	£299.00
	Microsoft Office	£30.00

Resolved: For Members' Information. The above payments were approved for payment.

(ii) Financial Request – New Mayor – 2026/27:

A request for financial assistance was considered from the Mayor of Durham; Members agreed a donation of £50.00 to go towards the Mayor's Appeal Fund.

Resolved: Clerk to arrange donation accordingly.

27/26. Parish Councillor Vacancy – Co-Option:

The Clerk reported two applications were received with regard to the Parish Councillor vacancy for Hett Ward as follows:

- 1 = Ruth Gardner
- 2 = Barbara Marinan

Following consideration of each application, candidate 1 was nominated and seconded receiving unanimous votes.

Resolved: Ruth Gardner be duly elected as Parish Councillor and summoned to attend the next Parish Council meeting to sign the declaration of acceptance of office.

28/26. Hett Drainage:

Clerk confirmed an update was received from PC solicitor on 15 June 2026, confirming the landowner's solicitor is awaiting a response from their client and will come back to the PC when they have further instructions.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

29/26. Scheme of Works for Approval – Replacement Benches:

Quotations were obtained for the replacement of two benches near Salvin Street, with the cost to be met through County Councillor Hutchinson's Neighbourhood Budget funding. Contractor 1 was identified as the preferred supplier, offering traditional-style benches and value for money.

Councillor Griffiths reported that a resident had requested the PC consider replacing the bench in Hett, which is currently in a state of disrepair. It was proposed the replacement bench would support the 'Let's Chat' campaign. It was further proposed that a bench be installed on Croxdale playing field, also in support of the 'Let's Chat' campaign.

Resolved: Clerk to submit DCC funding application once outstanding queries relating to the cost (in respect of the ground fixing plates and installation) have been clarified. The PC is to fund the purchase of x2 benches for Croxdale and Hett. The location of the new bench on the playing field would be considered as part of the allotment inspection.

30/26. Parish Council Allotments, Garages and Cemeteries:

The following updates were provided by the Clerk in relation to allotments:

- A new tenancy has commenced at the Poultry Centre in relation to a small holding.

- Skip hire was arranged for the period 20-22 June 2026 for Front Street East/Poultry Centre tenants. Councillor Hollingsworth reported a tenant from the Poultry Centre provided valued assistance in the skip arrangements over the course of the weekend.
- Feedback was received from a Poultry Centre tenant regarding inappropriate behaviour believed to be a tenant at Front Street East regarding the allotment skip hire.
- A death of a tenant holding an allotment and garage to the rear of Front Street East was noted. In accordance with the existing joint tenancy arrangements, each tenant will now become the sole tenant of the respective allotment and garage.
- Allotment parking signage was installed on 16 June 2026 in the Croxdale Inn car park.
- Respective tenants have been informed of the works at Croxdale playing field that will be carried out in due course to help make the area dog-proof. The purchase of materials will cost in the region of £200-250. Councillor Kerrison is assisting with the purchase of correct materials.
- A request was received from a tenant at the rear of Front Street East on 22 June 2026 regarding the size of the trees between the tenant's plot and the playing field and if the PC would look to carry out tree works.
- *Feedback was received from the tenant at Front Street East in respect of the internal boundary fencing request and questioned if repair works would be made to the external boundary fencing.

*Councillor Pyle declared an interest in the above update and left the meeting prior to its consideration. To facilitate this, the item was taken at the end of the agenda. Following its consideration, the meeting was concluded.

Councillor Kerrison raised if the external boundary fencing could be inspected for potential repairs, that can be seen on the main road opposite the Daleside.

Resolved: Updates For Members' Information. The PC noted the feedback regarding inappropriate behaviour and agreed that this would be addressed in future correspondence to all tenants, regarding behaviour and general courtesy towards one another. Should skips be required in the future, it was agreed that the most appropriate location would be at the entrance to the football field.

It was agreed that the trees to the rear of Front Street East would be inspected as part of the annual allotment inspection.

The Clerk is to respond to the tenant regarding their fencing proposal, advising that it does not meet the PC specification. The internal fencing proposal was intended to provide a consistent means of defining individual plot boundaries, whereas the tenant's request relates to securing the allotment, which is a different purpose. If the tenant wishes to proceed with the fencing, it was agreed that wire mesh could be installed between the posts and rails to provide a more secure boundary. In relation to the external boundary fencing, there are currently no plans for repair or replacement. However, its condition will be assessed as part of the annual allotment inspection to be carried out during the summer. It was also noted that the tenant accepted the allotment tenancy in its existing condition.

The external boundary fencing opposite the Daleside would also be inspected as part of the annual allotment inspection.

Croxdale Cemetery:

Clerk requested approval for a tree survey to be undertaken at Croxdale cemetery at a cost of £170.00 + VAT. The survey will be undertaken via Olivers Tree Services (as per the last survey in

2020) who will carry out a general health and safety tree survey and to highlight/recommend any tree works for immediate action.

Resolved: The tree survey was agreed to be undertaken via Oliver's Tree Services for consistency following the initial survey undertaken in 2020.

31/26. Planning Issues:

No new planning applications was discussed/received.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

32/26. County Councillor Reports:

No County Councillors were in attendance.

Resolved: For Members' Information.

33/26. Other Reports:

Overgrown Public Right of Way, Croxdale:

Councillor Clark reported a resident has highlighted a section of a public right of way at Croxdale woods is overgrown and requires maintenance and provided a location map of the area in question.

Resolved: Clerk to report to DCC accordingly.

Grass Cutting, Croxdale Tommy:

Councillor Hollingsworth reported that the area surrounding the Tommy is not being maintained to an acceptable standard and has become overgrown and untidy.

Resolved: Clerk to contact the cemetery maintenance contractor to enquire if the Tommies at Croxdale and Hett could be maintained following DCC grass cutting and to confirm a cost. The use of weed killer is not the preferred option and for the area to be strimmed.

Hett Bus Stop:

Councillor Watt reported the bus stop located on the south side has been vandalised (broken windows).

Resolved: Clerk to report to DCC accordingly.

Overgrown Public Right of Way, Hett:

Councillor Griffiths reported that the public footpath at Hett Style has become overgrown and is now impassable which is the main route used by children from Hett to access the bus stop.

Resolved: Clerk to report to DCC accordingly.

Trees Obstruction, Hett:

Councillor Griffiths reported that the tree outside No. Grove Court, has become overgrown and is causing an obstruction, giving rise to potential highway safety concerns. It was noted that this issue has been reported previously.

Resolved: Clerk to report to DCC in the first instance as a potential highway concern.

34/26. Date and Time of Next Meeting:

It was agreed that the next meeting would be held on Wednesday 29 July 2026 at 7.00 pm, Hett Village Hall.