

**Draft Minutes of the Annual Assembly of Mitford**

**Held on Wednesday 7th May 2025, 7pm**

**In Mitford Village Hall**

**Present:** Chairman of Mitford Parish Council - Mike Sharp  
Carole Burn  
Michael Jeans  
Matt Skillen  
Ted Rodger  
Eric Dodd

**Clerk:** Dee Smith

**Also Present:** Revd Elaine Jones

The Chairman of Mitford Parish Council welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1. **Minutes of last Annual Assembly – 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024**

The minutes of the last annual meeting held on 1<sup>st</sup> May 2024 were agreed by all and signed by the chairman.

2. **Chairman of Mitford Parish Council Annual Report**

The Chairman gave the following report:

We have welcomed back Eric Dodd to the Council; he has taken on the website and represents the community of Tranwell Woods. Recently we said goodbye to our Clerk Damian McEnroe who has moved away from the village, he has done a sterling job over the last 3 years, and I take this opportunity to thank him for his hard work and dedication. We are fortunate to have found an experienced replacement in Dee Smith and look forward to working with her.

We have continued to work with Northumberland County Council to improve road safety in our villages. Speed calming measures have been installed in Tranwell Village which include extended 30mph limits, gateway features, and an interactive speed sign funded by Councillor Glen Sanderson.

A similar scheme has been installed in Tranwell Woods with an interactive sign funded by the Parish Council. A scheme for the east and west approaches to Mitford Village is at the design stage, and we hope to see this installed this year.

The collapse of the riverbank at Abbey Mill has resulted in 18 months of traffic restrictions, it will be a complex repair, and we have worked with the highways

Signed

Date

team at county hall to try and minimise excessive traffic on Spital Hill during road closures and deal with wear and tear on St Leonards Lane. The repair work is scheduled for this summer and is expected to take at least 4 months.

Riverbank erosion behind the village hall has resulted in another significant landslip, this is the second in two years. A layer of boulder clay exposed by the 2023 slip had been expected to slow the rate of erosion, but this does not seem to have happened, we will now consider engaging a specialist consultant with a view to active intervention. A financial provision will need to be made.

The new bus service between Morpeth and the airport is well used, and with encouragement from the Parish Council, the bus shelter at the Piramal stop has been repaired. We were also successful with an application for funding for a new bus shelter on the westbound side of the road.

We continue to improve the aesthetics and environment of the parish, we are replacing the older public benches, looking for new sites for additional ones, investing in flower tubs, planting trees, and keep the parish tidy with regular grass and hedge trimming.

We are working with the Village Hall Management Committee on a resilience project which will see solar, and battery storage installed in the village hall. A £20,000 grant has been secured from the Northern Power Grid Foundation and Northumberland Community Energy Ltd are currently undertaking a feasibility and scoping exercise.

Financially the Parish Council is in a relatively strong position, we have reserved £6,000 for the warm hub resilience project, set aside £1,500 for contingencies, leaving total unreserved funds of £9,933 at the end of the financial year. A small increase in our budget for 2025 does not change the parish component of council tax due to the increase in housing stock.

Finally, I wish to thank my fellow councillors for all their hard work during the last year, our Clerk for keeping the show on the road, and our County Councillor for his continued support despite his heavy workload.

### 3. Report on behalf of the Village Hall Management Committee

Hall use has continued this year in much the same vein as last year. The regular bookings are keeping the income ticking over and there has been quite a few extra one-off bookings for childrens parties, council events etc as is usual.

Current regular bookings include:

#### **Mondays**

Brownies 6-00 till 7-30 during school term.

## **Tuesday**

Pilates 10-00 till 11-00.

Dancing 7-30 till 9-00 during school term.

## **Wednesday**

Mitford Parish Council 1st Wednesday of the month

Mitford Historic Society 2nd Wednesday of the month April to October

## **Thursday**

Table Tennis 7-00 till 8-30 (This is still in the diary but is only occasionally attended)

## **Friday**

Country Dancing 10-00 till 12-30 during school term

## **Saturday**

Mitford Buskers Night 5.30pm till 7.30pm usually 2nd Saturday of the month

## **Sunday**

Cafe Church 9-00 till 12-00 4th Sunday of the month

The Mitford Buskers night has been a new initiative by village residents and has been very successful in providing entertainment and bringing in new people to the village hall. All the nights have been well attended by people from the village and further afield.

New committee member Hazel Anderson organised a ceilidh in the village hall as part of Village Halls Week, a national celebration of village halls, their importance to village life and the people who give their time to the community. It was very well attended and was a great success. Hopefully we will be repeating it in the future.

Hazel also organised a Christmas Film night utilising the projector and screen we had installed recently. This was also well attended and a success in getting new faces to come to the hall.

We have been moving forward slowly in the solar panel/battery storage area. An agreement has been put into place with NCEL, a local charitable foundation, to provide solar panels and battery backup for the hall. We are awaiting further developments and are in the queue!

We have recently had a clear out of the storeroom and are planning some better shelving and easily moved storage for the tables and chairs. The storeroom should be much better organised when this work is finished.

The Village Fair this year was very successful and well attended.

We are now recognised as a warm hub and are still in the process of arranging some events to showcase the hall and the warm hub project.

The committee has some new members, including a Treasurer, Martin Thompson who has done a great job so far in sorting out the bank issues we had!

We are always in need of new members and anyone else would also of course be very welcome to join the team.

4. Questions from the Public

There were no public questions on this occasion.

The meeting concluded at 7.25pm.