

MINUTES of the Parish Council Meeting held on Wednesday 22 April 2026 at Newburgh School, Back Lane commencing at 7pm.

PRESENT: Cllrs Roughneen (Chair), Halliwell, Atty, Lea, Baker and Clerk Sandra Jones.
Ten members of the public were also present.

044/26

TO RECEIVE APOLOGIES

Apologies were received and accepted from Cllr Pennington, Borough Cllr Whittington, Borough Cllr Juckes, County Cllr Owens and Louis Casey, Chair of the Trustees for Moorcroft House.

045/26

COUNCILLORS TO DECLARE AN INTEREST IN ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION

Cllr Atty declared an interest in the Appleton Fields item and Cllr Roughneen declared an interest in the finance payments item.

046/26

TO APPROVE THE MINUTES OF THE PARISH COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON 25 MARCH 2026

It was resolved that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 25 March 2026 should be approved and signed by the Chair.

047/26

ISSUES RAISED BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The meeting was adjourned for public discussion.

Most of the members of the public attending the meeting raised concerns following the recent submission of a planning application by Wain Homes for a 96 homes development on land East of Tears Lane. The concerns raised included:

- The development would result in the loss of agricultural green belt land
- Access to and from the estate, would be mainly via on Tabby's Nook, part of which is currently one way
- Possible three year timescale for the development to be completed, which will cause additional large vehicles trying to gain access to the site from Tabby's Nook and Woodrow Drive. Residents along Woodrow Drive can struggle at times to navigate cars down this road under normal circumstances as there are usually many cars parked on the road/pavement.
- Can a Freedom of Information request be submitted to West Lancashire Borough Council to find out what pre application advice was given to the developer?
- The deadline for responses is 13 May. This will not be long enough for anyone to go through in excess of 45 documents and reports submitted by the developer. Can the Parish Council ask for an extension?
- Can the application be called in to the West Lancashire Borough Council planning committee to allow for greater scrutiny?
- Is it possible for residents or the Parish Council to undertake their own soil samples on the field?
- Prior instances of flooding in that area, especially along Tabby's Nook
- Wain Homes have submitted an application for over 200 homes in Parbold. Is it possible for Newburgh Parish Council to contact Parbold Parish Council to see how they are dealing with that application?
- If the build goes ahead, it will increase homes in the village by approx. 20%. The village does not currently have the facilities to deal with this level of increase in the village.
- The transport report submitted by Wain Homes states that there is no need for a car as there are local bus services and people can walk or cycle to Parbold. The bus services are only once an hour on average (none on Sundays) and there is no continuous footpath from Newburgh to Parbold. The A5209 is very busy and there have already been instances where pedestrians have been hit by larger vehicles which have mounted the pavement in order to pass a vehicle on the other side of the road. There is only one pedestrian crossing in the village.
- Will the Parish Council ask for support from our Borough and County Councillors following the election?
- Is there going to be a public meeting and/or a leaflet delivered in the village, to ensure that all residents are aware of the application, not just those on social media?

The Chair confirmed that the Parish Council had only been made aware of the application that day, so the Parish Council needed time to review the documentation and consider the next steps, such as a public meeting and/or a leaflet to be delivered to homes in the village.

The meeting was reconvened and three members of the public left the meeting at this point.

048/26

PLANNING

a) Applications to be considered:

None at this meeting.

b) To receive a verbal update regarding the potential unauthorised developments at land to the North of Back Lane and at Bramwell Cottage on Back Lane and agree any actions.

The potential unauthorised development at land to the North of Back Lane had been referred to the enforcement team at West Lancashire Borough Council the previous year. Enquiries made by a resident had recently revealed that there was still an application outstanding for determination by the planning department nearly a year later. Following discussion, it was resolved to ask Borough Cllr Whittington to make enquiries with the planning department and the enforcement team to find out the status of the site.

Work had been noticed on Bramwell Cottage on Back Lane, although there did not appear to have been any planning applications submitted for the work. Bramwell Cottage is in the conservation area of Newburgh. Informal enquiries had been made with the builder and the owner of the property advising them that there may need to be an application submitted for any work as the property is in the conservation area and recommending that they get in touch with the planning department for advice. As nothing had been heard since, it was resolved that the Parish Council would ask Borough Cllr Whittington to refer the matter to the Enforcement Team.

049/26

WORKPLAN

a) To receive a verbal update regarding village roads and the issue of traffic using Spencer's Bridge and agree any actions.

