

## HAYDON BRIDGE AND HAYDON PARISH DEVELOPMENT TRUST

### Minutes of the meeting held on 9 September 2025

#### Present

Mark l'Anson (Chair), Will Rutherford (Vice Chair), Henry Swaddle, Peter Fletcher, Kate Minto, Ian Foster, Anne Suddes, Phil Hartley, Siobhan Stephenson, Michael Sadgrove and Tessa Simmonds

Tessa Simmonds was welcomed to the meeting as a new Director, representing the Parish Council alongside Anne Suddes.

#### 25.26 Apologies

Apologies were received from Christina Taylor, Jo Bates, and Joanna Thompson.

#### 25.27 Declarations of interest - There were none.

#### 25.28 Minutes of the meeting held on 3 June 2025 - The minutes were approved.

#### 25.29 Matters arising not already on the agenda - None

#### 25.30 Haydon Hundred 2025

MI reported that there were 139 entries for the event and the net income to the DT was £1,184. This was a reduction in both numbers and net income on earlier years. The event went well and the routes were popular. The new organisation handling entries and marketing worked fine but did not produce the hoped for increase in entries. Possible ideas for next year, such as a family route, were discussed and the HH organising group would look at these when planning the event for 2026.

#### 25.31 Current and future operation of The Bridge

PF had circulated the Bridge Team Leaders meeting notes of 30 June and 4 August 2025.

The social/development session with the Bridge volunteers on 17 July had been very successful. Team Leaders had asked that the purpose and values statement include the word 'visitor' before the words 'information point' in the purpose section and a revised statement has been circulated for approval

##### **Decision: Directors approved the revised purpose and values statement**

The Plant and produce stall outside The Bridge is operating well and over the summer took an average of £65 a week in donations, much more than the previous Saturday stall, which only took up to £20 on a good day. The Bridge volunteers had taken to it very well and members of the public were now coming regularly to see what was available at the stall. It was also now becoming a valuable income source for The Bridge.

KM reported on the development of a Northumberland Branch of a literacy organisation.

##### **Action: it was agreed that once the branch was open the DT should look to establish a local literacy initiative at The Bridge, as the promotion of literacy and numeracy were a key part of the purpose of The Bridge.**

KM and IF reported on the archive session held recently at The Bridge by IF and Penny Wilkinson. 7 of The Bridge volunteers attended, including at least one member from each team. The issue of GDPR rules in relation to photographs held on The DT computer at The Bridge had been raised at the archive session. **Action: it was agreed that KM/PF and Penny Wilkinson would liaise with the archive section at Woodhorn to seek their advice**

There would be an Open Day to promote The Bridge from 9.30 – 12.30 on Saturday 4 October and Directors were invited to pop in.

KM reported that it had been decided to remove one of the NCC computers as only one was ever used at any one time. This would allow the NCC printer to be moved off the counter and a new table to be bought for the DT computer and printer.

MI reported that Carole Price is trying to get Northern Rail to agree to a shed being put outside The Bridge to house all the gardening equipment and water bowser used to maintain the planters on the station platforms and other garden areas in the village maintained by the village gardening group.

Negotiations on the size of shed to be allowed were continuing with Northern Rail

### **25.32 Neighbourhood Plan and Community Actions Update**

An updated Community Actions progress summary had been circulated with the agenda. It has now been re-ordered so that items achieved or dropped as unachievable are put at the end of the document. Items discussed were:

#### *1. Sustainability and climate change*

##### 1a) Secure funding for initial overall feasibility study for community led renewable district heating options

PF reported that a workshop was held on 20 June with the county council, the combined authority, CAN, Reheat and the Rural Design Centre to review the feasibility study findings and discuss possible next steps. Follow up work is being undertaken, for example about Greenwich Hospital's views on the Energy Centre site, with a view to submitting a funding application in the autumn for more detailed feasibility work

#### *2. Built & Historic Environment*

##### 2c Plaques group

AS reported that £900 grant has been approved from the Smiths Trust and NCC has now granted planning permission for the plaque for the Anchor and applications so the installation work can now go ahead.

#### *3. Natural Environment*

##### 3b developing projects to enhance habitat to increase biodiversity

Tree Planting: PHG reported that he has now done the survey and plan for the community orchard on Ratcliffe Road and the Parish Council is now seeking approval from NCC.

SS and KM reported that the plant and produce stall outside The Bridge was set up at the end of June. Other elements of the Royal Countryside Fund grant to the Nurture Project were in hand and the planters and seats on the old Bridge and other locations would be installed on 20 September.

