HAYDON BRIDGE AND HAYDON PARISH DEVELOPMENT TRUST

Minutes of the meeting held on 4 February 2026

Present
Mark I'Anson (Chair), Henry Swaddle, Peter Fletcher, Ian Foster, Jo Bates, Phil Hartley, Michael Sadgrove, Tessa Simmonds, and Christina Taylor

26.01 Apologies
Apologies were received from Will Rutherford (Vice Chair), Kate Minto, Joanna Thopmson, Siobhan Stephenson and Anne Suddes.

26.02 Declarations of interest - There were none.

26.03 Minutes of the meeting held on 2 December 2025 – On p.2 item 25.43 Archive the reference to Paul Burrows should read Alistair Burrowes. The minutes were approved with this amendment.

26.04 Matters arising not already on the agenda
25.49 John Martin Exhibition. TS reported back that the Parish Council thinks it owns the Exhibition. The Exhibition is being stored upstairs at the Community Centre whilst it is being decorated and its future location after that is uncertain. There are two elements – JM prints which were around the side walls in the Community Centre lobby; and an exhibition of John Martin's early years in Haydon Bridge, which was on exhibition boards in the centre of the entrance lobby.
Action: TS to talk to the vicar at St Cuthbert's about possibly hosting some of the exhibition/prints in the church or its lobby, though again it is due to be decorated in the near future
MS, via Averil Kirsopp to talk to Val Bell, the chair of the Community Centre

26.05 Haydon Hundred 2026
MI confirmed that the HH would be on Saturday 13 June, with the same routes as last year. There were 35 entrants so far, just up on the number at this time last year. We would be continuing with last year's automated entry system and are listed on 4 cycling sites. The sub group would meet soon to plan the event in more detail **Action: MI to arrange**
Action: PF to publicise in the Newsletter and KM to alert The Bridge volunteers that they will be needed on the day
There was discussion about also having a children's/families fun bike ride starting at The Bridge and along the route of the old A69, to be aimed at children under 12 who are not eligible for the main HH. There would be a low cost for entry. There was strong support for this
Action: more detailed work needed to firm this up – IF to talk to the Scouts to involve them; PH to talk to SS and MI to talk to a friend of his in order to better understand and address Safeguarding and operational issues

26.06 Current and future operation of The Bridge
PF had circulated the Bridge Team Leaders meeting notes of 24 November 2025, and 26 January 2026.

The Toilet door has been repaired and inside Painting has been completed and everywhere looks much cleaner and brighter. Thank you to the painting team. The outside will be painted later this year.

Flooding: PF has talked to Scudamores who will arrange for the drains at the entrance to the station to be cleared.

The Haydon Parish Archive

- work on the photo archive continues with Ian Foster and Alistair Burrowes.

- Penny Wilkinson is leading on the work to organise and publicise our archive of documents and objects. Penny has taken a look at what is in the cupboards, sorted it out and thrown away duplicate photocopies. There are quite a few documents that really don't belong in the parish archive including parish council minutes, Shaftoe Trust documents and details of planning applications. All these documents can easily be found in other places. There are few original documents in our stock at the moment. There is more work to do but the ultimate plan is to work on five different areas of the archive and to make as much of the archive as is possible available to the public. These five areas are:

  - Maps and place names

  - Directories - this is about local business and industry

  - People

  - Churches - one of our volunteers has recently rediscovered work she and a colleague did some years ago on clarifying the inscriptions on the headstones in the old church yard

  - WW1

The approach to date has really been to accept anything and everything with a vague link to our parish into the archive. We will eventually need to be much clearer about what we will and won't accept and about what has been given to us and what has been loaned.

Catch Up with a Copper: we have been contacted by Northumbria Police again by Stehanie Callf, our Neighbourhood Policing Officer with a view to another Catch Up with a Copper session. One has been held before at The Bridge but there has been quite a gap since the last one, due to illness. We have booked 4 sessions this year at The Bridge, in March, June, September & December. Each session will be 2-3 hours, in the afternoon. Precise times will be advertised. The police are unable to advertise these sessions so, when we have a date, we will advertise on Facebook through The Bridge.

ReadEasy adult literacy charity are in the process of affiliating to ReadEasy UK, after which RE Northumberland can begin to operate. They have 6 applications for reading coaches, including one of The Bridge volunteers who has been instrumental in getting RE off the ground in Northumberland. Like the DT, RE Northumberland has to raise its running costs which include an annual fee to RE UK and paying for all literature used in coaching and in advertising. RE Northumberland is approaching any and everyone they can think of for financial support including supermarkets; foundations; Rotary & Lions.

Discussion and action: PF raised the idea of the DT applying to the Shaftoe Charities to help fund a Readeasy initiative in HB. This was supported as long as the funds went to the DT/Readeasy initiative in Haydon Bridge and not to support the general work of ReadEasy. PF to follow this up with KM

Fundraising: team leaders at the bridge are trying to organise themselves with monthly activities throughout the year. The intention is that a team will take the lead with each activity but all the teams will know what is happening when and be able to support as necessary. There was strong support from the Directors for this initiative

Storage: We are planning to sort out the loft again, and to cull the vast numbers of leaflets held at The Bridge, but we will not be getting rid of all of them.

