

NATLAND PARISH COUNCIL
Minutes of the Council Meeting
Held at Natland Village Hall at 7pm.
On Monday 29th September 2025

25/86 Present: Councillors Smith (Chairman), Catnach, Clark, Harkness, Ibbs and Wilson. two members of the public and Parish Clerk Kevin Price. Apologies for absence were accepted from Councillor Kelly and received from Westmorland & Furness Councillors Jonathan Brook and Doug Rathbone.

25/87 Public participation:

Mr Andrew Thomas addressed the Council on the following planning application, urging the Council to object strongly to it. A number of questions were asked by Councillors.

2025/1744/HRN Hedgerow North of Natland Mill Beck Lane. To create access to field for development purposes. CBO-0879-001 Access Appraisal 080425. The length of Hedgerows is 48.00 metres.

25/88 Declarations of Interest:

Councillors Ibbs, should anything relating to St Mark's Church be discussed.

25/89 Minutes:

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th July were agreed and signed by the Chairman.

25/90 Westmorland & Furness Councillors:

Councillor Rathbone had submitted a report, which had been circulated to Councillors. He particularly stressed the need to engage the help of the Police, in order to police the new 20 mph speed limits. This will be an agenda item for the next meeting.

25/91 Planning:

The following applications were considered (and details the responses sent)

2025/1734/FPA St Marks C of E School Oxenholme Lane Natland.
Replacement of sections of boundary fencing with 1.8m high vertical rail fencing.

The Council does not object in principle to the school erecting a secure fence. However, there are errors in the application in that the maps are incorrect and the boundaries with neighbouring properties to be fenced have hedges, trees and dry-stone walls, though boxes ticked state not.

Furthermore, the school grounds are higher than the neighbouring gardens, so a 1.8m high fence will be well over 2m high. Access to the school from the gardens could be prevented by a lower fence. The established beech hedge on the north side of a neighbouring garden completely screens and blocks off the adjacent pre-school / nursery area so a 1.8m fence is unnecessary there. It will also make trimming the hedge difficult. The east side of that garden has a mix of trees and shrubs and a dry stone wall alongside the boundary with the school.

These significant errors in the application lead Natland Parish Council to conclude that the plan has been submitted without inspection of the boundaries or consultation with the neighbours. The parish council would like these matters to be considered and the application and proposal adjusted appropriately.

2025/1744/HRN Hedgerow North of Natland Mill Beck Lane. To create access to field for development purposes. CBO-0879-001 Access Appraisal 080425. The length of Hedgerows is 48.00 metres.

(Councillor Clark declared a personal interest in this application and left the room while it was being considered)

The Council resolved to object strongly to the application for the following reasons:

The removal of mature hedgerow and trees along Natland Mill Beck Lane would have a detrimental effect on the appearance of the tranquil rural lane, which is well used by walkers, cyclists and families.

The purpose of removing the hedgerow is to provide for vehicle access to a proposed new housing development to the north of Helme Drive. It is premature to request permission to remove a mature hedgerow before plans have been submitted or agreed for what would be a controversial development. Furthermore, the supporting report submitted with the application makes it clear that this would be an expensive solution to solving the access problem requiring a bridge over Natland Mill Beck. The beck regularly floods at this point so a new crossing would need to be substantial detracting from the rural nature and character of the area.

The proposed access would also mean crossing the historic mill leat which runs alongside Natland Mill Beck Lane. This presumably would need to either be filled in or crossed in a culvert arrangement. Either option is detrimental to an historic feature.

The area of Amenity Open Space to the south of Helme Drive and bordered by Natland Mill Beck Lane should be protected from development. It allows open views from the historic canal bridge at Natland Mill Beck Lane. The open fields and space also enhance the experience of many walkers and cyclists who use Natland Mill Beck Lane and the Lancaster Canal footpath.

Natland Parish Council believes that this proposal should be considered as part of the full development application and should be considered by Westmorland and Furness Council's full planning committee, rather than being a delegated decision.

2025/1721/LDPR 1 Longmeadow Lane Natland. Lawful Development Certificate for the conversion of the existing garage into habitable space with a disabled access lift.

The Council raised no objections to this application.

25/92 Assertion 10 – ‘Digital & Data Compliance’:

Details of the requirements, which must be in place by the end of this financial year, had been circulated to Councillors, who are encouraged to look at the Sedgwick Parish Council website and the Crook and Underbarrow ones.

It is clear that a new website will be needed. Enquiries will be made locally, A2A in Milnthorpe and Narked Design were mentioned, as they have been responsible for several sites in recent years.

Westmorland & Furness Council could be asked for assistance, especially with the gov.uk email addresses, but the directive came from CALC, so maybe they will be able to help smaller Councils to comply with the legislation.

This will be an agenda item again at the next meeting.

25/93 Finance:

a. It was resolved to pay the following accounts:

Lune Valley Landscapes & Ground Maintenance	£225.00	Grass cutting (to note)
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Open Spaces Society	£45.00	Annual subscription
T Flitcroft	£100.00	Payroll administration – annual payment
Natland & Oxenholme Village Hall	£37.80	Hire of hall.
K M Price	£51.05	Backpay

b. The monthly cash and budget statements were noted.

c. Despite a letter having been sent to the bank, requesting transfer of £20,000.00 to the Council's interest-bearing account, the transaction had not been carried out. The Clerk will write again and enclose copies of the previous correspondence.

d. The Local Government Services Pay Agreement 2025-26 was noted and approved. (The Clerk at Natland is currently employed for 23.5 hours monthly at Point 20 on the Salary Scale).

25/94 Reports from Councillors:

a. Highways:

Councillor Clark has been in touch with Councillor Rathbone regarding various issues.

Councillor Catnach highlighted the severe lack of parking facilities in the village; often all available places are full and this is likely to worsen as and when new homes built. She will report that the hedge opposite Charnley Fold is in need of cutting.

b. Footpaths Officer:

Councillor Kelly has reported the overgrown vegetation on the footpath by Jones homes. This has been acknowledged. Over a year ago she reported the bad state of the footpath near Cracalt Farm. Nothing has happened, the footbridge is still broken, so it has been reported again and it is now on the action list.

c. Village Hall:

Councillor Wison reported that the work on the ceiling has now been completed, as had work carried out by Rentokil, and work on any remaining asbestos. Further work is scheduled for summer 2026.

d. CALC:

Councillor Smith had attended the online 'Unity Bank' session recently.

25/95 Correspondence (including emails and phone calls):

Councillor Ibbs updated the Council on plans for the school playground. The Head Teacher will be asked to submit a formal request for funding to the next meeting, when 'School playground renovation' will be an agenda item.

25/96 Date and place of the next meeting:

Monday 27th October 2025 at 7pm at Natland Village Hall.

The meeting closed at 8.05 pm

Signed:

Dated: