ELLINGHAM NEWSLETTER

November 2026

£3.50 PER ANNUM

THIS MONTH

Development Plans for Ellingham

Report on TESS Trip to Namibia

Report from the School: Small School, Big Hearts

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As November arrives and the leaves begin to fall, Ellingham pauses once again to remember those who gave their lives in the service of their country. On the plaques in the church are familiar names which remind us of young men who once walked our lanes, worked in our fields, attended our church and shared in the everyday life of Ellingham.

They left behind families, friends and futures that would never be fulfilled. Remembrance Sunday offers us a moment to reflect not only on their courage and sacrifice, but also on the terrible cost of war. And as we remember the fallen of two World Wars, our thoughts turn to those suffering in conflicts today, from Ukraine and Gaza to Sudan and beyond. Their experiences remind us that the longing for peace is as urgent now as it was for previous generations.

In gathering together, wearing our poppies and observing the silence, we honour the past while renewing our hope for a more peaceful future. Their names endure, and so must our remembrance.

40p per copy

Delivered free to all parishioners, thanks to a grant from Ellingham Community Trust

www.ellinghamcommunitytrust.org



Remembrance, Faith and the Hope of Peace

Every November, we gather in churches, at war memorials and around village crosses to remember those who gave their lives in the service of their country. We stand in silence, lay wreaths of poppies and hear the familiar words, "We will remember them."

But what does it really mean to remember?

We Will Remember Them

By Graham Edmondson and Eileen Duncan

For many of us, Remembrance Sunday is deeply personal. We remember fathers, grandfathers, brothers and neighbours who fought in the two World Wars, and those who never returned. In villages like Ellingham, the names carved into our memorials are more than a record of history. They represent young lives interrupted, families changed forever, and futures that were never realised. Yet remembrance is about more than looking backwards.

As Christians, we are called not only to honour the sacrifices of the past, but also to recognise the suffering of people caught up in conflict today. The world may have changed enormously since 1918 and 1945, but the terrible human consequences of war remain painfully familiar.

In Ukraine, families continue to endure the destruction of their homes and communities. In Gaza, civilians have suffered unimaginable loss, while the wider Israeli-Palestinian conflict has left deep wounds on all sides. In Sudan, a devastating civil war has displaced millions, bringing hunger and suffering on an immense scale. Behind every headline are ordinary people: parents trying to protect their children, elderly people frightened to leave their homes, and young men and women whose lives have been overtaken by events beyond their control. They are not so different from the people whose names appear on our village memorials.

As we went to print, we received the following piece written by a reader of this magazine:



Northumberland Fusilier Lancelot Borrell lies buried in South Charlton Churchyard His father was the Schoolmaster in the village at that time. Lancelot's two brothers also were serving in the army at that time.

This made us think about how many families, including those from Ellingham had several sons and daughters serving, and how very difficult it must have been for the families who were left behind as they received very limited information from their sons and daughters whilst the number of reported casualties mounted. One Ellingham family received a letter from their son saying he was fine, days after receiving official confirmation that he had been killed in action.

So, as we remember the casualties, let us also remember the families left behind who lost their loved ones. And let us remember not only those who died in the wars of yesterday, but also those who suffer in the conflicts of today.

In Flanders Fields

by John McCrae

In Flanders fields the poppies blow
Between the crosses, row on row,
That mark our place; and in the sky
The larks, still bravely singing, fly
Scarce heard amid the guns below.

We are the Dead. Short days ago
We lived, felt dawn, saw sunset glow,
Loved, and were loved, and now we lie
In Flanders Fields.

Take up our quarrel with the foe:
To you from failing hands we throw
The torch; be yours to hold it high.
If ye break faith with us who die
We shall not sleep, though poppies grow
In Flanders Fields.



Sunday Rota - November 2026

All 9.15 Reader (R) Sidesman (S)

1st Nov All Saints Sunday

Miss E Duncan (R) Mrs D LighCoot (S) Red

8th Nov Remembrance Sunday

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

11th Nov Short Act of Remberance in Church 11.00am

15th Nov 2nd Sunday before Advent

Mrs D LighCoot (R) Mrs D LighCoot (S) Red

23rd Nov Christ the King/Sunday next before Advent

Morning Worship Red

29th Nov United Service at St Ebba's Beadnell 10.00am



Minutes of the of Ellingham Parish Council Meeting held on Tuesday 22nd September 2026 at 7pm in Ellingham Village Hall Ellingham

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

Public Question Time: None

Apologies for Absence: Parish Councillor Mrs J Thompson

Declarations of interest: None

Request for Dispensation: None

The Minutes of the Parish Council Meeting held on 21st July 2026- Parish Councillors agreed that the minutes of the Parish Council meeting held on 21st July 2026 were a true record of the meeting. The Chairman signed a hard copy of the minutes.

Matters Arising: None

Min 323- Ellingham Neighbourhood Plan-

The Chairman advised the meeting he had spoken to his contact at Ellingham Community Trust in relation to funding for the Neighbourhood Plan and it has been agreed if the consultancy fees could be reduced by 50% they would cover some of the consultancy fees to allow the Ellingham Neighbourhood Plan to be completed.

Parish Councillors agreed the Clerk contact the Planning Consultant and ask if she could reduce her fees by 50%.

Min 324- Annual Review of Clerk's salary

Parish Councillors noted the Local Government Services pay agreement for 2026/27. The Clerk is on SPC 12 - £15.31 per hour gross

Parish Councillors agreed the payment of 22.5 hours @ 0.49p per hour back pay due to the Clerk for hours worked since 1st April 2026.

Parish Councillors agreed to review the Clerk's salary at the January meeting as part of the budget setting process.

Min 325- Financial Statement

Current Account	£ 6,407.79
Savings Account	£ 948.47

Parish Councillors agreed that the Current A/c to held at approx. £1k, and the additional funds to be placed in the Savings A/c. The Clerk to monitor the Current A/c bank balance to ensure it does not drop below £1k

Min 326- Receipts

Barclays Bank	£ 2.48	Saving A/c – Interest
Northumberland CC	£1,900.00	½ Annual precept

Min 327- Accounts for payment- Parish Councillors agreed the following payments.

I Hunter	£ 137.60	Salary 14.25 hours @ £15.31 per hr + back pay.
HMRC	£ 91.60	PAYE

Min 328 – Planning Applications: Parish Councillors ratified the Parish Council's response of "No Objections" to the following planning application.