Decision and action: it was agreed to have a dispenser outside The Bridge for walks/cycling leaflets. JB can advise on what to get

Security alarm: **Action: PF to talk to KM about where to keep the alarm code numbers**

Volunteer training: CT and MS both confirmed that they were available to work with PF and KM on planning volunteer social and development event for 2026.

26.07 Neighbourhood Plan and Community Actions Update

A Community Actions progress summary had been circulated with the agenda and was noted. Discussion points were:

1. *Sustainability and climate change*

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

The Net Zero Group (MI, SS, PH, AS and PF) reported on the discussion at the last renewable heating steering group on 30 January and the key points had been included in the written report for this meeting. Although a renewable energy district heating system was the long-term goal, the lack of a suitable energy centre site meant this would be put on hold. England government policy was all about putting the responsibility onto individual households and funding support is for air source heat pumps and improving home insulation for individual properties.

Short-term action would therefore focus on how information and advice could be best circulated to local residents about options for individual homes. Lack of capacity in the energy grid was noted and MI said that the county council representative on the Steering Group was taking this up with Northern Powergrid.

Also, in relation to medium term action we will talk to other community groups, such as Humshaugh, which are focusing on electricity generation via e.g. solar panels, to make profit that could be ploughed back into community initiatives around green energy

2. *Built & Historic Environment*

2c Plaques group

3 of the 4 plaques have been installed and other possible locations will be discussed. AS is going to arrange some publicity with the Hexham Courant.

5. Vibrant and thriving communities

5a Securing access to High School facilities

PF reported that representatives from the DT, PC and Shaftoe Charities would be meeting with the headteacher on Thursday 12 February

Additional item for discussion: Household surveys
SS had reported how helpful the household and business surveys done for, and community actions in, the Neighbourhood Plan (NP) had been to support funding applications by local community organisations such as the Nurture Project. The household and business surveys had been carried out in November 2020 and published in early 2021 so were now over 5 years old. Is there a case for the PC/DT refreshing this information by carrying out a new round of up to date surveys?
PF said that the funding used for this as part of the NP development was no longer available. In addition we would need to carry out a round of community consultation to understand current community concerns and issues before we could put together a new round of household and business surveys.
Decision: it was agreed that a clear case was needed for a new round of community consultation before any further action is taken

26.08 A strategic approach to Communications
a) Newsletter – PF reported that the eighth (January) edition of the Newsletter has been published. 100 paper copies had been printed with most (35 each) placed in a box outside the Community Centre and in the Chemist. 5 each were placed in The Railway, The General Havelock, The Anchor, the Haydonian Lounge and Bar, Oddfellows Coffee and The Bridge. Nearly all copies have now been taken, so there is positive interest in the Newsletter. The Welcome section asked people to sign up automatically for new editions, with a QR code for easy sign up also on the front page.

Now 154 people have signed up to receive the Newsletter automatically.(up from 130 in December and 100 in September) but it is too early to see if the paper copies are having a positive impact on this.

b) Website – IF reported that the website is working well and a copy of the analytics information had been circulated. MI had asked IF at the last meeting to put a link to The Bridge opening times on the home page. This had been done and the number of hits on The Bridge had increased as a result. IF has found out that 10 years of back issues of the Haydon News have not been included when the new website was set up. He is working with the website designer to address this.

c) Social media: There had been a change with the social media arrangements with inputs about The Bridge changing from MS's personal account to KM now posting as The Bridge The aim is for a person from each Team to be able to post under supervision from a Team Leader. There is also an Instagram post set up though this is not live yet.

26.09 Governance
a). Companies House personal codes: PF reported that 13 Directors had signed up for their personal code needed for companies house log in. IF explained that Experian, who did the security check, would not recognise his address, which meant that he could not complete the registration process. **Action: It was agreed that IF would approach the county council to check their registration of his address and the name it was under to ensure it was registered under him and not his late father. Once this was clarified he would have another go at registration to see if he could pass the Experian check. If this is unsuccessful it was agreed that, as a last resort, and on the basis that it did not set a precedent, Ian would get registered via an ACSP firm, at a cost to the DT of £200 + VAT.**
b). Post of Treasurer: MI reported that the DT needed to appoint a Treasurer now EF has retired as a Director. **Decision: IF agreed to be appointed as Treasurer**

c). Policies: MS said that a risk policy update review is under way. PF said that KM had asked for support in relation to producing the policies. **Action: CT offered to support and work with KM and MS on policy production**

26.10 Finance and Grants

a) Corporation Tax response form: MI reported that he was still trying to sort this out with HMRC, but that HMRC have now given him a number to phone and he is hopeful it can be resolved.
b) DT accounts: MI reported that there was currently a £678 year to date deficit, although a cash surplus as £2,700 relates to depreciation. This was likely to turn into at worst a cash break even at the year end

26.11 Any other business - None

26.12 Date and time of next meeting

7pm on Tuesday 28 April 2026 at The Bridge.