The Nurture Project Open Day on 10 August went very well with lots of new visitors and over 200 people attending in all. The open day showed that there is still a lack of knowledge by most local people about what the Nurture Project offers.

SS reported that the £30k of NCC RAMP funding applied for by the Nurture Project has been approved and there is no commitment for the DT to provide any cash flow funding.

## *5. Vibrant and thriving communities*

### 5a Securing access to High School facilities

MS reported that a new Chief Operating Officer has just started at the High School, who seems very open to working more closely with the local community. It was agreed in the light of this to leave this item on the to do list for the Community Actions.

## *6. Local economy and tourism*

### 6a) Supporting local business

PF reported that he and JT were following up the idea of a sign for local businesses outside The Bridge. SS has included funding for 10 signs to be made about village facilities, which will be spread along the bee friendly walk. It was agreed to wait and see what these signs looked like before deciding whether additional signage about local businesses was needed.

## *7. Accessibility and transport*

7a Cycle route to Hexham: PH reported that he and John Kyte has met with Stuart Johnson, the tenant farmer at West Wharmley about the cycle route to Hexham. WR has also met with him. Stuart was positive but concerned about access to his fields via the gates and possible loss of land. Further discussions would be held.

7e Footpaths initiative: PH reported that although problems with footpaths were being reported to the NCC footpaths officer, very little action was forthcoming, which negated the purpose and value of the footpaths group. It was agreed to keep this as an action on the plan until this was resolved.

## **25.33 Feedback on MI and PF meeting with Chair and Vice Chair of Parish Council**

As agreed at the last meeting MI and PF had arranged to meet the new Chair and Vice Chair of the Parish Council to discuss working together going forward. The meeting was very positive and it had been agreed that the DT would attend the October 23 meeting of the PC to brief them about the work of the DT.

It was felt in discussion that the DT would welcome the PC playing a more proactive and strategic role going forward about the key priorities for the Parish and working with the DT to take them forward.

**Action: MI and KM to attend the October PC meeting; PF and MI to prepare some slides for presentation**

**It was also agreed to invite Parish Councillors to drop in to the Bridge Open Day on 4 October**

## **25.34 A strategic approach to Communications**

a) Newsletter – PF reported that the sixth (September) edition of the Newsletter has been published. It includes information from the Langley WI and key actions by the PC. When MI and PF met with PC representatives they asked for quotes for the cost of some paper copies to be left at Claire's and in pubs. There was also a suggestion that copies could be put in waterproof perspex boxes outside The Bridge and the Community Centre as happens in Newbrough. **Action: PF to send sample costs to the PC**

A flyer was hand delivered to all households in the parish in June publicising both the new website and the Newsletter. People seemed to be signing up to the Newsletter via the website and now over 100 people have signed up to receive the Newsletter automatically.

b) Website – IF reported that the new website is working well and a copy of the analytics information had been circulated. There are a growing number of events in the events calendar.

c) Social media: MS reported that there were now 86 people on our X link and 125 on the Facebook link. He was continuing to post. He felt that the best route to communication was direct posts onto Haydon Bridge Matters.

#### **25.35 Governance**

**Decision: Tessa Simmonds was approved as a DT Director representing the Parish Council.**

**Action: PF would add TS to the Director list at Companies House and the Charity Commission.**

#### **25.36 Finance and Grants**

a) Annual accounts and report for 2024-25

A draft annual report for 2024-25 had been circulated for discussion

**Decision: The Annual report was approved subject to correcting the year of the Haydon Hundred in the report, and removing the reference to the community oil group. Action:**

**MI and PF to link the report and accounts and PF to submit them to Companies House and the Charity Commission**

#### **25.37 Any other business**

Corporation tax response form: MI had reported at the last meeting that he had now responded to the Corporation tax enquiry form. However, although the DT is not and never has been liable for Corporation Tax, HMRC is trying to fine the DT £100, or potentially £200 for late submission of form CT600E and another form. MI has tried a number of times to resolve this with HMRC but so far to no avail, but the DT might have no choice but to pay the fine as further delay in paying increases the level of the fine.

**Decision: it was agreed that MI has one further try at resolving this and if unsuccessful to pay the fine and raise the matter with the local MP to see if he can get it resolved**

#### **25.38 Date and time of next meeting**

7pm on Tuesday 2 December 2025 at The Bridge.