26/02782/PRUTPO- Tree Preservation Order application: Yew tree hedgerow reduce the height to 2m. Ellingham Hall, Milking Parlour Ellingham Hall Lane Ellingham Northumberland NE67 5EY

Parish Councillors considered the following planning applications

26/02885/REM- Reserved matters application for (Appearance, landscaping, Layout and Scale) on approved application 22/04258/OUT for the erection of a single residential dwelling- Beech Cottage Hagg View Lane Ellingham Chathill Northumberland NE67 5FF.
Parish Councillors agreed to submit no objections to the above planning application.

26/02888/REM- Reserved matters application for (Appearance, layout, landscaping,
and Scale) on approved application 22/04259/OUT for the erection of 2 dwellings- Beech Cottage Hagg View Lane Ellingham Chathill Northumberland NE67 5FF
Parish Councillors agreed to submit no objections to the above planning application.

Min 329- Consultations

Parish Councillors agreed not to respond to the current Northumberland County Council consultation on its draft Gambling Licensing Policy (its local 'Statement of Principles').

Parish Councillors agreed not to respond to the current Northumberland County Council consultation on a new countywide Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) relating to the consumption of alcohol in public places.

Min 330- Highways/ Local Issues- updates-

The Chairman stated that the C69 road from Preston to Chathill had been resurfaced, markings reinstated and the edges had been filled.
However, there is a bump on the road on the corner at Preston when heading south which means drivers must go round the corner on the wrong side of the road. The Clerk agreed to report the issue on Fix my street.
County Councillor G Renner-Thompson advised the meeting that a resident had been in contact with him about the speed on the C69 at Preston and visibility when entering the C69.

Min 331- Conclusion of Annual Audit 2025/26

Parish Councillors agreed that the Annual Audit for 2025/26 is now concluded.
Parish Councillors agreed that the Parish Council's 2025/26 Annual Accounts are now approved.

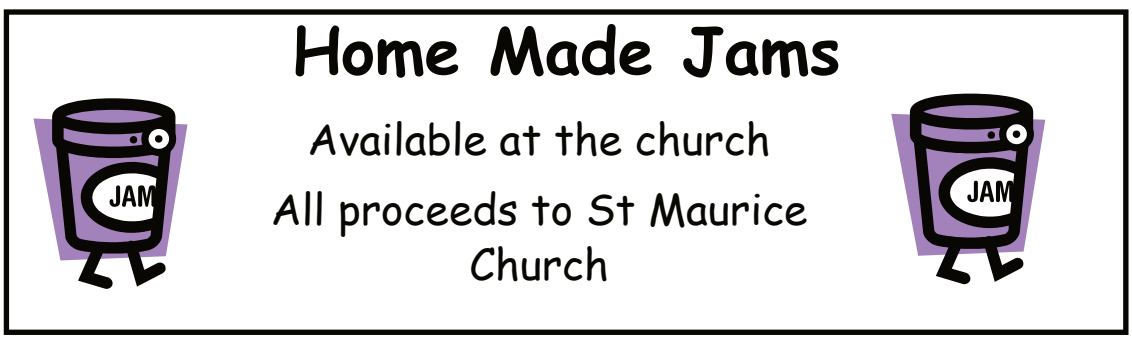
Min 332- Correspondence- Parish Councillors noted the following correspondence received.

NCC- Email- Reply to Parish Council's question re C69
NCC- Email- Update Digital switchover as of January 2027.
NCC- Email- Invite to Town & Parish Council conference on 8th October
NCC- Email- Northumberland Libraries August Newsletter.
NCC- Email- Northumberland Local Plan update.
NCC- Email- Letter from Leader inviting Town & Parish Councils to attend the annual conference on 8th October.
Ellingham Village Hall- Email- Invite to First Aid course on 2nd October.
NCC- Email- Reports from recent Town & Parish Council Liaison Working Group

Min 333- County Councillor report- County Councillor G Renner-Thompson advised the meeting that he had no further updates

Any other Urgent Business: None

Date of next Parish Council meeting 17th November 2026 at 7p.m.
In the Ellingham Village Hall, Ellingham.



Development in Ellingham?

Eight areas of land across Ellingham parish have been identified as potentially suitable for housing development, with a combined capacity of 115 new homes — 80 around Ellingham village and 35 in Chathill. Nothing has been approved, but the scale of what is being considered raises important questions about the future of our communities.

The possibility of new housing development in Ellingham has become an increasingly important issue for our community. With the Government seeking a substantial increase in housebuilding across England, Northumberland County Council is examining where additional homes might be built over the coming years.

For a small rural parish such as ours, the implications could be significant. New homes might bring new families, support local services and help younger people remain in the area. Equally, substantial development could place pressure on local infrastructure and alter the character of villages that have evolved gradually over many generations.

The starting point for understanding what might happen is something called the Housing and Economic Land Availability Assessment, or HELAA.

What exactly is the HELAA?

The HELAA is an assessment undertaken by Northumberland County Council to identify land that might potentially be suitable for housing or employment development.

Landowners, developers and other interested parties can put forward sites for consideration. The Council then assesses them against a range of criteria, including suitability, availability and achievability.

Crucially, inclusion in the HELAA does not mean that a site has planning permission, or even that it will eventually be developed.

The assessment is an evidence-gathering exercise. It helps the Council understand what land might be available as it prepares its new Local Plan, which will determine where development should be encouraged, restricted or prevented.

There are several stages between identifying a possible development site and granting permission for houses to be built.

What has been identified in Ellingham?

The assessments that we examined identified four sites in Ellingham itself, with an indicative combined capacity of approximately 80 homes.



All four were assessed as amber rather than green. This is an important distinction, suggesting that there are matters requiring further consideration before the sites could be regarded as straightforward development opportunities.

An amber assessment does not necessarily rule out development, but neither should it

be interpreted as an endorsement.

For Ellingham, the prospect of 80 additional homes would represent a substantial change. The village's character is shaped by its relatively modest scale, surrounding countryside and established pattern of development.

Any proposals would inevitably raise questions about access, traffic, drainage, the availability of services and the extent to which new building could be accommodated without fundamentally changing the village.

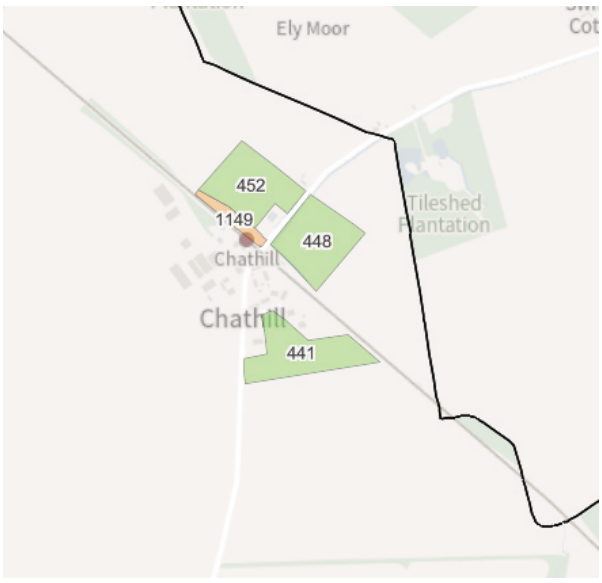
There is also the question of housing need. Would additional homes provide opportunities for local families and younger residents, or would they primarily attract buyers from elsewhere? The answer would depend on the nature, size and affordability of whatever housing was eventually proposed.

And what about Chathill?

It is important not to overlook Chathill, which forms part of our parish.

The assessments identified four further sites in Chathill, with an indicative combined capacity of approximately 35 homes.

Three of these sites were assessed as green, with one amber.



A green assessment suggests that a site has performed more favourably against the HELAA criteria. However, it does not mean that planning permission has been granted or that development is inevitable.

For Chathill, as for Ellingham, the issue is not simply how many houses might be built, but where they would be located, how they would connect to the existing settlement and what impact they might have on the surrounding community.

What do the figures add up to?

Taken together, the eight sites examined across Ellingham and Chathill have an indicative capacity of 115 homes. They cover approximately 13.25 hectares, of which around 10.66 hectares were assessed as potentially developable.

These figures should be treated with considerable caution. They are not a housing target for the parish, nor do they represent an approved programme of construction.

Indeed, the Council may ultimately decide that some of the sites are inappropriate for inclusion in the new Local Plan. Others could be considered suitable only for development on a smaller scale.

Nevertheless, the figures demonstrate why residents should take an interest in the planning process now, rather than waiting until individual applications are submitted.

The importance of the Neighbourhood Plan

This brings us to another important development: the preparation of an Ellingham Neighbourhood Plan.

Neighbourhood planning provides an opportunity for local communities to influence how their area develops. Once properly prepared, examined and approved

through the required process, a Neighbourhood Plan becomes part of the statutory development plan used to determine planning applications.

It cannot simply prevent all future development, nor can it override national planning policy. However, it can establish locally appropriate policies on matters such as the location and design of housing, protection of valued green spaces, local character and community facilities.

For Ellingham and Chathill, this could be particularly valuable.Rather than responding separately to individual development proposals, the parish has an opportunity to consider what sort of development, if any, would be appropriate, where it might best be accommodated and what safeguards should be put in place.

The Parish Council has already been progressing work on the Neighbourhood Plan, including discussions about securing the funding needed to complete it. The success of that process will depend not simply on the work of councillors and consultants, but on the participation of residents.

Development: opportunity or threat?

It would be easy to portray new housing entirely as a threat to village life. But the reality is more complicated.

Rural communities need to remain living communities. Without opportunities for younger families, villages risk becoming increasingly expensive and less socially diverse. New residents can help sustain schools, businesses, community organisations and local services.

On the other hand, development that is poorly located, badly designed or disproportionate to the size of a settlement can cause lasting harm.

The challenge is to find the right balance.

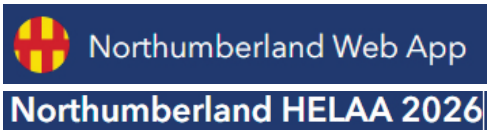
For Ellingham and Chathill, that means asking some fundamental questions. How much development could our communities reasonably accommodate? What types of homes are actually needed? Could existing roads and infrastructure cope? And how do we protect the landscape and rural character that make this such an attractive place to live?

These are not questions that can be answered by a traffic-light assessment on a Council spreadsheet.

What happens next?

The HELAA is only one stage in a much longer planning process. Northumberland County Council will use its evidence to inform the preparation of the new Local Plan, and there should be opportunities for public consultation as that work progresses.

In the meantime, the Ellingham Neighbourhood Plan offers an important opportunity for residents to make their views known and help shape the future of the parish. There is no reason for alarm simply because land has been identified as potentially developable. But there is every reason to be informed, involved and prepared to contribute.



https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/NorthumberlandCountyCouncil/media/Planning-and-Building/planning%20policy/Studies%20and%20Evidence%20Reports/Housing%20Studies/HELAAFrequentlyAskedQuestions.pdf

The Pack Horse Leek Club

Some of our 2026 Leek Show winners



Louise Tait



John Dobson



Sylvia Alder



Gerald Milburn

The winner of the October Draw: Neil Mundy

AGM

The Leek Club will be holding their

Annual General Meeting

on Wednesday 18th November

at 7.30pm in Ellingham Village Hall.

All welcome

The Pack Horse Leek Club



Tuesday 15th December

Ellingham Village Hall

7pm for 7.30pm eyes down

Come along and enjoy, bring your own refreshments.

Our Christmas raffle prizes include :

M&S Hamper

Meat voucher from Turnbulls of Alnwick

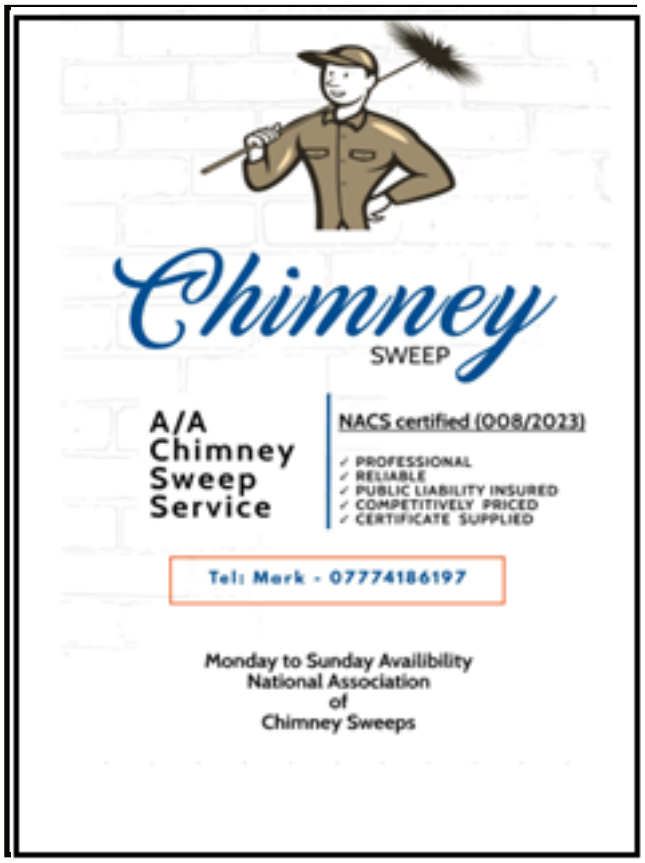
Meal voucher for The Pack Horse

Fruit Cake

Bottle of whisky

and many other prizes.

The Pack Horse Inn
Ellingham



Carpe Vitam Yoga

Yoga classes are running in Ellingham Village Hall

Yoga is for everyone and we would love to welcome you to our

Thursday morning session at 9:30am

Tuesday evening 6-7pm

'Seize your Life' and come and join us in **Ellingham Village Hall**

Come with a mat or I have some to buy- **Contact Karen on:**

Karenmundy@icloud.com

W:CarpeVitamYoga.uk

E:CarpeVitam.yoga@gmail.com

Preston Tower

One of the few survivors of 78 Border Pele Towers listed in 1415

Two rooms are furnished in contemporary style. Maps, ballads and stories explain the grim way of life under threat of Border Reivers.

Open all year daily
10 am - 6 pm
Admission £4.00
(children 50p :
concess & parties
£1.50

EVH

ELLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL

Come and join in! From Art to TaiChi to Craft Workshops.

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Find us on Facebook and Instagram

ELLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL TRUST
SEPTEMBER MANAGEMENT MEETING MINUTES

Attendees – EVHT management meeting

1. G Macleod, C Stevenson, G Duncan, Jayne Dobson and R McKibbin.
2. Apologies: G Edmondson, E Duncan.

Conflicts of interest and safeguarding

1. Nothing to report.

Approval of Minutes

1. The minutes of the 11 August 2026 meeting were approved and signed by GM.

Matters arising

1. It was agreed that we will cancel our MPLC Umbrella Licence.

Treasurers report

1. The EVH fundraising target budget for 2025/25 (£8,750) has been achieved. Hall hire income is running behind forecast at 59% for the first 10 months.
2. Income and expenditure totals to 31 August 2026 were £2,450.09 (mostly from the Rummage Sale £234.75 respectively.

New extension

1. We have raised the sum required for the construction of the village hall extension.
2. We agreed to appoint Tim Brook RIBA as our architect.
3. We are now in the process of securing funding to cover the architect's fee and statutory fees such as Building Control approval.
4. The intention is to commence the works early in 2027 and finished by April 2027 to allow any landscape work time to settle/grow before an early summer wedding booking.

Policy updates

1. The business plan is due to be reviewed and updated.

Hallmark 3

1. GM will submit the first draft of the Hallmark 3 pro-forma to the Hallmark assessors who will then decide if they need to visit the hall.

AOB

1. The use of the additional storage space that will be provided by the new extension was discussed. It was agreed that RMcK would mark out the footprint of the new storage area on the hall floor so that interested committee members could assess the various options on 27 September at 10.00am.
2. EVHT management meeting ended at 9.45am.

ELLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL TRUST
SEPTEMBER SUBGROUP MINUTES

Attendees – EVH sub-group feedback meeting

1. G Macleod (T), C Stevenson (T), G Duncan (T), Jayne Dobson (T), R McKibbin (T), A Hunt (V), J Rose (V) and I Stephenson (V)
2. Apologies: G Edmondson (T) E Duncan (T).

Bookings & marketing

1. GM will approve the 18th birthday party booking on 3 October 2026 with the proviso that the hall booking is made by an adult. As the booking person is local to Ellingham the hourly rate will be 50% of the full rate.
2. Our Hire Agreement will be checked/amended to ensure it states EVH is only able to accept bookings from those 18 and over.

Rummage Sale review

1. The day was very successful – well done all involved (esp. A Hunt).
2. Future thoughts:

    A ‘secure’ holding space for people who are buying multiple items.

    Fewer drop off sessions.

    Reduce the opening time to 10.00 – 13.00.

    Removal of left over items to third parties went well.

Parking for the first couple of hours caused some local issues. This will always be a problem for events with large numbers.

Possible use of 'sold' signs for some larger items.

The use of two card machines was very helpful.

Events

1. The next coffee morning will be on 31 October 2026 when the Seahouses Village choir will sing. All takings will go to a charity chosen by the choir. The 12 December 2026 coffee morning will also accept food donations for the Alnwick Food Bank.
2. The next Quiz night will be 15 October 2026.
3. 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 now cost £70/person and will run from 10.00 to 16.00. There will be no lunch provided only tea/coffee.
4. Stained glass baubles workshop on 7 Nov 2026 (am) with stained glass 'Robin' (pm). Hall hire offered at £15/hour.
5. Christmas Fair: 15 November 2026 - £40/table. JD confirmed that 11 tables are now confirmed, which is a full house. The event will run from 10.00 to 14.30 and 3 volunteers are required to help. Road signs will go out at the beginning of November. Christmas decorations will be erected and mulled wine and tea/coffee will be available.
6. Wreath making run by Vanessa Wellock on 28 Nov 2026 (12 places booked for the morning session and 6, so far, for the afternoon session).
7. Potential nature pyramid/paper lantern session with date to be finalised by GD. Final decision to be made in October 2026.
8. A pantomime (Beauty and the Beast) will run on 29 December 2026. Digital poster to be circulated. EVH will be charged £500 and tickets will be sold at £12 for adults), £8 for children. Entry will be free for 4 year-olds and under. The bar will be open.

Landscaping

1. Nothing to report.

AOB: None

Date of next meeting: 20 October 2026 at 9.00am

WHAT'S ON AT ELLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL?



STAINED GLASS CHRISTMAS DECORATION

Saturday, Nov 7th,
9am -12 noon

Make a decoration such as an angel or tree. £55.



STAINED GLASS ROBIN MOSAIC

Saturday, Nov 7th
1pm - 5pm

Make a Christmas robin mosaic for your tree or window. £45.

To book either of the workshops above go to the organiser:
simplysmallholding.co.uk



QUIZ NIGHT

Thursday, Nov 19th
7.30pm - 10pm

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

All details of events and regular activities can be found on the website:
ellinghamvillagehall.com

admin@ellinghamvillagehall.com or phone: **07938 828699**

WHAT'S ON AT ELLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL?



WREATH MAKING WORKSHOP

Saturday, Nov 28th
10.30am or 1.30pm

All materials provided: £55
Very popular - will sell out.

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY
DETAILS TO FOLLOW

Tuesday, December 15th, evening
The Pack Horse Leek Club Christmas Bingo

Thursday, December 17th, 7.30 - 10pm
Village Hall Christmas Quiz

Saturday, December 12th, evening.
Wynne Productions present **'The Pitmen Painters'** by playwright Lee Hall (Billy Elliot), celebrating the work of the Ashington Group of painters, a small society of artists from Ashington, composed largely of mine workers. Bar and food by Carnaby's. All profits go to a hospital charity in Uganda.

Tuesday, December 29th (time tbc).
Northumberland Theatre Company presents **'Beauty and the Beast'.** Family Christmas pantomime. Bar and refreshments.

All details of events and regular activities can be found on the website: ellinghamvillagehall.com

admin@ellinghamvillagehall.com or phone: **07938 828699**

REGULAR ACTIVITIES AT ELLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL

Come and join one of the regular activities, exercise classes or craft sessions at the hall. Everyone is welcome. Check latest details on the website: ellinghamvillagehall.com

Book the hall for your own party, business meeting or family event through the website. Parishioners receive a 50% discount on hall hire charges.

If you are not already on our 'What's On' email list then send a message to: admin@ellinghamvillagehall.com



TABLE TENNIS

Mondays 4 - 6pm

Great exercise and competitive fun with no age limit.

Contact:
Gus Macleod on 07896 595082



KNIT 'N' STITCH

First Tuesday of the month
1.30 - 3.30pm

Enjoy an afternoon in good company on wide range of creative projects, share tips, enjoy some cake and a chat. No need to book - just turn up.

admin@ellinghamvillagehall.com or phone: **07938 828699**



ART CLASS

Fourth Tuesday of the month
1.30 - 4.30pm

No experience or talent required - just come and have a go.

Contact: Ian Stephenson on 07740 638733



YOGA

Tuesday evenings 6 - 7pm or Thursdays 9.30 - 11am.

Yoga with Carpe Vitam.
A great all rounder.

Contact: Karen Mundy
Karenmundy@icloud.com



TAI CHI

Wednesdays 6 -7pm

Everyone, including beginners, welcome.

Occasional changes to timetable so please contact:
Enid Scott on 07951 438561



QUIZ NIGHTS

Third Thursday of the month (except June, July & August)
7.30 - 10pm

Bring your friends, drinks and snacks. Just turn up.

Everyone welcome.

admin@ellinghamvillagehall.com or phone: **07938 828699**

ELLINGHAM COMMUNITY TRUST MINUTES 3 SEPTEMBER 2026 AT ELLINGHAM VILLAGE HALL

ATTENDEES: David Metcalfe (DM) Chair, John Thompson (JT) Vice Chair, George Unwin (GU), Brenda Frier (BF) Trustees, Louis Fell Treasurer, Virginia Mayes-Wright (VMW) Clerk

1) **APOLOGIES:** Judy Glover (JG), Graham Edmondson (GE)

2) The Trustees reviewed the minutes from the previous meeting held on 6th August 2026.

ACTION : JG to pass a couple of Welcome Pack leaflets to each of Community Contacts. **Ongoing.**
ACTION : LF to confirm applicants to suppliers. **Ongoing.**
ACTION : DM to write Chairman's Report. **Ongoing.**
ACTION : Clerk to create Parish Magazine article and Website case study. **Ongoing.**

3) Treasurer's Report.

LF presented the Treasurer's Report. LF noted that although the finances look healthy, expenditure in the coming period will include the Solid Fuel Scheme and the ongoing Village Hall grant. The Trustees discussed the financial position and noted that this is the lowest point for the Trust's finances as noted in the 5 year forecast. The Trustees thanked LF for the financial reports. **ACTION : LF to produce a 5 year financial forecast for the AGM.**

4) Applications/Review of Schemes

Grants/Applications In Progress
Long Nanny – The Clerk noted a request for funding for removal of Giant Hogweed from the Long Nanny. The Trustees discussed the application, and the benefit to the community. The Trustees expressed that further information on level of funding and an action plan was needed before a final decision could be made. **ACTION : Clerk to contact applicant requesting an Action Plan and indication of funding requested.**
Photographic Archive – The Clerk reported receipt of a request for funding associated with the Photographic Archive project. Trustees discussed the funds requested and approved the funding. **ACTION : Clerk to inform applicant Photographic Archive applicant.**
The Chair suggested the applicant should be approached to become a formal part of Ellingham Community Trust in the role of 'Parish Archivist'. This would ensure that the project could continue within allocated funds. **ACTION : Clerk to arrange support for the project.**
Neighbourhood Plan – the Trustees noted receipt of an acknowledgment email and await further information.
Solid Fuel Scheme – the Trustees discussed the progress of the scheme, and any outstanding queries. **ACTION : Clerk to update Solid Fuel Scheme with latest info and email LF. ACTION : Clerk to inform applicants when LF provides information. ACTION : Clerk to add info to form about new residents.**
Green Scheme – GU reported two Green Scheme applications being considered at the moment. **ACTION : Clerk to contact an applicant to advise the applicant of the policy.**
TESS – No new applications in the period.

5) AGM Arrangements.
The Clerk noted that AGM notice didn't make Parish Magazine owing to communication error. **ACTION : Clerk to ensure AGM advert is in the Newsletter.**
The Clerk asked for feedback on the draft consultation.

ACTION : Trustees to review draft consultation suggestions to Clerk by 11th Sept.
ACTION : Clerk to post consultation by 18th Sept.

6) Communication
The Clerk suggested focusing on the Consultation this month. **ACTION : Clerk to post information on the consultation on the website & draft for Social Media. ACTION : BF to post on Social Media**

7) AOB. The Trustees congratulated BF for her nomination for the Lady Rose Crossman Lifetime Achievement Award.

ARRANGEMENTS FOR NEXT MEETINGS: 1st October 2026, 5th November 2026 and AGM, 3rd December 2026. All at Ellingham Village Hall.

Minutes compiled by : Virginia Mayes-Wright. It is noted that a full version of these minutes and all others are available at www.ellinghamcommunitytrust.org.

ECT telephone number – 07841437614 (Trustee Brenda Frier)

ECT
ELLINGHAM COMMUNITY TRUST

Annual General Meeting 2026

Ellingham Community Trust's
Annual General Meeting

5th November 2026 at 7pm
(coffee from 6.45)
at Ellingham Village Hall.

Save the date, and come along to find out more about the work of Ellingham Community Trust.

For more information visit www.ellinghamcommunitytrust.org

Ellingham Community Trust TESS Scheme offers applicants the opportunity to study, full time education or a training courses, at a higher or further education establishment, or youth activities that promote health and wellbeing.

A recent applicant, Catherine Metcalfe, from Chathill, spent time in Namibia. Here is her story.

Training, Education and School Support Scheme (TESS) a Case Study

Hi, my name is Catherine Metcalfe and this summer I spent 2 weeks in Namibia as part of a World Challenge expedition that was organised through my school. I just wanted to share some of my experiences and thank the Ellingham Community Trust that supported me through the Training, Education and School Support Scheme (TESS).

