

THIS MONTH

- “Knowing Me, Knowing You”: Trevor and Angie Garrard
- “Voices of Old Ellingham: Peggy and Bill Redpath”
- “40 Years of Farming “ with Graham Simpson

ELLINGHAM NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 2026

£3.50 PER ANNUM



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With summer almost gone, and autumn fast approaching, it's almost a whole year since we launched our “new look” Newsletter—so we probably need to stop calling it “new”!

The point of this newsletter is to play a part in strengthening engagement and communications within our community, and so we are still extremely interested in receiving contributions from all parishioners and also advertisers who would like to play a part in things.

We'd also love to hear your thoughts on the Newsletter, the content and what you suggest we might include. Let us know!

All comments to ellinghamviews@gmail.com please.

40p per copy

Delivered free to all parishioners, thanks to a grant from Ellingham Community Trust
www.ellinghamcommunitytrust.org



22nd September
is the day we
celebrate the life
of our
Patron Saint,
Maurice.

According to legend our Saint Maurice was born in Thebes in Egypt (the ruins of which lie within the modern city of Luxor) in 250AD

Maurice became a soldier in the Roman Army and was promoted until he became commander of the Theban Legion., thus leading approximately 1,000 men.

He was an acknowledged Christian at a time when early Christianity was seen as a threat to the Roman Empire. Yet he appears to have moved easily within the pagan society of the times.

The Theban legion was composed entirely of Christians and was called to serve in Gaul to assist Emperor Maximillian in defeating a revolt by the Bagaudes. They were dispatched with orders to clear the Saint Bernard Pass (although it was possibly not called that at that time) across the Alps.

Before going into battle they were instructed to offer sacrifices to the pagan gods and pay homage to the Emperor. Whilst Maurice willingly pledged his men's military allegiance to Rome he stated that service to God superseded all else. He said that to engage in wanton slaughter was inconceivable to Christian soldiers and that his men would not worship pagan gods.

When Maximillian ordered the legion to harass some local Christians, they refused. This incensed Maximillian who ordered that they be punished. As punishment he ordered that every 10th soldier should be killed, a punishment known as decimation a term which is still used today although not with exactly the same meaning.

More orders followed, but the men, encouraged by Maurice refused to obey and a second decimation followed. When the Theban Christians still refused to obey Maximillian ordered all remaining members, including Maurice to be executed. The place in Switzerland where this happened is now Saint-Maurice site of the Abbey of Saint Maurice.

Because he was Theban, Maurice is always depicted as being black ever since the 12th century and is generally depicted in full armour, in Italy emblazoned with a red cross.

Saint Maurice gives his name to the town of Saint Moritz as well

as numerous places called Saint Maurice in French speaking countries.

Over 650 religious foundations named after St Maurice can be found in France and other European countries and he is the patron saint of the Vatican's Swiss Guard.

Quite why Ellingham is the site of one of only three churches dedicated to Saint Maurice in England, the other two being Eglingham and Plympton, I have been unable to find out although there is perhaps a clue in the history of Ellingham church which was written by Tom Ridley (copies of which are available in church) which says that the land for the church was given to the monks of Durham by Nicholas de Grenville who, the name suggests may have come from France

I did find numerous churches dedicated to Saint Maurice throughout the world, including one in the Czech Republic and several in Florida. **(Written by Eileen Duncan)**

Sunday Rota: September

Reader (R) Sidesman (S)

6th Sept Trinity 14 Green

Mrs D Lightfoot (R) Mrs D Lightfoot (S)

3rd Sept Trinity 15 Green

Mr N Mundy (R) Miss E Duncan (S)

20th Sept Trinity 16 Green

Miss E Duncan (R) Mrs D Lightfoot (S)

27th Sept St Maurice United Service & Judy Glover Anniversary

Mr N Mundy (R) Miss E Duncan (S)

4th Oct Harvest Thanksgiving Green

Ellingham Church
Thursday 3rd Sept
at 12 noon

*Celebration
of Life*
John Cairns





The Pack Horse Leek Club

Tattie in a Bucket & Rose Competition



The “Tattie in a Bucket” weigh in went very well and a big thank you to all who took part. The results are as follows:

Adults

1st Louise Tate 1.27

2nd Louise Tate 1.21

3rd John Dobson 1.17

Children

1st Freddie Walby 1.05

2nd Kitty Stevenson 0.94

3rd Delilah Walby 0.94

This years Booby Prize goes to Ken Grayson

The Tony Ashworth “Rose in a Bowl”

1st Jayne Dobson

2nd Rosie Barber

3rd Diana Milburn

We are looking forward to the Annual Leek Club Show on Saturday 12th September. As a reminder the times are as follows:

Entries 10am – 12 noon

Show opens to public at 4pm when afternoon tea and cakes are available.

Presentation of prizes 5pm

Auction of produce 9.30pm at The Pack Horse Inn

The August Monthly Draw winner was Graeme Sinclair

WHAT'S ON AT ELLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL?



THE PACK HORSE LEEK CLUB SHOW

Saturday, Sept 12th

10am: Hall open for entries till 12 noon.

4pm: Show open to public. Teas and coffees.

5pm: Presentation and Prizes.

9.30pm: Auction at The Pack Horse.



QUIZ NIGHT

Thursday, Sept 17th
7.30pm - 10pm

Teams of up to six. Bring your friends or join a team. Bring your own drinks and snacks.



WREATH MAKING WORKSHOP

Saturday, Nov 28th

All materials provided: £55.

Early Bird: Book before end of September: £50.



ELLINGHAM COMMUNITY TRUST MINUTES AUGUST 2026 AT ELLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL



Present: David Metcalfe (DM),(Chair (remotely)), George Unwin (GU), Brenda Frier (BF), Judy Glover (JG), (Trustees), Louis Fell (Treasurer), Virginia Mayes-Wright (VMW) (Clerk).

Apologies: John Thompson (vice chair), Graham Edmonson (Trustee)

MINUTES FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING: The Trustees reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting held on 2nd July 2026.

ACTION: DM to check in with GE regarding Photographic Archive. **Ongoing.**

ACTION: Clerk to check in with David Griggs. **Completed.**

ACTION: JG to pass a couple of Welcome Pack leaflets to each of Community Contacts. **Ongoing.**

ACTION Clerk to draft survey on schemes. **Completed.** The Clerk suggested that she creates a mock up as a Google form for the Trustees to review.

ACTION: Clerk to mock up as a Google form for the Trustees to review. **Ongoing.**

ACTION : LF to confirm applicants to suppliers. **Ongoing.**

ACTION : BF to put on Social Media. **Ongoing.**

Completed Actions

JG and BF to check applicants

Clerk to remove duplicate application

Clerk to find out who needs to be re-elected as Trustees

Clerk to send poster to the Parish Magazine for repeated entry

Clerk to post the AGM notice to the website

Clerk to email BF with the AGM notice

Treasures Report.

LF presented the Treasurer's Report.

Applications/Review of Schemes

Grants/Applications In Progress

Neighborhood Plan – GU declared an interest in the application, and the Trustees requested that GU stays in the room to answer queries. The Trustees discussed the application and had a number of queries regarding the expenditure. **ACTION : DM to forward the queries to the applicant.**

Solid Fuel Scheme – The Clerk noted some amendments to the Solid Fuel Scheme applications. **ACTION : Clerk to update the Solid Fuel Scheme applications spreadsheet.**

Green Scheme – Thanks received from one applicant. One application received. **PAGE 7**

TESS – One new application received. The Trustees discussed the application noting that this would be suitable. The Trustees agreed. **ACTION : Clerk to inform the TESS applicant.**

AGM Arrangements.

LF requested additional information for the Annual Accounts

ACTION : DM to write Chairmans Report.

Communication

The Chair informed the Trustees about a possible Case Study from previous TESS application. It was agreed that this should be used on the website and for an article in the Parish Council to promote the TESS. **ACTION : Clerk to create Parish Magazine article and Website case study.**

Update on Residents – It was noted that one death has occurred in the parish, and several moves have occurred.