The speed device continues to provide valuable information for the Parish Council to submit evidence to Lancashire County Council Highways department. A meeting will be arranged soon with other local Parish Councils to discuss all the road issues they are facing and to co-ordinate a response to the Lancashire County Council Highways department. The aim is to have a meeting with the department to push for action to be taken to make local roads safer for residents.

b) To receive a verbal update on flooding issues in the village and agree any necessary actions.

It was confirmed that there had been no flooding incidents in the centre of the village in recent weeks.

c) To receive a verbal update on the Play Area, including the condition of the boundary wall and agree any actions.

It was confirmed that some of the Parish Councillors had met with another local play area company to see what services it could provide and also to find out the possible timescales for repairs to be completed, following the recent long wait for Yates Playgrounds to carry out repairs. Any documentation received from the play area company will be circulated to Councillors once it has been received.

It was confirmed that the Church had arranged for the tree next to the play area wall to be felled the following weekend. It was resolved that the Clerk would contact the school to make it aware of the work to be carried out and to confirm that the play area will be closed that day. Further efforts will now be made to obtain at least three quotes for the cost of rebuilding the wall. Councillors were keen for this to be arranged as soon as the quotes are received and one is formally approved, as the play area is starting to be very busy now that the better weather has arrived.

d) To consider arrangements for the 2026 Annual Parish Meeting including date, themes, possible budget and agree any actions

Due to current workload and shortage of time, it was resolved to hold the Annual Parish Meeting on the same day as the Annual Parish Council Meeting on 20 May 2026. The agenda will follow the format of previous years, with the Annual Report from the Chair and a section for public discussion.

e) To review confirmation that the proposed inquiry to be held by the Planning Inspectorate on 25 August 2026 to look into the longstanding footpath claim has now been cancelled. The Planning Inspectorate will now undertake a document review prior to making a formal decision. The Parish Council will consider any actions now required.

The decision of the Planning Inspectorate to cancel the public inquiry was noted and it was confirmed that the Parish Council had nothing further to add to the process.

050/26

TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE ON APPLETON FIELDS AND AGREE ANY ACTIONS.

Cllr Atty confirmed that three Trustees had met with the contractor to discuss the new path through the wood. However, following a request from a neighbouring landowner to have a meeting with the Parish Council to discuss some boundary issues which may have an impact on the location of the path, there may be a need for a change of plan. More will be known once the meeting with the landowner has taken place.

051/26

TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE ON THE POTENTIAL CLOSURE OF MOORCROFT HOUSE AND AGREE ANY ACTIONS

Louis Casey, the Chair of the Trustees for Moorcroft House had sent his apologies and confirmed that there was nothing new to report at this time.

052/26

TO RECEIVE A VERBAL UPDATE ON THE RECENT MEETINGS WITH NEWBURGH SCHOOL AND THE CLEAN AND GREEN DEPARTMENT AT WEST LANCASHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL AND AGREE ANY ACTIONS REQUIRED.

Members of the Parish Council had recently met with representatives of the school to discuss a recent audit undertaken, which highlighted that the height of some of the boundary walls and fences was a safeguarding issue. It had been recommended that the school arrange for new six foot high boundaries to be installed around the school. It was acknowledged that this would change the look of the school, but the safety of the pupils was paramount, even though there were no current issues at present. The new arrangements will also result in new higher railings being placed around the play area. The school is in the process of obtaining quotes for the work and asked for the assistance of the Parish Council in highlighting the issue and also to look into possible grant funding opportunities for the school to raise the necessary funds.

The annual meeting with the members of the Clean and Green team at West Lancashire Borough Council had recently taken place. A loss of staffing members and budget constraints is having an impact on the services the department is able to provide. It was confirmed that the new food caddies had been distributed around the village and collections for food waste would take place on a weekly basis. The Parish Council was asked to promote the online system on the West Lancashire Borough Council to residents as a way to contact the department about issues such as dog fouling and fly tipping. The Parish Council had asked if the department could provide a trolley for litter picking to support the local group in helping to keep the village tidy. It was confirmed that there were no spare trolleys to distribute to local litter picking groups, however, enquiries would be made to see if there was any grant funding available.

053/26

TO CONSIDER POSSIBLE PARISH COUNCIL COMMUNITY EVENTS, SUCH AS AN OPEN GARDENS EVENT. IN ADDITION, RECEIVE AN UPDATE REGARDING THE NEWBURGH NEIGHBOURHOOD WATCH SCHEME.

There was nothing new to report regarding the Newburgh Neighbourhood Watch Scheme. Cllr Lea had recently attended two Facebook training sessions in order to find out the best ways to communicate with residents to inform them about Parish Council events, such as the Neighbourhood Watch Scheme, volunteer days and litter picking days. There are issues trying to access the old Parish Council Facebook page, which has 1400 followers, so a new Facebook page appears to be the best option.

Due to lack of time and the amount of work involved, it was resolved not to hold an Open Gardens event in 2026. However, it was resolved that the event would be added to the work plan for 2027 along with the Annual Parish Meeting, to allow for further arrangements to be considered. It was also suggested that a village scarecrow festival could be considered as another community event in 2027.

054/26

FINANCE

a) To agree Accounts for Payment for April 2026 (Schedule attached).

Cllr Roughneen left the meeting at this point and Cllr Halliwell took the Chair.

It was resolved to approve the April 2026 accounts for payment. Electronic payments will be made wherever possible.

Cllr Roughneen returned to the meeting at this point and resumed as Chair.

b) To note the report from the Internal Auditor in relation to financial year April 2025-March 2026.

The report from the Internal Auditor was noted with no concerns raised, although it was recommended that the Parish Council consider drafting a formal Play Area policy.

c) To approve the Annual Governance and Accountability Return 2025-26 – Section (Annual Governance Statement) will be approved before Section 2 (Accounting Statements).

Following discussion, it was resolved to defer this item until the May Parish Council meeting to allow all the Councillors additional time to review all the information available.

d) To note the period chosen for the Exercise of Public Rights – Wednesday 3 June 2026 – Tuesday 4 July 2026.

The period chosen for the Exercise of Public Rights was noted.

e) To note income received for January 2026 – March 2026.

Income received for January 2026 to March 2026 was noted

f) To note the Budget/Expenditure Statement year ended 31 March 2026.

The Budget/Expenditure Statement year ended 31 March 2026 was noted.

g) To note the Bank Reconciliation Statement for March 2026.

The Bank Reconciliation Statement for March 2026 showing a balance of £25,133 was noted.

h) To approve the Asset Register as at 31 March 2026.

The Asset Register as at 31 March was noted.

i) To receive an update regarding the purchase of a new single noticeboard, including recent quotes obtained and confirmation of any permissions required for the installation.

It was resolved to defer this purchase until later in the year, once the cost to rebuild the wall at the play area on Back Lane is known.

055/26

TO NOTE THE CLERK'S REPORT (INFORMATION ONLY)

The Clerk's report was noted.

056/26

COUNCILLORS TO RAISE ISSUES FOR DISCUSSION ONLY (10 MINUTES TOTAL TIME)

No issues raised.

057/26

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next Parish Council meeting will be held on 20 May 2026 at 7pm.

The meeting ended at 8.45pm.

Schedule of Accounts for Payment – April 2026

Ref No	Payee	Amount
N/A	Unity Trust monthly service charge	£ 7.00
N/A	Nest Pension Scheme	£ 68.81* Direct Debit
230426	Yates Playgrounds – play area repairs	£ 558.00
230496	M M Roughneen – printing Chair expenses	£ 18.99
230426	HMRC – NI and Income Tax April 2026 payment	£ 89.88
230426	Mrs S Jones – April salary and expenses	£ 975.33
230426	Purple Umbrella – donation in lieu of T Reddington Internal Audit	£ 150.00
230426	Newburgh School – printing of Christmas leaflets	£ 7.55
	TOTAL	£ 1,875.56