The World Challenge expedition to Namibia is a student-led trip focused on wildlife conservation, cultural immersion, leadership development, and trekking across Namibia's landscape.

As part of a conservation initiative and cultural immersion, we visited a local boarding school to meet the local children, painted a library, and visited the local area to see how people support themselves and their family, such as fixing up cars and growing plants. Alongside this, we built a protective wall and water pump system to protect the pump from being damaged by passing wildlife and in turn help conserve water.

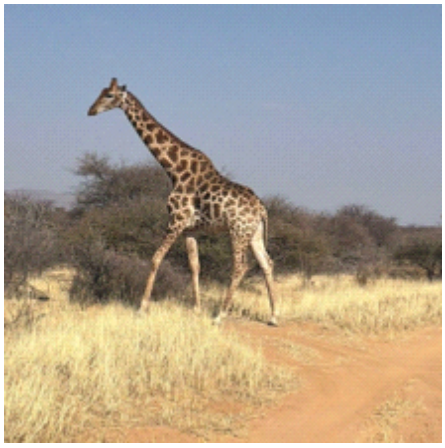


We also went to an elephant conservation society to learn how we could protect and prevent the elephants from poaching to help conserve the species and reduce the risk of further endangerment. It was as a very eye-opening experience which will stay with me for the rest of my life.

Additional experiences were taken during the trip. We went trekking in Spitzkoppe mountains where we were able to get up close with zebras that were free roaming in a valley.

This was amazing and one of my favourite parts of the trip. On some of these mountains, we were able to see historic artwork from the San people, which was very cool to see. Whilst there, we experienced sleeping at a campsite in the desert where we had very clear views of the Milky Way and spent a lot of evenings stargazing.





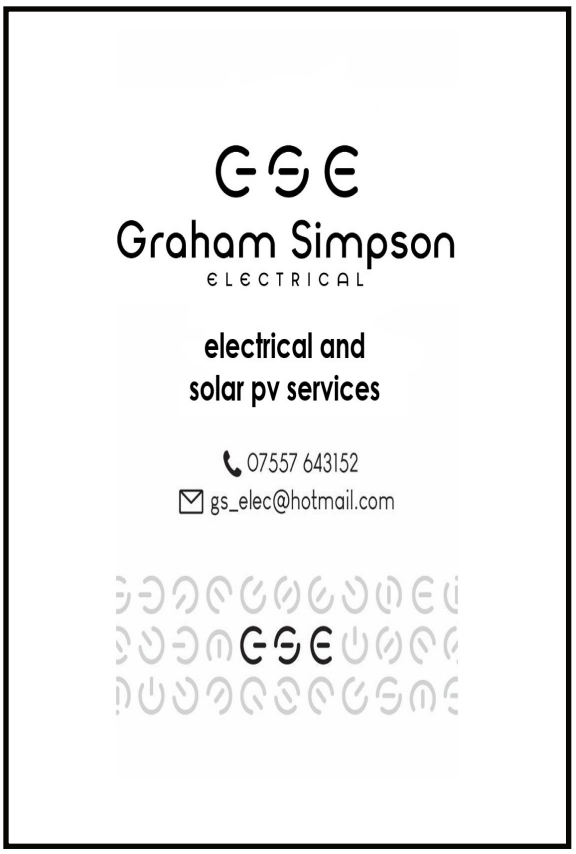
We saw giraffes on the side of the road as we travelled between different locations, which was another amazing experience. Near the end of the trip, we visited Swakopmund, which is located near the coast, and explored the local craft markets. Finally, on the last day, we went on a safari and saw a family of rhinos alongside other local wildlife such as antelopes, warthogs and a baby giraffe. It was an amazing time.

I learnt a lot about conservation, teamwork and resilience and came home with a greater appreciation for the natural world. I want to say thank you again to the Trust for providing support which allowed me to have these life-changing experiences.

Catherine Metcalfe







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The Church WhatsApp Group

The vicar announced that the church WhatsApp group was being closed.

Apparently, it had become toxic, divisive and full of people expressing opinions they would never dare voice face-to-face.

The PCC immediately agreed to return to its traditional method of communication. Talking about each other behind their backs.

The AI Sermon

The vicar admitted he'd started using ChatGPT to write his sermons. "It's extraordinary," he said. "It produces a beautifully structured, uplifting sermon in about thirty seconds."

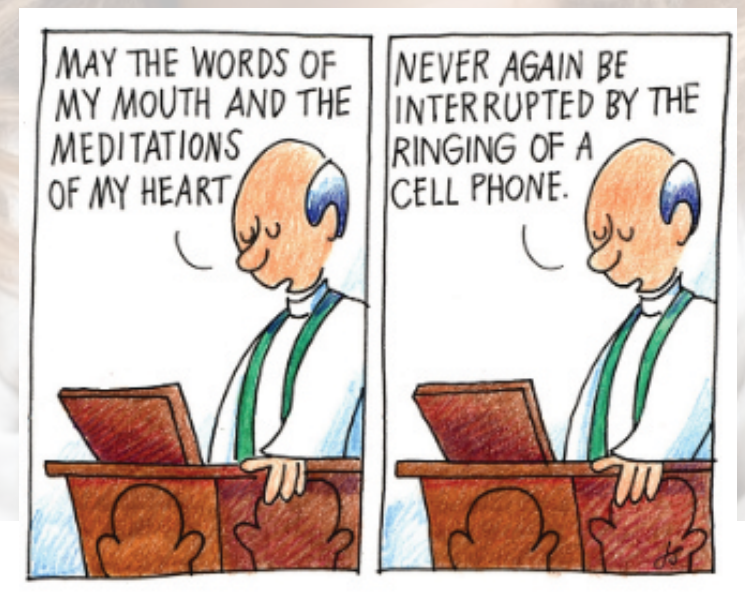
"That's wonderful," said the churchwarden. "Can you ask it to make them thirty seconds long as well?"

The Church Facebook Page

The vicar posted a lovely photograph of the church at sunset.

He captioned it: "A place of peace, reflection and harmony."

Within twenty minutes, 37 people were arguing in the comments about who was responsible for cutting the grass.



Knowing Me, Knowing You

It's the best I can do.

Matthew and Charlotte Simpson

This month, we are chatting with Matthew and Charlotte Simpson, who live at Glebe Farmhouse with their three-year-old daughter Florence. Matthew was born and raised in Ellingham of course, but, rather remarkably, has returned to the very house where his life began. Charlotte grew up in rural Scotland before spending much of her working life in London. We chatted about how it's changed over the years, and why they've chosen to make it their home.