A.O.B. None

ARRANGEMENTS FOR NEXT MEETING: 3rd September 2026



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Four years ago, Angie and Trevor Garrard swapped the congestion of Chelmsford for life in North Northumberland.

Graham sat down with them to talk about leaving Essex, travelling the world with their daughter, India, and little more than two rucksacks, some extraordinary experiences along the way — and why, having seen so much of it, they now have very little desire to leave north Northumberland.

Let's start with the obvious question. When did you actually move here?

Angie: July 2022, so four years ago now. We came up from Essex, although our connection with Northumberland goes back much further.

Trevor's parents, who lived in Suffolk, bought a holiday home in Lucker around 2006 or 2007. That started us coming up regularly. Some-



Knowing Me,
Knowing You
It's the best I can do.

times we stayed with them and, if they were using the house, we rented a cottage nearby.

Gradually it went from being an occasional visit to coming up two or three times a year. We spent probably ten or twelve Christmases here as well. Christmas Day at the White Swan became something of a tradition.

Over all those years we got to know this part of Northumberland extremely well and simply fell in love with it. Every time we came up, going back south became more of a wrench.

So when the time eventually came to decide where we wanted to live, Northumberland was really the obvious answer.

But Essex to Northumberland is still quite a move. Why did you want to make that move?

Trevor: We actually loved our house in Chelmsford. That wasn't the problem. We'd originally moved there for work because we were both based at headquarters and it made life very easy. But the place around us changed.

We lived on a fairly large estate and to get into Chelmsford we had to turn onto a road that became unbelievably busy. It reached the point where I would sometimes get India out of the car, send her down the road to press the button on the pedestrian crossing and wait for the lights to stop the traffic so I could actually get out of our road.

We were only two or three miles from the city centre and sometimes you could walk

there quicker than you could drive.

Chelmsford became busier and busier. There was development everywhere — thousands of new houses — and increasingly we just didn't want that sort of life. I remember constantly wiping black dust from the windowsills because of the traffic and pollution.

Then we'd come up here and everything felt completely different. I remember seeing the Angel of the North on the journey and feeling as though we were coming home.

Living somewhere is different from holidaying there. Has anything surprised you since moving?

Angie: Probably how sociable it is. When we moved here, there was really only one person I knew properly in the area, my friend Jane Hardy. We'd been swimming around the Farne Islands together. We knew a few other people to say hello to from years of visiting, but that was about it. Now we know far more people than we ever knew in Essex.

You can go into the Pack Horse, start talking to somebody you've never met before and suddenly discover all sorts of connections. It doesn't seem to matter what people do or what their background is. They might be farmers, business owners, labourers or retired — everybody just mixes.

On our estate in Chelmsford we probably knew the people three or four houses either side of us, despite being surrounded by hundreds of houses. Here we've met people everywhere.

And our friends in Essex now come and visit us. Some have become members at Ad Gefrin and even have food sent down from Turnbull's. So we've converted them as well!

There also seems to be rather less con-

cern here about what somebody owns or what they do for a living.

Angie: Absolutely. Where we lived there could be quite a lot of emphasis on what people appeared to have.

Travelling changed our attitude to that anyway, because once you've lived for a year out of a couple of rucksacks you realise how little you actually need.

Which brings us neatly to the extraordinary trip you made. You didn't just have a long holiday — you took your daughter out of school and travelled around the world for a year. How did that happen?

Angie: We'd both travelled quite extensively before. I've always loved travelling and diving.

When we started thinking about retirement, we talked about doing something bigger. My sons had gone travelling when they were younger, but that opportunity wasn't really available to our generation in the same way.

India was the youngest and the big question was when we could possibly do it without damaging her education.

We spoke to a friend who was a headteacher and she said, "If you're going to do it, do it in Year 7." Her view was that there was enough overlap with the final year of primary school for us to make it work. So that was it.

I put a huge map on the wall in my office and started planning. It took about three years. The question was simply: where haven't we been, and what do we really want to see?

I don't think most of our friends or family

genuinely believed we'd ever do it. We were in our fifties and apparently proposing to disappear around the world with a school-age child, two rucksacks and a little wheelie case. But we did

Where did you go?

Angie: South Africa, India, China, Japan, Borneo, Singapore, Australia, New Zealand, Hawaii and then across the United States.

I organised most of it myself. There were endless visas and arrangements, particularly for India and China, but eventually it all came together.

We started in South Africa, which remains one of our favourite countries — apart from Northumberland, obviously!

India was very interested in animals, so the Kruger was essential. Through a retired police association magazine I'd found a former police officer who arranged trips there. He put us in touch with an expat called Terry.

It was fantastic and, contrary to what people might imagine, we didn't spend a fortune. We were living on our pensions and I became



very good at finding affordable ways of doing things.

We spent a week around the Kruger, stayed at Terry's house beside a dry riverbed and saw the Big Five. We then travelled down to Cape Town and did the Garden Route.

The whole trip was also India's education.

I taught the things that needed formal teaching — maths, English and science — but for everything else I thought, "She's going to learn by being there."

Instead of just reading about Nelson Mandela, we took her to Robben Island.

She went cage diving with great white sharks. She did a tandem skydive from 10,000 feet with her brother, while Trevor and I remained very firmly on the ground wondering why we'd agreed to it.

Those experiences stay with you in a way that reading something in a textbook doesn't.

From there you went to India, which sounds as though it was rather more challenging.

Angie: India was by far the hardest part of the whole year.

I'd worked in the police, including child protection, and I'd seen some pretty awful things, so I thought I was reasonably well prepared. I wasn't.

Trevor: We weren't travelling around in luxury. We used ordinary trains and travelled as people there travelled.

I remember Delhi station one night. It was around 90 degrees and the platforms were absolutely packed.

Our train started coming in and nobody

was forming anything resembling a queue. Then this enormous railway official appeared with a staff almost as tall as he was. He blew his whistle. Nobody took any notice. So he started walking along the platform using the staff rather vigorously to persuade everybody to get into line. It was remarkably effective!

Angie: I remember looking at Trevor and thinking, "Should we just leave and go to the Maldives?" Fortunately we didn't.

Trevor: India is extraordinary because you have these completely different sides sitting alongside each other. There is incredible colour, culture and beauty, but also poverty and hardship on a scale that's difficult to comprehend until you've seen it.



We took India to the Taj Mahal and managed to get a photograph of her sitting on the famous bench at sunrise. We visited the Blue City and Pink City and went to Ranthambore looking for tigers — although the tigers declined to cooperate. Then there was

Varanasi.

That was like stepping back into a medieval city. You see the funeral ghats on the Ganges and people living with almost nothing. I remember walking through narrow streets and seeing a young woman with a baby huddled around a tiny fire because she had nowhere else to live. Experiences like that are incredibly humbling.

The trains were an experience too. Even travelling first class air-conditioned could mean four bunks in a compartment and you had no idea who the fourth occupant would be. The air-conditioning sometimes consisted of an enormous fan inches from your face.

Angie: We also discovered that we'd accidentally booked ourselves into a vegetarian area. After several days Trevor announced that he couldn't face another meal without meat, so we found a taxi and went in search of a McDonald's selling something resembling a chicken Maharaja burger. Not perhaps our finest cultural moment!

Presumably things became slightly easier after India?

Angie: Thankfully, yes!

We went into China and travelled to Beijing, the Great Wall and Xi'an to see the Terra-cotta Army.

I'll never forget walking into the main excavation hall at Xi'an. It is absolutely enormous and there are rows and rows of figures stretching out in front of you. I'm not somebody who cries very often, but that sight nearly did it. You've seen the photographs, but nothing prepares you for the scale.

From China we went to Japan, which we loved. My only regret is that I didn't allow enough time there. We went to Tokyo, Kyo-

to and Hiroshima and travelled on the bullet trains.

Hiroshima was particularly important because of what we were trying to do with India's education. Later we went to Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, so she was able to see places associated with both sides of that history rather than simply learning dates from a book.