	NEWBURGH PARISH COUNCIL INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT 2025-26
A. Appropriate accounting records have been kept throughout the year, and periodic bank reconciliations were properly carried out during the year.	The roll-forward of the previous year has been checked and is accurate. Bank reconciliations are prepared routinely and subject to independent scrutiny and sign-off by members. Sample transactions listed in the minutes were checked and found to be accurate: ● P.1856 10/12/24 S Jones £947.27 ● P.1872 25/3/26 Newburgh School £220 ● P.1831 25/6/26 Horrobin £50 The year end bank balance is accurate and correctly disclosed in the AGAR.
B. The Authority complied with its financial regulations, payments were supported by invoices, all expenditure was approved and VAT was appropriately accounted for	The scheme of delegation for bank payments to be approved and signed in line with Financial Regulations is no longer necessary as the bank account has been changed to one which provides 2 signature control (Minute 092/25b p1835). Procedures are in place to ensure the integrity of the system and these were reviewed by the Council (Minute 104/24D p1793). Financial Regulations are complied with and reviewed regularly (Minute 038/26 p.1872). Quotations/tenders have been requested appropriately and in line with Standing Orders and Financial Regulations: During the year only the purchase of insurance was above the £500 threshold and in that case quotations were obtained and a report submitted to Council for consideration (Minute 064/25c p.1826) Procedures for payment of invoices (receipt of goods/confirmation of service/delivery and approval for payment) were reviewed and three samples were checked: ● Roughneen for Newburgh Fair and maintenance expenses £140.34 (Minute 077/25 p.1831) ● Horrobin for Play area maintenance £30 (Minute 064/25 p1826) ● Zurich Insurance (Minute 064/25c p1826) No cheques have been used during the year. There is clear segregation between the setting up of on-line payments and the physical release of payments. There is oversight and attention to on-going customer relationships and contracts. VAT has been reclaimed and received within the financial year. No debit/credit card is used.
C. The authority assessed the significant risks to achieving its objectives and reviewed the adequacy of arrangements to manage these	A comprehensive risk management plan is in place and it has been reviewed during the year, with a further in-depth review planned (Minute 038/26 p.1872) Comprehensive and appropriate insurance cover is in place. Arrangements are in place for monitoring outdoor spaces. Responsibility for the play area is addressed in risk register. A robust protocol is in place including weekly inspections and annual ROSPA inspections. A weekly log of inspections is maintained.
D. The precept or rates requirement resulted from an adequate budgetary process, progress against budget was regularly monitored, and reserves are appropriate	The precept for the year ending 31st March 26 was agreed at the January Parish Council meeting following recommendation of the Finance Committee and detailed budget proposals (minute 009/25 p 1805). Budget reports are prepared quarterly including explanations regarding significant or unexplained variances. The authority has established reserves and these are reviewed as part of the budget assessment process and documented within the detailed budget proposals.

	The precept received in the accounts matches the prior year submission form and the public record of precept amounts.
E. Expected income was fully received, based on correct prices, properly recorded and promptly banked and VAT accounted for	The Parish Council has raised no invoices during the year and has no debtors. All receipts were properly recorded. The Parish Council leases Appleton Fields at a peppercorn rent to a Charitable Trust. On-going dialogue and oversight is formalised with an agreement for one councillor to attend all meetings of the Trust as an observer, and Appleton Fields being a standing item each month on the Parish Council agenda.
F Petty Cash n/a	No petty cash is held.
G. Salaries to employees and allowances to members were paid in accordance with the authority's approvals, and PAYE and NI were properly applied.	With the exception of the Chairman's Allowance, no Councillor receives any payment or allowance. The Chairman's Allowance is set at £200, but is actually only paid for actual expenses, on approval of receipted expense claims approved by Council. There is one paid member of staff for whom a formal contract of employment is in place. There is written confirmation of any changes to the contract ■ Gross pay against spinal point on NJC scale and contract hours are correct to most recent written confirmation of change to contract (Min 151/25 p.1856). ■ Correct tax code is used. ■ Software is up to date. ■ Tax and NI are calculated and deducted appropriately and paid to HMRC monthly. ■ Pension contributions are correct and paid to provider. ■ Three separate payments were examined and all were properly documented and approved. ■
H. Asset and investment registers were complete and accurate and properly maintained.	The asset register is properly maintained. Asset register and insurance values are aligned. The asset value to be reported in the AGAR agrees with the prior year value. There are no loans or or investments.
J. Accounting statements prepared during the year were prepared on the correct accounting basis, agreed to the cash book, supported by an adequate audit trail, and where appropriate, debtors and creditors were properly recorded	Accounting statements are prepared monthly and are comprehensive, clear and concise for elected members and members of the public to easily understand. There is a comprehensive audit trail. There are no debtors or creditors.
K. Did the authority meet the External Audit Exemption criteria	The Authority did not meet the External Audit Exemption Criteria and therefore an external audit is required.
L. The authority publishes information on a free to access website, up to date at the time of internal audit in accordance with the relevant legislation.	The website was up to date at the time of audit, and complies fully with the relevant transparency code.
M. The Authority, during the previous year, correctly provided for the period for the exercise of public rights as required by the Accounts and Audit Regulations.	The website includes clear information regarding public scrutiny, including the required public notice period.
N. The authority complied with the publication requirements for the prior year AGAR	Requirements in relation to the prior year's AGAR have been met in full.
O. Trust Funds	N/a

Income Received January 2026 – March 2026

3/1/26	Public Sector fund interest	£ 52.46
4/2/26	Public Sector fund interest	£ 52.08
4/3/26	Public Sector fund interest	£ 45.54
10/3/26	HMRC re VAT return	£ 802.64
31/3/26	Bank interest	<u>£ 0.40</u>
TOTAL		<u>£ 953.12</u>

NEWBURGH PARISH COUNCIL					
Budget/Expenditure Statement		2025/26			
Detail	Budget		March		Underspend/
	£		Expenditure		(Overspend)
			£		£
Clerk's Salary	11527		11223		304
HMRC - Ni and Tax payments	1300		1224		76
Clerks Pension	855		755		100
Clerk Cover	1823		0		1823
Clerk's Expenses	200		166		34
General Admin	250		273		-23
Postage	50		49		1
Members travel costs	20		32		-12
School Hire	360		345		15
Training inc Quality Registration	400		132		268
Audit	370		360		10
Website Management	350		370		-20
Chair Allowance	200		65		135
	17705		14993		2712
Village Maint & Repair	200		0		200
Appleton Fields	0		0		0
Play Area Maintenance	300		0		300
Insurance	650		635		15
Associations					
Local council Review	0		0		0
LAPTAC Subscription	225		214		11
Hon Sec Honorarium	17		10		7
Society Local Council Clerks	200		200		0
CPRE	40		36		4
WL Heritage Association	0		0		0
	482		460		22
Activities					
Newsletter	250		72		178
Maintenance of SPID	2820		2454		366
Christmas Celebrations	800		630		170
	3870		3156		714
S137 Expenditure					
Best Kept Village Competition	30		122		-92
Civic Service/Community Events	50		337		-287
Donations	200		150		50
Maintenance of the Dell	75		75		0
	355		684		-329
TOTAL	23562		19927		3635
Concurrent Grant					
Village Cleaning & Maintenance	930		936		-6
	930		936		-6

Bank Reconciliation Statement
Month ending 31 March 2026

					£		£		
<u>Bank Statement Balances</u>									
	Club & Societies Account		31/03/2026				2,202.03		
	Unity Trust Current Account		31/03/2026				726.47		
	Unity Trust Savings Account		31/03/2026				9,077.39		
	Savings Account		31/03/2026				127.43		
	Public Sector Deposit Fund						13,000.00		
							25,133.32		
	Less unrepresented chqs						-		see below
							25,133.32		

	Bfwd Balance	2025		20,277.70			
	Receipts	to	31/03/2026	26,122.91			
				46,400.61			
Less	Payments	to	31/03/2026	21,267.29			
	Balance					25,133.32	-

Date:	01-Apr-26
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NEWBURGH PARISH COUNCIL			
ASSETS REGISTER	Apr-25	Mar-26	Notes
ORIGINAL KNOWN PURCHASE COST.			
Ash Brow bus shelter, purchased January 2004.	1,237	1,237	
Speed Indicator Device, purchased July 2007.	3,059	3,059	
Play Equipment, Back Lane, purchased June 2009 plus two new picnic tables March 2025	19,216	19,216	
Computer equipment, purchased September 2010, July 2013 (printer), June 2019 (replacement printer)	310	310	
Laptop, purchased December 2018, plus new larger hard drive January 2025	615	615	
Play Area Fencing, gates and wet pour surface, Back Lane, purchased June 2009.	10,083	10,083	
Notice Board, Course Lane, purchased July 2015	2,113	2,113	
Christmas tree lights purchased November 2016 and November 2020, Star purchased December 2021, additional battery lights purchased December 2024	1,284	1,284	
Heritage Board, Ash Brow. Purchased November 2019, some parts from previous sign	500	500	
Appleton Fields, Cobbs Brow Lane, transferred ownership from Appleton Family May 2020	1,720	1,720	
Battery Strimmer - purchased January 2025	178	178	
	40,315	40,315	
GIFTED ASSETS ESTIMATED CURRENT VALUE.			
Gavel and Block	50	50	
Public seat, Play Area, Back Lane	300	300	
Public seat, Ash Brow (Best Kept Village Competition).	300	300	
Bus shelter, Cobbs Brow Lane	300	300	
Chain of Office	100	100	
Three Best Kept Garden Trophies.	150	150	
Two Public seats, Woodrow Drive old peoples bungalows	-	-	
	1,200	1,200	
ASSETS ESTIMATED CURRENT VALUE.			
Metal filing cabinet, two drawers.	50	50	
Two bus shelters, Course Lane.	4,000	4,000	
Footpath Information Board.	100	-	1
Three public seats on The Green.	600	600	
One public seat on Cobbs Brow Lane.	300	300	
One public seat on Course Lane.	300	300	
One public seat on Play Area, Back Lane.	300	300	
	5,650	5,550	
GRAND TOTAL	47,165	47,065	

Notes

1 Footpath information board beyond repair and removed May 2025.
May 2025 Parish Council minutes note removal (pg 1827) and confirmation to Zurich Insurance as part of quote process.