Graham: Matthew, I suppose the obvious place to start is the rather extraordinary fact that you're now living in the house where you were born. How did that come about?

Matthew: Yes, it's quite something, really. When Mum and Dad first moved up from the south to take over Home Farm, Glebe was the first house they lived in, and I was born here. In fact, the bedroom Charlotte and I now use was my very first bedroom. We moved to Home Farm when I was about 18 months old, so I don't actually remember living here. But when we started thinking about coming back to Ellingham, The Glebe Farmhouse suddenly came onto the market. It had passed through quite a few different owners over the years, so the timing was extraordinary. We came to see it the same day.

Charlotte: A friend sent us the link, and we couldn't quite believe it. I'd always loved the house. We got married in St Maurice's Church, so I'd walked past the house so many times and thought how lovely it was. It really did feel like fate.

We moved here in March 2025, and it's such a beautiful little corner of the village, tucked away near the church. And of course, for Matthew, there's that lovely connection with his childhood. We're now raising Florence in the house where he was born.

Graham: What was Ellingham like when you were growing up, Matthew?

Do you remember it being any different from today?

Matthew: It was a fantastic childhood, actually. Home Farm was still a working farmyard, and all my early memories are of the farmhouse and farmyard, which is now Carnaby Drive and Maxwell Drive.

We were always outside, riding bikes, climbing trees, building dens in the woods and exploring the fields. There was a tremendous amount of freedom. It was pretty awesome, really. There weren't that many children in the village, although there were the Edmondsons and a few others. The village is probably twice the size it was when I was growing up though.

I remember the old green Village Hall very well. Derek Gerrard used to run Youth Club there, and we had great fun. It was all pretty basic compared with the new hall, but we loved it.

And the pub was a big part of village life, just as it is now. I remember when Malcolm and Carol ran it. Carol used to give me lollipops, and there was a pool table. I remember drinking those little bottles of Orangina. It's lovely that Florence can enjoy the pub now too. She absolutely loves going there! And it's still a great place for people to get together, particularly on a Friday evening. It's so good that it is so welcoming of kids.



Looking back, it was a wonderful way to grow up, and it's exactly the sort of childhood we'd like Florence to have.

Graham: You've certainly travelled a fair way from Ellingham since then. Tell us a little about what you did in the intervening years.

Matthew: After school in Alnwick, I took a gap year doing charity work in Southern Africa, then studied History and Politics at Manchester University. After that I went to Sandhurst and joined the Welsh Guards. I served two tours in Afghanistan, in 2009 and 2012. I was only 24 when I first deployed, responsible for 30 men in combat, so that certainly made me grow up quickly. There were some rather different experiences too, including ceremonial duties at Buckingham Palace, Windsor and the Tower of London, carrying the Colour in Moscow and taking part in William and Kate's wedding.

After leaving the Army, I spent a short time in investment banking before retraining as a barrister. I practised in London before joining a Chambers in Newcastle in 2022. That move was really what made coming back to Northumberland possible.

Graham: Charlotte, your journey to Ellingham was rather different. How did a girl from rural Scotland end up working in London and then settling in Northumberland?

Charlotte: Well, I grew up in rural Kinross-shire, on the banks of Loch Leven, so I was very much a country girl originally. I went to St Andrews to study

English and Art History. William and Kate were students there at the same time, and I even modelled in the university's famous charity fashion show!

After that I studied law in Manchester, while working as a mixologist in a cocktail bar. Then I got a place on a graduate scheme with Aon and ended up working in the City of London as an insurance broker.

I now work as an energy insurance underwriter in the Lloyd's market, insuring oil and gas installations around the world, from the North Sea to the Gulf of Mexico and Venezuela. It's a very international business, and quite a contrast with life in Ellingham!

Matthew and I met through mutual friends. He proposed on Dunstanburgh Beach in 2015, and we married the following year at St Maurice's Church.

Graham: Did you know Northumberland before you met Matthew?

Charlotte: No, and I have to confess something rather embarrassing now. Although I'd travelled through Northumberland many times on my way between Scotland and the south, I'd never really been to Northumberland before meeting Matthew. And I used to imagine Northumberland as quite a dark and gloomy place!

I know, coming from Scotland, that's a bit rich! But I couldn't have been more wrong. I had no idea about the wonderful beaches, the countryside and all the beautiful places around here. Bamburgh, Dunstanburgh, Beadnell – they're absolutely stunning.

I'll always love Scotland, of course, but Northumberland is now equal. And Ellingham itself is such a beautiful village. We're incredibly lucky to have all these places on our doorstep.

Graham: So what made you both decide to leave London and settle up here? And



was moving to such a small village quite a culture shock?

Charlotte: During lockdown we started thinking seriously about leaving London and moving north. We'd both grown up in the countryside, and when Florence came along in 2023, we wanted her to enjoy the same sort of childhood we'd had.

But I did think that moving straight from London to Ellingham might be a bit of an extreme change, so we initially settled in Newcastle. Then the Glebe Farmhouse came onto the market, and everything just fell into place; and now, of course, having Matthew's family around us is one of the best things about living here. Florence is growing up surrounded by grandparents, cousins and family. It's wonderful.

Graham: But you still commute to London?

Charlotte: I still have to go to London for work, usually about once a month, but when the trains are behaving themselves, it's actually quite straightforward. It's

about three and a half hours from Alnmouth to King's Cross. I enjoy going back, seeing friends and having a couple of days in London, but after two nights I'm usually desperate to get home!

And what I really love about Ellingham is the sense of community. You can walk through the village and say hello to people, stop for a chat, and feel that you belong. You don't necessarily know everybody terribly well, but there's a friendliness here that's really special. In London, you can live somewhere for years and barely know your neighbours. It's completely different here. I feel very much at home, and that's something I really value.

Graham: Matthew, coming back after all those years, what strikes you most about how Ellingham has changed?

Matthew: The most obvious thing is the development. The farmyard where I used to play is now housing. All the houses behind Ellingham Hall are new too. When I was a child, that was simply part of the Hall grounds. I remember there being sheds and a Portakabin, but certainly not houses. And the old stable block, which was rather dilapidated, has been transformed into a lovely and very smart house!

The Village Hall is another big change. The old hall was great fun, but the new one is a fantastic facility for the community, particularly with more young families living here now.

I think that's one of the really positive changes. There are certainly more children around, and the village has a slightly different feel to it. But a lot of what made it special when I was growing up is still here.

To be honest, one thing I'd really like to see is a children's playground somewhere in the village. Other nearby villages have them, and I think it would be a great asset for Ellingham. Somewhere for the children to meet and play. It's something I'd love to help move forward, although finding the time is always a challenge.

And there's another change that's less obvious but probably just as important – high-speed internet. Without it, Charlotte and I simply couldn't do the jobs we do while living here. Unfortunately, most of our working days are spent sitting in front of computers, but at least we're doing that in rural Northumberland! I think that's changing things for the village more generally. People who grew up here can now come back and continue their careers, whereas a few years ago that might not have been possible. We've got friends who've moved back to Alnmouth and other places nearby for exactly that reason.

Graham: In a sense, things have come full circle for you then Matthew??

Matthew: Yes, absolutely! Right down to things like the fact that Sheila (Barron) used to babysit me when I was little, when we were living at Home Farm. And now, all these years later, she's babysitting Florence. So much has changed in Ellingham since I was growing up, but Sheila's still here, looking after the next generation! It's another example of things coming full circle, and I think it says something rather special about the village and the people who make it what it is.

Graham: And how is Florence finding life in Ellingham? What do you all enjoy doing when you're not working?

Charlotte: She absolutely loves it. One of my favourite things is walking her across the church field to school when the weather is good. It's such a lovely way to start the day. We love walking on the beaches. It's wonderful having all these beautiful places so close by.

Matthew: And I do quite a lot of running. I've done an ultramarathon along the Northumberland coast, which is a pretty spectacular place for it. I also love getting out on my motorbike and riding through the countryside. There's so much here, really and I think when you've been away, you appreciate it even more.

Graham: Charlotte, do you think people elsewhere realise what they're missing by not knowing Northumberland?

Charlotte: Not nearly enough! I'm constantly surprised by how many people I work with, particularly those in the south, know almost nothing about Northumberland.

When I tell them where I live and describe the beaches and countryside, they're often amazed. I encourage colleagues to visit our Newcastle office and then stay for the weekend so I can show them around. I think people simply don't realise what they're missing. **Although perhaps we shouldn't encourage too many of them, or we'll spoil the secret!**

Graham: Finally, after all the places you've lived and the things you've done, has Ellingham turned out to be what you'd hoped?

Matthew: Absolutely. I had such a happy childhood here, and it's lovely to think that Florence can have something similar.

Obviously, the village has changed, but a lot of what made it special is still here. The countryside, the people, the sense of community, and having family nearby is fantastic.

I've been fortunate enough to live and work in some extraordinary places, but there's something very special about coming back to where you started. To end up living in the very house where I was born is quite something.

Charlotte: I couldn't agree more. I never imagined, when I was living in London, that I'd end up in a little Northumberland village. But I love it.

Florence has her family around her, we've made so many friends, and there's a real sense of belonging. And after the pace of London, it's lovely to have somewhere so peaceful to come home to. I feel very lucky, actually. We both do.

If you would be willing to be part of "Knowing Me, Knowing You", please let us know!..We really need more folks, new and more established villagers, to "get to know" each other!




St Maurice Church, Ellingham
Carol Service
Saturday 12th December, 3pm
Musicians and Singers needed
If you can sing or play a musical instrument come and join us for a couple of rehearsals and to play at the Carol Service.
We have 2 guitars, a guitar/saxophonist and a keyboard player and a full PA system. We also have about 7 singers.
At the end, we are usually rewarded with mulled wine and mince pies!! What could be better??
Contact: Gustav Macleod at
gustavmacleod235@gmail.com / 07896595082

Small School, Big Hearts

Our village school may be small, but it has a remarkable team of people helping children learn, grow and thrive. In this lovely contribution, Brenda Frier introduces the teachers, support staff and others whose dedication makes the school such a special part of our community.

Article by Brenda Frier school volunteer and ECT Trustee.

Meet the Remarkable Team at Our Village School

Proud to be part of the Pele Trust

At the heart of our local community is a small primary school where every child is known, valued and encouraged to shine. As part of the Pele Trust, we benefit from strong shared leadership while retaining the friendly, close-knit character that makes our school so special. Behind every busy classroom, exciting activity and happy school day is a dedicated team working together to create a warm, supportive environment for every pupil. We may be a small school, but we have a very big heart.

Leading the Way

Mr Craig Shaw, Executive Headteacher
Mr Shaw leads four schools and is present in each one every week. He brings the schools together through shared purpose and strong leadership while remaining closely connected with pupils, staff and families.



Mrs Chloe Senior, Teaching Head of our school
Mrs Senior leads the school day to day and teaches pupils in Years 3, 4, 5 and 6, combining whole-school leadership with an active and inspiring role in the classroom.



Mr Luke Brown teaches Reception, Years 1 and 2, and Early Years, helping our youngest pupils to build strong foundations, confidence and a lifelong love of learning.



Mrs Karen Swinbank leads Wellies and Wonder alongside **Ellie Friend**, our fantastic Wellies and Wonder teaching assistant. Together, they nurture our provision for two-year-olds, creating a joyful place where little learners can discover, play and grow.

Mrs Jill Dodds, our amazing Key Stage 2 teacher and leader of English and science, inspires curiosity, creativity and achievement across the curriculum.

Support That Makes a Difference

Mrs Julie Swordy supports pupils in the younger part of the school, helping each child to feel secure, confident and ready to learn.

Mrs Julie Fife supports children with special educational needs and also works in Early Years, providing thoughtful care and encouragement.

Miss Isla Morton, a former pupil, completed her apprenticeship and is now a fully qualified teaching assistant—a wonderful example for the children she supports.



Inspiring the Next Generation

We are also delighted to welcome trainee teacher **Miss Harriet Chattaway**, who is developing her classroom experience and sharing her enthusiasm as part of our school community.

The Team Behind the Scenes

Mr John Tate, our caretaker, helps to keep the school safe, welcoming and running smoothly every day.

Mrs Josie Scott, our on-site cook, prepares meals for the school community with care.

Mrs Carolyn Graham, our lead for finance, supports the careful management of the school.



Mrs Kathy Davies has been our amazing School Manager for many years, offering invaluable knowledge, dedication and support to the whole school community.

We'd Love to Hear from You

Every member of our team brings something unique, but they all share the same commitment: helping every child feel happy, supported and inspired to achieve their very best. We are proud of the people who make our village school such a special place.

Would you like to learn more about our school, arrange a visit or ask a question? Whether you are a prospective family, a member of the local community or simply interested in what we do, we would be delighted to hear from you.

For general enquiries, please contact **Mrs Kathy Davies, School Manager**, on **01665 589 233**.



Over the coming months, we hope to be able to cover more of what's happening at the school, and hopefully to share some examples of what the children have been doing- stay tuned!



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 Councilor: 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