Then came Borneo, because India wanted to see orangutans, Singapore and Australia.

And Australia wasn't exactly a quick stop either?

Angie: No! My oldest son lives in Perth, so Australia was a big part of the journey.

We started in Sydney, hired a camper van and drove right across southern Australia to Perth — about 44 days on the road.

We spent Christmas and New Year with my son and his family and later flew to Cairns and travelled down the east coast.

After that came New Zealand, where we spent about a month in a motorhome travelling around both islands.

Then Hawaii and finally America.

Trevor: We flew into Los Angeles, hired a car and drove across the country. We particularly wanted to see Nashville, Memphis — including Graceland — and New Orleans.

By the end we were exhausted, so we rented a house on Cape Cod for a couple of weeks and had what you might call an actual holiday before finally coming home.

What did you personally learn from spending a year travelling like that?

Angie: How little you need.

We had two rucksacks and India had a



India insisted "Rabbie" made the trip as well!

little wheeled case. That was basically our life for a year.

Obviously there were exceptions. Trevor accumulated so many T-shirts that we eventually had to send a box home from Australia. He also bought a vintage toy boat at a fair in Perth which somehow had to find its own way back to Essex.

But generally you realise that so much of what we surround ourselves with is unnecessary.

You come home, look at a wardrobe full of clothes and shoes and think, "Why have I got all this?"

Trevor: You also realise how fortunate we are. Seeing how little some people have — and how they nevertheless get on with life — puts a lot of our own worries into perspective.

It was an incredible year. India still talks

about it now.

And yet, having travelled all over the world, you now hardly travel at all?

Angie: That's true!

When we came home we felt India needed stability. She went back to school, joined the Air Cadets and eventually chose to go to college in Essex, so we stayed there longer than we'd originally expected.

She'd also always wanted a dog. We'd promised her that when we finished travelling we'd get one, because when we were both working full-time it wouldn't have been fair.

So Ruby arrived — a rescue dog from Spain — and that changed things too.

We've barely travelled abroad since. We took Ruby to France once. I went away with India before she joined the RAF because she wanted to visit the Greek islands associated with Mamma Mia! I actually had to get a new passport for that trip. Trevor doesn't even have a passport now. And neither of us is particularly bothered.

That's quite a transformation for two people who once spent a year going around the world.

Trevor: The funny thing is that we don't feel as though we're missing anything.

I say to people we meet on the beach who are here on holiday: we're permanently on holiday. Most mornings I can walk Ruby down at Low Newton. What better commute could you ask for?

We go to the theatre, we're members of the Playhouse, we're members at Ad Gefrin, we go to Turnbull's and there are pubs and places we love. The Pack Horse has become almost a second home. We love the people

there and you feel almost part of the family.^{PAGE 13}

We could genuinely be out every night if we wanted to be.

Obviously the area changes during holiday periods and everywhere becomes much busier, but we understand why tourism matters here. You simply adapt.

Angie: A while ago I was in Greece with India and we were talking to somebody on a boat. They asked me: "Apart from where you live now, where in the world would you most like to live?" And I genuinely couldn't think of anywhere.

I've been fortunate enough to see some fantastic places, but I don't particularly want to be anywhere other than here.

You've also thrown yourself into local life rather than simply moving here and observing it from the sidelines.

Angie: I think that's really important.

If you move somewhere like this, you've got to put yourself out there. Go and do things. Meet people. Become involved. And you've also got to accept the place you've chosen to live in.

You can't move into the countryside and then complain because somebody is muck-spreading in the field next door, or because there's dust during harvest. We have a big wheat field behind us. Of course there's going to be dust sometimes!

People have lived and worked here for generations. There are farms, shoots and all sorts of rural traditions. I might not personally agree with absolutely everything everybody does, but that's not the point. You've moved into their community. You can't arrive and expect everything already here to change to suit you. You have to become part

of it.

And you've found plenty of ways of doing exactly that.

Angie: Yes, and we've done things here we would never have imagined doing before.

I'd volunteered with the Air Cadets for about three and a half years, helping with things like sport and Duke of Edinburgh activities. Since moving here I've deliberately tried different things.

I've been involved in seal rescue. I've helped with lambing. I volunteer with Riding for the Disabled. With the lambing I simply thought, "I've never done that before — I'll have a go."



That's one of the lovely things about living here. There are opportunities to experience things and meet people that we simply wouldn't have had in our previous life. There's so

much to do.

So what does retirement look like these days?

Trevor: I made an executive decision about that a couple of years ago. Now we're properly retired, our weekend runs from Thursday until Monday. Tuesday and Wednesday are the abstinence days. The rest of the week is on!

Having listened to all this, I think you've probably earned a five-day weekend!

Angie: Exactly. That's how retirement is supposed to work.

And genuinely, we're very happy. We've travelled, we've seen some extraordinary things and we've lived in a completely different part of the country. But this feels like home.

Sometimes you have to go a very long way to discover where you actually want to be.

Getting to know each other is what the Newsletter is all about. If you'd be willing to share a little about yourself, don't be shy! Whether you are relatively new to the area, or a long standing part of the community. We'd love to chat to you. Let us know if you'd be willing to be part of a "Knowing Me, Knowing You" piece in the future. Email us at EllinghamViews@gmail.com

TARGET RAISED!

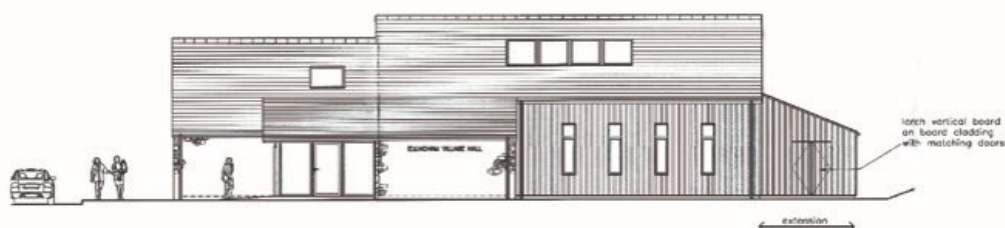


ELLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL Development Fund

The trustees of Ellingham Village hall are delighted to announce that funding for the Phase 2 extension of the village hall has been raised.

It is hoped that work will start early in the new year.
Thank you to all our funders, generous donors and everyone who has contributed in any way however small.

Fundraising will continue so that decorating, shelving, staging and other items can be completed in full.



The Phase 2 extension will add a valuable area to the Hall and provide new facilities for performances; a back-stage area or green room, as well as extra storage space to allow for a new programme of events and activities, both indoor and outdoor.

Thank you to:

The Bernard Sunley Foundation, The Catherine Cookson Charitable Trust, Lord Crewe's Charity, Rothley Trust,
Sir James Knott Trust, The Joicey Trust, The National Lottery Community Fund, Salmon City Band...

And our generous local community.

To donate please contact admin@ellinghamvillagehall.com
Every little helps!

WHAT'S ON AT ELLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL?

ART WITH SAM WATERCOLOUR WORKSHOP



**Friday 9th October
10am - 3pm**



Sam Folcarelli will take you through basic watercolour techniques, moving onto more in depth methods. Bring an apron if you like. Tea and coffee available. Please bring your own lunch.

Tickets £80. All materials provided. Book now!

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ELLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL TRUST JUNE MANAGEMENT MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the meeting held on 16 June 2026



Attendees – G Macleod, E Duncan, G Duncan, C Stevenson, Jayne Dobson and R McKibbin.

Apologies: G Edmondson

Conflicts of interest and safeguarding:

Nothing to report.

Approval of Minutes:

The minutes of the 20 May 2026 were approved and signed by GM.

Matters arising

SSD purchased for backup storage of marketing and website data.

Treasurers report

Income and outgoing totals to 31 May 2026 were as follows (previous month in brackets):

Room hire – £779.00 (£823.75).

Fund raising – £381.80 (£382.50).

Other income – Interest – £31.09 (£15.65).

Expenditure - £848.77 (£386.93). Major costs include maintenance - £535.79, licenses (music and general usage) - £233.83 and equipment - £78.99.

Funding update

The outcome of the Awards for All application has not been announced (probably July 2026).

Our Micro Grant submission to the Ballinger Charitable Trust was refused.

Policy updates

The non-payment of a hire invoice has caused EVH to reconsider how we encourage payment from one-off users of the hall. It was agreed that ED will issue an invoice in the period leading up to the hall hire. This invoice will need to be settled before the date of the event (as per the payment terms in the EVH Hire Agreement). In addition, the party hiring the hall should provide a valid contact phone number as required on the EVH booking form.

Hallmark 3

Following the positive review of our Hallmark 2 submission GM has begun to consider the various requirements of the Hallmark 3 assessment. In general Hallmark 3 requires EVH to demonstrate it is working with the community and its users, including marketing the hall. Many of the Hallmark 3 requirements have already been implemented by EVH.

Specific elements yet to be addressed include the production of a welcome pack (much of this information is already on the website) and the encouragement of 'formal' feedback from hall users.

First Aid Course

Some EVH committee members have received first aid training but now require a refresher course. It was agreed this could be linked to an 'open to all' demonstration of how to use the Ellingham defibrillator which is managed by the Parish Council.

Hall checks and cleaning requirements

For the purpose of general duties and monthly checks the following rota for 2026 was updated and agreed: June – JD, July – CS and August – ED.

AOB

The need for an AGM sometime in March 2027 was noted.

EVHT management meeting ended at 10.05 am



ELLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL TRUST EVH sub-group meeting JUNE MINUTES Minutes of the meetings held on 16 June 2026



Attendees – G Macleod (T), C Stevenson (T), E Duncan (T), G Duncan (T), Jayne Dobson (T), R McKibbin (T), A Hunt (V), and I Stephenson (V)

Apologies: G Edmondson (T) and J Rose (V)

Bookings & marketing

A preliminary enquiry has been made by a film company to hire the hall for 3 days in early July 2026. The hall will be used for storage and make-up facilities. EVH offered the hall at a rate of £2500 for Monday to Thursday and £2800 for Monday to Friday. A decision is required by Friday 19th June 2026.

Events

Coffee morning to be held on 25 July 2026. The 'Tattie in a Bucket' weigh-in will be held separately on 26 July 2026. There will be no coffee morning in August. Coffee etc will be provided at the Pack Horse Leek Club show on 12 September 2026 (Macmillan charity event).

EVH BBQ on 11 July 2026: Agreed that EVH will order meat for 55 people (110 sausages, 55 burgers and 55 steaks). Vegetarian options will also be ordered. CS has kindly agreed to order buns from Morrisons and also bags of ice. Currently cooks (loosely defined) will be GE, GM and also Gareth Voyle (resident). Start time will be 17:00 and costs will be £12/head for adults, £5/head for children and children under 3 will be free. Music will be provided by Lee and Tom. Play equipment will be provided for younger children.

Rummage Sale: 29 August 2026. Drop off events for donations will be held on 21st, 27th and 28th of August. It is now likely that the vacant office in the Home Farm development will be available as a donation storage point from July 2026 onwards.

Christmas Fair: 15 November 2026 - £40/table.

Wreath making run by Vanessa Wellock on 28 Nov 2026 (morning and afternoon sessions). £32/person with early bird price available. Market this event from August at the earliest.

Potential nature pyramid/paper lantern session with date to be finalised by GD. £20/head with tea/coffee provided.

Ellingham WI trophy

EVH have accepted a trophy bowl from the now defunct Ellingham Women's Institute. We will use it when collecting the entry fee at hall functions.

Landscaping

Nothing to report.

AOB

The next North Northumberland Village Halls Consortium meeting will be held on 8 July 2026 at Breamish. GM will ask JR if she can attend.

Date of next meeting

7 July 2026 at 09.00



ELLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL TRUST

JULY MANAGEMENT MEETING MINUTES

Minutes of the meetings held on 7 July 2026

Attendees – G Macleod, G Duncan, G Edmondson, C Stevenson, Jayne Dobson and R McKibbin.

Apologies: E Duncan

Conflicts of interest and safeguarding

Nothing to report.

Approval of Minutes

The minutes of the 16 June 2026 meeting were approved and signed by GM.

Matters arising

None.

Treasurers report

There is no report this month as the treasurer is on holiday.

Funding update

The National Lottery Community Fund has approved our application and is giving Ellingham Village Hall £10,798 towards building our extension.

Policy updates

None required.

Hallmark 3

GM has continued to consider the various requirements of the Hallmark 3 assessment. It is clear that many of the requirements listed under the 'community efforts' section have already been implemented. The need for a 'welcome pack' is one obvious outstanding matter. The helpful Ellingham Community Trust 'Welcome to Ellingham Parish' is an excellent start but we need a more specific pack for village hall users.

First Aid Course

Some EVH committee members have received first aid training but now require a refresher course. It was agreed we should organise an 'open to all' course including a demonstration of how to use a defibrillator.

Hall checks and cleaning requirements

For the purpose of general duties and monthly checks the following rota for 2026 was updated and agreed: July – CS and August – ED.

WHAT'S ON AT ELLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL?



THE PACK HORSE LEEK CLUB SHOW

Saturday, Sept 12th

10am: Hall open for entries till 12 noon.

4pm: Show open to public. Teas and coffees.

5pm: Presentation and Prizes.

9.30pm: Auction at The Pack Horse.



QUIZ NIGHT

Thursday, Sept 17th
7.30pm - 10pm

Teams of up to six. Bring your friends or join a team. Bring your own drinks and snacks.



WREATH MAKING WORKSHOP

Saturday, Nov 28th

All materials provided: £55.

Early Bird: Book before end of September: £50.

admin@ellinghamvillagehall.com or phone: 07938 828699



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W: CarpeVitamYoga.uk

E: CarpeVitam.yoga@gmail.com

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AOB

The next AGM will be held in March 2027 to coincide with the monthly coffee morning.
EVHT management meeting ended at 9.45am.



ELLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL TRUST EVH SUB-GROUP FEEDBACK MEETING

Minutes of the meetings held on 7 July 2026



Attendees –

G

Macleod (T), C Stevenson (T), G Duncan (T), G Edmondson (T), Jayne Dobson (T), R McKibbin (T), A Hunt (V), J Rose (V) and I Stephenson (V)

Apologies: E Duncan (T)

Bookings & marketing

No major enquiries have been received.

BBQ arrangements

Current numbers attending stand at 98. Meat options for 80 people have been ordered (2 x sausages, 1 x burger and 1 x minute steak per person). 10 vegetarian options have also been ordered.

We will have 4 BBQs (3 x gas and 1 x steel drum). Currently designated cooks are RM, GE and Gareth Voyle (resident) with CS on the bench.

Volunteers from the committee and their partners have kindly offered to produce salads.

The Bunkhouse has kindly agreed to lend us 2 gazebos (thank you Kirsten).

Tom and Lee have agreed to sing two or three sets during the day.

Ian and Kay will look after the bar.

Rummage sale

‘Drop off’ days have been agreed and flyers are ready. These and other signage will be circulated/erected 2 - 3 weeks before the event. John Hunt has kindly agreed to remove the following day.

We need a lock on the rear gate to discourage exit from the hall without paying.

The ‘office’ beside Home Farm should be available from early August to store donated items, which will be checked for suitability before transferring to the hall.

Any left over items will be taken by the organiser of the Beadnell car boot sale.

A volunteer rota will be arranged by AH once names are known.

Events

Coffee morning to be held on 25 July 2026. The 'Tattie in a Bucket' weigh-in will be held separately on 26 July 2026. There will be no coffee morning in August. Coffee etc. will be provided at the Pack Horse Leek Club show on 12 September 2026 (Macmillan charity event).

EVH BBQ on 11 July 2026 (see details above).

Rummage Sale on 29 August 2026 (see additional details above). Drop off events for donations will be held on 21, 23, 27 and 28 August. The last two dates will also be used to set up the hall ready for sale day on the 29th of August.

Quiz nights will recommence on 17 September 2026.

An art class will be held by Sam Folcarelli (www.artbysamfolcarelli.co.uk) on 9 October 2026 in addition to the normal art class on 27 October 2026. The SF art class will cost £70/person and will run from 10.00 to 16.00.

Stained glass baubles workshop on 7 Nov 2026. Hall hire offered at £15/hour. JR to lead on this.

Christmas Fair: 15 November 2026 - £40/table. JD confirmed that 10 tables have already been confirmed.

Wreath making run by Vanessa Wellock on 28 Nov 2026 (morning and afternoon sessions). £32/person with early bird price available. Market this event from August at the earliest.

Potential nature pyramid/paper lantern session with date to be finalised by GD. £20/head with tea/coffee provided.

Coastal & Rural Taskforce – Sustainability talk on 29 September 2026. Details will follow.

Landscaping

Nothing to report.

AOB

None.

Date of next meeting: 11 August 2026 at 9.00am



The Newsletter is here to be a communication tool for every parishioner.

If you would like to express a view, on anything that is happening in our around the Parish, please send us your views.

So please don't be shy, let us know what you think about the Newsletter, the topics we cover and anything else in our little corner of Northumberland! Email to:

EllinghamViews @gmail.com

THANK YOU!

Ollie Simpson and his team have made a great job of restoring the Pond Wood Walk. This links the road just past Harelaw to the byway between The Nest and the A1.

For the first time since Storm Arwen, it is a joy to walk.

One section of this path is, however, still likely to flood over the winter when permission could be requested to take to the adjacent headland.

(Name and address supplied)

THANK YOU (AGAIN)!

Lynne and I would like to say a big thank you for your best wishes, cards and gifts for our retirement.

It's been a privilege to serve at St Maurice and we wish you well for the future .

Canon Tony (and Linda)

TRAFFIC COMING INTO ELLINGHAM

Is it just me, or have other people noticed the speed of traffic coming into the village along by Paddy's?

On my way out of the village yesterday I almost had two head-on crashes with people coming into the village at break-neck speed. Someone is going to get hurt unless something is done.

Maybe it's holidaymakers, because I didn't recognise the cars, and nobody who knows that road would go at such speeds. There are blind corners and people walking dogs along that road, it is so dangerous.

Can some signs be put up? What about speed bumps?

(Name and address supplied)

I understand that the back road through Ellingham has apparently been assessed by Highways and placed on the “**reserve list**” for future works. Can anyone explain what this actually means?

I appreciate there are many roads across Northumberland requiring attention and limited money to repair them. But perhaps someone could tell us where Ellingham sits on this mysterious reserve list — 10th, 100th or somewhere just below “when hell freezes over”?

Until then, I shall continue weaving my way through the village.

Anyone following me should please note: I haven’t been drinking at the Pack. I’m avoiding the potholes.

(Name and address supplied)



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A priest, one of many in his deeply religious town, decides to skip Mass one Sunday morning, to enjoy the day playing golf.

Fortunately for him, a second priest is available and deputises, so the townsfolk don’t really notice his absence.

However, God notices and is determined to exact a punishment. God spends a few minutes pondering his options, before ordering his angels to ensure that the priest gets a hole-in-one on every hole on the eighteen-hole course.

The angels think this is quite the unusual punishment. They ask God, “Why are you rewarding him? He’ll be only too happy when this happens.” God replies, “Yes, yes. But who would he tell?”

Peggy Redpath passed away on 21st May 2024, aged 98, after living in the village for over 80 years.

Peggy and Bill Redpath married in 1947 after his return from army service, and spent the rest of their lives in the village, with Peggy eventually living in Ivy Cottage. Bill worked as chauffeur on Ellingham Estate .



Tell me about your family coming to Chathill.

Well, my father, Norman Fife, came originally from Blanchland. He was a joiner there before moving up here with the family in 1938. He became foreman on the Ellingham Estate and worked out of a workshop in the old stables there. He was a skilled craftsman and had all sorts of tools and equipment there.

One unusual responsibility he had was looking after the village air-raid siren. Even after the war the siren remained part of the emergency arrangements during the Cold War years. It was kept in a

wooden crate and had to be tested periodically. If there was ever any problem with the telephone connected to it, the authorities made sure it was repaired very quickly.

It's funny the things people remember. Not the grand events, but things like workshops, tools, old telephones and village sirens. Those are often the details that stay with you.

You worked at Maxwell's Farm when you first arrived, what was that like?

I worked there full-time around 1940, right at the beginning of the war.

Most of my work was in the dairy. I milked cows and worked with the milk afterwards. Everything was done by hand. There were no modern systems and no machinery doing the work for you. It was hard work, but nobody thought much about it because that's

how farming was.

The farm had a dairy and calf pens, and there was always plenty happening. John Maxwell was there at the time and the family had already been farming there for years. Looking back, it was a very different world. People worked long hours, but there was a strong sense of community and everybody mucked in when needed.

I knew Bill (Redpath*) slightly then, of course, but not very well because he went away to war. We didn't really get together until afterwards and we married after the war had ended.

How has the landscape around the village changed?

Quite a lot of the features people remember have disappeared.

There used to be a pond where the Golden Close houses now stand. The stream ran down into it



Ducks on the pond, where Golden Close now stands: From David Griggs Photographic Archive

and there were sluice gates that controlled the water., up at Harelaw

The water powered work at the farm, and later at the sawmill. People used to open the sluices up there to release the water when it was needed.

The Glebe was different too. When we first came there was a small farm there and many of the buildings were already in poor condition. Looking at it now, it's hard to believe it's the same place.

There were stories as well

about an old mill. The field behind Brook Cottage was known as Mill Field and several people believed there had once been a mill there. When you see the amount of water running through that area, it certainly seems possible. You can understand why people think that when you look at the landscape.

Looking back, what do you remember most about the village, back then?

More than anything, I remember the people.

The village revolved around the farms, the church and the pub. People knew one another and



Sluice gates in Pond Wood, Harelaw: From David Griggs Photographic Archive

they knew one another's families. There was a strong sense of belonging.

Life wasn't always easy and people worked hard, but there was a closeness about the community that's difficult to describe. The village has changed enormously over the years, but when I think back, that's what I remember most clearly: the people, the friendships, and a way of life that has largely disappeared now.

**Recorded by David Griggs
in January 2023**

When we think of Peggy, we must also remember her husband Bill Redpath, one of the village's most colourful characters.

William Redpath

William (Bill) Redpath, born in 1918 in Chathill, was a pillar of Ellingham community. He spent his married life in the village, working as chauffeur to Sir Hugh Carnaby de Marie Haggerston (Lady Belinda's father) and was a distinguished war veteran. He enlisted in the

9th Battalion, Royal Northumberland Fusiliers in April 1939. His unit initially carried out coastal defence in Norfolk and later trained in the Scottish Borders before being sent overseas in late 1941.

The battalion sailed from Liverpool, joining Convoy William Sail 12X bound for the Far East. After stops in Trinidad, Cape Town and Mombasa, they reached Bombay, having travelled more than 17,000 miles by sea, before training at Deo-



lali Camp, India.

In January 1942 they boarded the Felix Roussel for Singapore. Japanese bombers attacked the convoy shortly before arrival, sinking the Empress of Asia and damaging the Felix

Roussel. They reached Keppel Harbour on 5 February 1942, just ten days before Singapore fell.

Following the surrender on 15 February, Bill was reported missing and later confirmed as a Prisoner of War, captured at Malcolm Road.

In November 1942 he was transported to Thailand with 630 other PoWs and forced to work on the Thailand–Burma Railway, laying sleepers and rails around Wang Pho, Tha Mayo and Nong Pladuk.

Bill was liberated on 12 September 1945 and flown to hospital in Rangoon. He was awarded the Pacific Star, War Medal and 1939–45 Star, and in July 1947 married Margaret (Peggy) Fife.

Bill will always be remembered in Ellingham. The apple tree was planted outside the Pack Horse in his memory, as a local character, a regular patron of the Pack Horse, and a devoted husband and family man.

More Than 40 Years of Farming

When Graham Simpson arrived to manage Ellingham Home Farm in 1984, he freely admits that he knew virtually nothing about arable farming. More than 40 years later, the farm has more than doubled in size, moved out of the village, embraced extraordinary advances in agricultural technology and diversified through everything from wild boar to pigs.

Graham E sat down with Graham S to look back over more than 40 years of change.

Graham E: Let's start at the beginning. When did you actually take over the farm?

Graham S: I started farming here in May 1984. I'd left the Army the month before and came up here to run the farm on behalf of my in-laws, initially as the farm manager. At that time of course, I had absolutely no experience of arable farming at all. You could have put me in a field of wheat or a field of barley and I wouldn't have been able to tell you the difference, so



there were certainly a few local people who thought I probably wouldn't last very long. "Three weeks" one local said! I'm glad to say that more than 40 years later I'm still here, and the farm is considerably larger and stronger than it was in those days.

Graham E: So, you arrive relatively "green" and suddenly you're responsible for managing a farm.

Graham S: I think my military background gave me a very strong grounding because, in the military, you're not necessarily expected to be the expert in everything, but you are expected to be able to take information from different sources, assess it and then make a decision. That's essentially what I did when I came here. I became a bit of a sponge for information, listening to advice from all sorts of people and then trying to sift through it and work out what was genuinely useful and what perhaps



The old farmyard, as it was in 2003, (above) with the new housing development superimposed (below)



wasn't.

I certainly didn't make every decision correctly, and of course I made mistakes, but I think I was reasonably good at listening, processing the information and then making up my own mind. The other advantage was that I came into farming with a completely fresh perspective. I wasn't constrained by methods or dogma that had existed within a farming family for generations, so in many ways I had a blank canvas. I could look at things and ask, "Why do we do it this way?" without already believing there was only one answer, and I think that helped enor-



mously.

Graham E: The farm you arrived at in 1984 was very different from the farm we see today?

Graham S: Well, it was considerably smaller. I can't remember the precise acreage now, but it was probably somewhere around 400 or 500 acres, and there were also a number of smaller parcels of land around the area that were being farmed by other people. Over time those gradually came back under our control, so the farm grew from those

400 or 500 acres to just over 1,000.

When I arrived, we also had quite a lot of sheep and a full-time shepherd. There had been cattle here too, although we didn't take those on, so the livestock side was really centred around the sheep. But the sheep lasted only about another five years, and eventually I had to accept two things. Firstly, I wasn't a particularly competent stockman and, secondly, the sheep simply weren't contributing enough to the viability of the business, so in the end they had to go.

Sadly, that also meant making our shepherd, Tom Smith, redundant, although fortunately he finished with me on the Friday, having received his redundancy package, and started another job on the Monday, so I think he came out of it reasonably happy. Tom was a great character and someone I had tremendous respect for, and I think he could see, as I could, that the sheep system simply wasn't working for us.

Graham E: Once you'd made that decision, presumably you started looking for other ways to develop the farm?

Graham S: Yes, we maximised the arable side as much as we could, and in those days arable farming was actually pretty good, certainly better than it is at the moment. Then I had what you might describe as the hare-brained idea of diversifying into wild boar. I had a friend down in Somerset who was farming them and I rather liked the idea, so we fenced off a field behind what is now the housing area and created a series of wild boar pens. One of the things I liked

about farming wild boar was that there really wasn't a textbook. Nobody quite knew what the hell we were doing, so we had to learn as we went along.

Steven Sprott, who quite a few people locally will know, helped me at the time. He'd had some experience with feral pigs in Australia, so at least he knew slightly more than I did about dealing with these rather wild animals. We had our fun though. One of the first boars I took to Alnwick for slaughter managed to escape in the middle of Alnwick, which caused a certain amount of entertainment. It got out of the back of the trailer and eventually we cornered it in some allotments near the old gasworks, opposite where Aldi is now. But we learnt as we went along and the enterprise actually became reasonably successful. We certainly weren't making a fortune out of it, but we were supplying wild boar to restaurants and other hospitality businesses around the area.

Graham E: And then foot-and-mouth arrived.

Graham S: Yes, in 2001. We didn't have an outbreak on the farm itself, but we were within a zone where there was a suspected outbreak and, because pigs are such effective spreaders of foot-and-mouth, the decision was made that all of ours had to be culled. That was really the end of the wild boar enterprise.

By that stage we had probably about 40 adults and another 80 to 100 offspring, including two rather large stud boars called Stalin and Boris. Stalin was definitely the

nasty one and you really wouldn't want to find yourself alone with him, whereas Boris was actually quite gentle, although he did have some extremely vicious-looking tusks.



Graham E: Eventually more livestock returned to the farm, though, for quite a different reason.

Graham S: Yes. As we became essentially an arable farm, one of the things we increasingly needed was organic matter because muck remains one of the best ways of improving the fertility and condition of the soil.

So in 2015 we invested quite heavily in building a couple of pig units. We rear pigs under contract for a group in Suffolk that supplies Morrison's and other outlets. They provide the pigs, while we provide the buildings, labour and straw and receive a fee for rearing them. Importantly for us, we also get the muck, which then goes back onto our own land every year, so it fits very well with the arable side of the business.

Graham E: Another major change came around that same period, when you moved the farmyard itself.

Graham S: Yes, by then it had become increasingly obvious that the old farmyard simply wasn't in the right place for a modern farming business. Farming had changed enormously, the machinery had become much bigger, and there was also far more movement of heavy vehicles associated with the farm, whether that was lorries delivering fertiliser, seed and other supplies or vehicles coming in to collect grain.

The village simply wasn't designed for that sort of traffic, so trying to get modern agricultural machinery and heavy lorries through village roads wasn't particularly good for us and, equally importantly, it wasn't ideal for the people living there either. From our point of view, the new site gave us the space to organise the machinery, grain storage and general movement of vehicles far more efficiently. Large lorries can now come in, deliver or collect and leave without having to negotiate their way through the village.

Moving the farmyard made all of that much easier for us, but at the same time it removed a considerable amount of heavy agricultural traffic from the village. So I think it was one of those situations where what made good business sense for the farm also had a very clear benefit for the local community.

Graham E: And there's been another transition taking place alongside all this. You're no longer necessarily the person sitting in the tractor every day.

Graham S: No, definitely not. In fact, I haven't driven one of the tractors for two or

three years now. Ollie has gradually taken on more and more of the day-to-day management and he is very much the hands-on farmer these days.

He's the one dealing with the crops, machinery and all the practical decisions that have to be made every day, and that in itself is increasingly demanding because farming has become so much more technical than it used to be. There's all the GPS, the precision farming, the variable seed rates, the yield mapping and all the technology built into the machinery, and Ollie and the team are the ones actually using that and making it work in practice.

I'm still very much involved in the business and there to support him, but my role has changed. I tend to deal with more of the paperwork and administration now, and I get involved where I'm needed, so there has been a gradual passing of responsibility from one generation to the next rather than any sudden handover.



Graham E: Technology is perhaps one of the biggest themes running through the story of the farm. I remember you building your own grain dryer being quite a significant one.

Graham S: Absolutely. Farming is a business and you have to understand where your money is going. I became very aware of just how much it was costing us to dry grain commercially because, up here, certainly historically, it was unusual to harvest grain at a sufficiently low moisture content to store it safely without drying it.

So we used to send it away to a commercial grain dryer and, apart from paying for the drying itself, there were also deductions for the weight lost during the process. Obviously everybody understands that grain loses weight as you remove moisture, but I felt the deductions being made were considerably greater than the true loss. When I sat down and worked it out, I reckoned that back in the early 1990s we were probably spending £20,000 to £30,000 a year more on grain drying than we really needed to. So we took the plunge and invested in our own system, and it is a decision I have never regretted.

We actually lost one dryer to a fire in about 1994, which was a bit of a setback, but we rebuilt it, and then when we eventually moved the farm steading from the old location to the new one, the grain dryer moved with us.

We're still using it today, although it has obviously been developed enormously over the years. Now there's effectively a magic box of tricks attached to it which monitors the grain going in and coming out and automatically changes the settings without human intervention. The technology is quite

extraordinary when you think about it.

Graham E: And machinery tells a similar story, doesn't it?

Graham S: Very much so. When I arrived, I had three tractors. One was about 36 horsepower and the other two were around 48 horsepower, whereas today I have two main tractors, one at 215 horsepower and the other at 250.

But it isn't simply a question of size. Modern tractors have fully automated steering and GPS systems that can take you repeatedly down a field within about two



centimetres of exactly the same line. Once you're lined up, you press a button and the tractor effectively takes over.

You're not really a tractor driver anymore, you're a machine operator, and you need to understand some pretty sophisti-

cated technology. Quite frankly, some of it is slightly beyond me now, which is another reason why Ollie and the chaps doing the hands-on work are so important. They understand that technology and use it to its full potential.

Graham E: I remember John Maxwell talked about how much land a man and a horse could plough in a day. Someone farming in that era would barely recognise what happens on a modern farm. today

Graham S: Absolutely not. And ploughing itself is a good example because we do far less of it now. A plough is very good at burying weeds and it still has an important place in the rotation, but it is incredibly hungry in terms of fuel and time.

We probably only plough a particular field once every five years now, principally to control weeds and volunteer crops, whereas for most cultivation we use minimum tillage. The thinking around soil has changed enormously because we now understand just how important soil structure is, and ploughing turns the soil completely over and disrupts that structure.

It also consumes an enormous amount of diesel, whereas with modern cultivation equipment we can cover ground vastly faster while using considerably less fuel. When I started, it wouldn't have been unusual to spend an entire day working a 20-acre field, whereas today we can cultivate and drill that same 20-acre field in a morning. That is an extraordinary change.

We use satellite imagery and we've had the whole farm mapped using specialist

equipment that measures the characteristics of the soil, things like its density, clay content and sand content.

From that information we can vary seed rates across an individual field, and we also analyse the fields for phosphate, potash and other nutrients every five years, which allows us to vary the amount of nutrients we apply. Then, when the combine goes through the field at harvest, it maps the yield, so we know where the good areas are and where the poorer areas are.

The really useful part is that you can then start asking why. Is there a nutrient problem? Is it the soil? Is there something else going on? All those different maps can now be overlaid, and ultimately what you're trying to do is achieve greater consistency across the whole field. That takes years, but that's really the holy grail and what we're working towards.

Graham E: Thinking about this technology, someone could almost come think farming has become easy, but that is a long way from reality, isn't it?

Graham S: You're absolutely right. If you had any sense, you probably wouldn't do it, but the trouble is we love it. We love working in the countryside and we love rising to the challenges.

The difficulty is that it can be incredibly disheartening because there is one enormous factor you simply cannot control, and that is the weather. You can do absolutely everything right, invest in the best

machinery, have the right spraying programme and the right fertiliser programme, and a crop can look absolutely magnificent, then the weather turns against you and suddenly a lot of that work can count for very little.

That's just farming. You can do everything you could and should have done and still end up with a disastrous harvest because it rains at the wrong time, or perhaps doesn't rain at all. That's why farmers have this reputation for constantly grumbling about the weather, and I think sometimes we're quite justified in doing so.



Graham E: And weather isn't the only uncertainty.

Graham S: No, then you add government policy into the equation and, without getting too political, there are times when we simply don't know where we stand. That makes running a long-term business even more challenging because you have to be constantly adapting to whatever circumstances present themselves, although I suppose that's also one of the things that keeps it interesting.

ELLINGHAM NEWSLETTER

Graham E: In your case, though, this isn't simply a business or a job. You're farming land that has been connected with the family for generations,

Graham S: Absolutely. Some of the land has been in Caroline's family since 1698, and I've always believed that we don't really own the land in the way people sometimes imagine. We're really custodians of it, looking after it for future generations, and I think that is how most people who have a long connection with land tend to see it. Farming is always about looking ahead, and I suppose my job has been to look after the land and the business, improve them where I could and hopefully leave them in good shape for the next generation.

Ollie is now very much the hands-on person taking that forward, while I'm still here to support him and keep an eye on the business from a slightly different angle. I may not be sitting in the tractor every day anymore, but there is certainly no shortage of paperwork to make sure I remain occupied.

Graham E: So after more than 40 years, despite everything, you still wouldn't swap it?

Graham S: No, because if it were only about the money, none of us would do it. There are easier ways to make a living, but farming gets under your skin. You become attached to the land, to the place and to the responsibility of looking after it properly, and once that happens I don't think it is something you can ever walk away from.

Edinburgh Fringe 2026 Top Jokes

Olaf Falafel: I remember thinking, as I taped a piranha to my boomerang, this could come back to bite me.

Richard Stott: To the person who stole my bank card and spent all my money on ancestry.com – you know who you are.

Scout Boxall: I like my men like I like my passwords – weak, easily compromised, barely distinguishable from each other.

Li Jin Hao: A friend said to me: ‘The last thing I wanna be is racist,’ and I was like: ‘Oh, so it’s on your list?’

Jenny Gorelick: I dated a magician – I was seeing him, now I don’t.

Sasha Nezlobin: My daughter is obsessed with climate change. She told me we have to stop using plastic completely. So I took away her credit card.

Chris Grace: The Trump administration is like the movie Oppenheimer – it’s full of weird white guys and halfway through you wish it would end early.

Anna Thomas: I’m having an awful time at the moment. The back of my car fell off and you’ll never guess what you can’t buy at a car boot sale.

Bella Hull: I lost my nail file, so I’ve just been using the pavement. As a method, it’s concrete.

Alex Kitson: I spent all day writing a joke about margarine and I can’t believe it’s not better.

Fil Milton: My brother convinced me to go halves on a used funeral car. I can’t believe I was so easily co-hearsed.

Bróccán Tyzack-Carlin: I’m looking for a new job. I walked past a mirror shop the other day and thought, ‘Ooh, I could see myself working there

**Draft Minutes of the of Ellingham Parish Council Meeting
held on Tuesday 21st July 2026 at 7.15pm in Ellingham Village Hall Ellingham**

Website: www.ellinghamparishcouncil.gov.uk

PRESENT: Chairman P Robson, Vice-Chairman O Simpson Parish Councillors Mrs J Thompson & G Unwin County Councillor G Renner-Thompson Clerk: Mrs I Hunter 1 member of public

Public Question Time: None

Apologies for Absence: None

Declarations of interest: None

Request for Dispensation: None

The Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 26th May 2026- Parish Councillors agreed that the minutes of the Annual Parish meeting held on 26th May 2026 were a true record of the meeting. The Chairman signed a hard copy of the minutes.

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Matters Arising: None

Min 315- Ellingham Neighbourhood Plan-

Parish Councillors considered the feedback from the Neighbourhood Plan meeting of Parish Councillors with the Planning Consultant.

Parish Councillors noted the £7700 + VAT fees from the Planning Consultant for the preparation and submission of the Ellingham Neighbourhood Plan.

Parish Councillors agreed that the Parish Council will ringfence £2K and the Clerk submit a £5700 funding application to Ellingham Community Trust to allow the Ellingham Neighbourhood Plan to be completed.

The Clerk to also contact Northumberland County Council Neighbourhood Planning Department to see if they can provide any financial support.

Parish Councillors agreed once the funding is confirmed the Clerk contact the Planning Consultant and ask her to progress the Neighbourhood Plan to the next stage.

Min 316- Financial Statement

Current Account £ 4734.84 Savings Account 945.99

Min 317- Receipts

Min 318- Accounts for payment- Parish Councillors agreed the following payments.

I Hunter £84.99 Annual Microsoft Subscription

I Hunter £120.07 Salary 13.5 hours @ £14.82 per hr

HMRC £80.00 PAYE

I Hunter £26.98 Expenses

Min 319- Highways/ Local Issues- updates-

The Chairman stated that the C69 road from Preston to Chathill had been resurfaced. However, the edges had not been filled which had left a large drop from the edge of the road to the verge.

Parish Councillors agreed the Clerk raise the issue with Northumberland County Council Highways Department.

Parish Councillors noted that sub-base type of material had been placed along the edge of the back road at Ellingham. Parish Councillors agreed to monitor the situation.

Min 320- Correspondence- Parish Councillors noted the following correspondence received.

Member of public-Emails- Swinhoe crossroads

NCC- Email- Update from Cabinet member for Highways

NCC- Email- feedback to the Parish Council's 3 priorities to the Local Transport Plan programme

NCC- Email- Neighbourhood Planning – Support Update for Parish Councils.

North Northumberland Voluntary Community Forum-Email- Request for nominations for Voluntary & Community Awards 2026 – by 31st July.

NCC- Email- Digital switchover update.

Resident- Email- Local issues.

Beadnell Parish Councillor- Email- Bus service update

Min 321- County Councillor report- County Councillor G Renner-Thompson provided the following update: Central Government have made changes to the planning system, as of October 2026 there will be no more Area Planning Committees, and County Councillors will lose their right to call planning applications into committee. Planning Officers will be determining nearly all planning applications.

Any other Urgent Business:

Min 322- Future Parish Council meetings- Parish Councillors agreed that the Clerk contact Ellingham Village Hall Committee again requesting that the Parish Council meetings be able to commence at 7pm, as the group using the hall before the Parish Council meetings finish at approx. 6.30pm.

Date of next Parish Council meeting 22nd September 2026 at 7.00pm.

If you have any pictures showing anything around the village, please send them to EllinghamViews @gmail.com

In Case You
Mised it
Pictures from Village Events



The Village BBQ was tremendously well attended— so well attended that the chefs had their work cut out dealing with the massive queues! Lee and Tom did a wonderful job with their harmonies, and well done everybody who helped!



The Leek Club Plant Sale, held along with the Coffee Morning was a great success too.





The Pack Horse Leek Club

Annual Show



Saturday 12 September 2026

This year the club is introducing a children's section. The theme is a Dinosaur made out of vegetables, it can be any size, shape or colour just let the little one's imagination show. I'm sure we will all look forward to seeing their exhibits.

The premature baby hats are always popular; we need lots of them to show and donate to the Premature Baby unit afterwards. So please give it a go.

There is always a good show of vegetables and flowers, for the non-growers there are cakes and jams to enter.

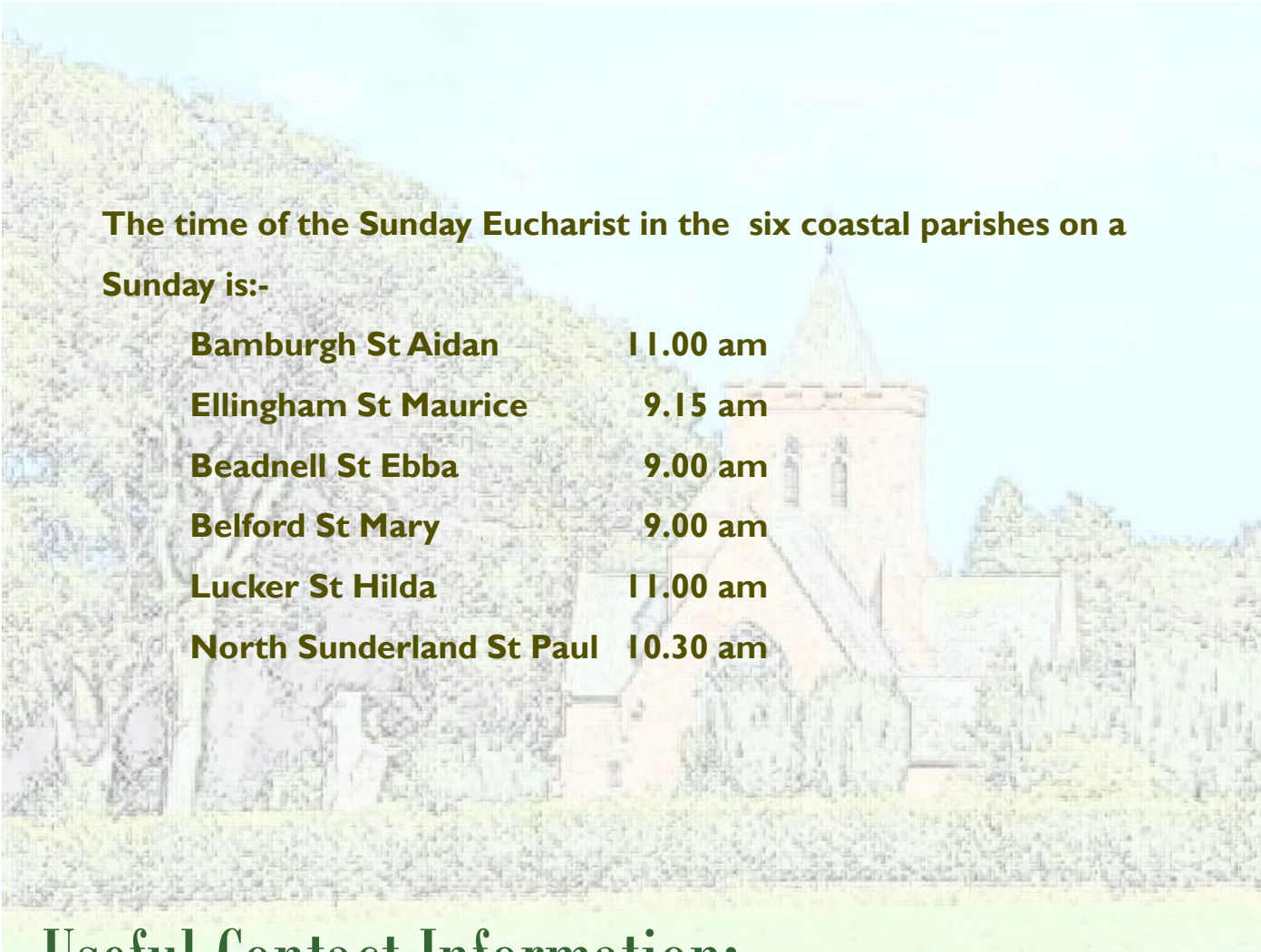
We would love to see as many exhibits as possible to make it a great show that is open to everyone.

Don't forget the Auction of vegetables, cakes, jams etc. at The Pack Horse Inn later in the evening – great fun!

The show is at Ellingham Village Hall key times are below:

10am - 12	Open for Entries
1.00pm	Judging
4.00pm	Open to Public when afternoon teas will be available
5.00pm	Presentation of prizes
9.30pm	Auction at the Pack Horse Inn

For further information on membership or the prize draw tickets please contact: Diana Milburn, 2 Golden Close, Ellingham or 07732 553931



The time of the Sunday Eucharist in the six coastal parishes on a Sunday is:-

Bamburgh St Aidan	11.00 am
Ellingham St Maurice	9.15 am
Beadnell St Ebba	9.00 am
Belford St Mary	9.00 am
Lucker St Hilda	11.00 am
North Sunderland St Paul	10.30 am

Useful Contact Information:

Churchwardens:

Dorothy Lightfoot : 01665 589463

Neil Mundy: 07712751100

Clerk to Parish Council:

Isobel Hunter email: ellinghampc@gmail.com

Ellingham Community Trust:

07841 437614 (Trustee Brenda Frier) email:

ellinghamcommunitytrust@gmail.com

Northumberland County Council: Guy Renner-Thompson

guy.renner-thompson@northumberland.gov.uk

North East Mayor (Public transport) Kim McGuinness

mayorsoffice@northeast-ca.gov.uk

Ellingham Village Hall:

07938 828699 email: admin@ellinghamvillagehall.com

All copy to the Editor (eileenduncan76@gmail.com) by 15th of the month. For non parishioners cost is £3.50 per year, payable to PCC Ellingham