

Claife Parish Council
Minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held at The Braithwaite Hall, Far Sawrey
At 7.00 pm on Tuesday 15th April 2025

Attendees; Cllrs A Brodie (Chair), S Hilton (Vice Chair) M Stanton, S Denyer, J Whitworth, D Knight, Caroline Sharp Worth (Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer), Laura Lee NT and one member of the public

Apologies

Cllr. Pender

29/2025 Welcome by Chair.

Councillor Brodie welcomed everyone to the meeting.

30/2025 Minutes

Resolved To approve the minutes of the Annual Parish Meeting held on 14th May 2024.

31/2025 Chair's Report

Councillor Brodie reported: This year has seen a change in personnel.

Your Council was sorry to receive the resignation notice from Lyn Prescott, our much-valued Clerk and Responsible Finance Officer, in August 2024 but we are pleased to welcome Caroline Sharp Worth who took up office on April 1st. We hope she will find her new role interesting and enjoyable.

I would like to extend my gratitude to Cllr Stanton for stepping in and taking on the RFO and minute taker role (unpaid), and to my fellow Councillors, in particular our Vice Chair, Cllr Hilton, who have supported me as I took on the role of Acting Clerk (unpaid) in addition to my role as Chair, for the last 7 months, until we recruited Caroline.

Being Acting Clerk has been a steep learning curve but it has had benefits quite apart from saving Council money! The Council has a better understanding of the duties and time required to complete the tasks required of a Clerk and of the financial duties of the RFO.

In July 2024 Cllr Keighley resigned due to the successful development of her business. Cllr Keighley was most helpful in bringing to Council's attention anti-social issues arising at Harrowslack and matters that affect the retention of young families in our Parish.

In January 2025, Council welcomed David Knight, from Near Sawrey, who was co-opted as one of the 3 Councillors representing the Lower Ward.

Other proposed changes are out for public consultation:

- To align all Parish Council election years with that of the next scheduled election date for the Westmorland and Furness Authority in 2027 and every 4 years after that.
- To change the boundaries of WF wards. Currently, Claife is part of the Coniston and Hawkshead ward. The proposed ward of Hawkshead and Greenodd will include the Parish Councils of Claife, Skelwith, Hawkshead, Satterthwaite, Colton, Lowick, Egton with Newland, Mansriggs and Osmotherley.
- To elect a Mayor for Cumbria.

Progress:

- Lack of gritting on U and C roads in the parish may be coming to an end. WF Highways team have listened to our concerns and are working on a proposal to support a gritting and snowploughing scheme funded by a group of Parish Councils, including Claife.
- A grit box has been placed near Low House, Near Sawrey, for the use of residents.

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Signed & Approved by (Chair)

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Date

- Persistent potholes along the B5285 have been repeatedly reported by Councillors and resurfacing is anticipated.
- Councillors are building a constructive relationship with National Trust Officers.
- Dead and dying Ash and other damaged trees have been thinned and removed from public access land at Lakebank Esthwaite. Young saplings now have light and space to grow.

32/2025 Representative's Reports

a) The Braithwaite Hall Trust

At the last Hall AGM I stood down as Chair and Jimmy Mallett stepped up, Jimmy is a very long-standing committee member and trustee.

A sub-committee has been formed to steer our ambitious program to insulate, fit solar panels and a new heating system to the building. The preliminary costings for this suggest a budget for this in the region of £120,000, this will obviously need grants to be sourced but many other halls have completed this type of work, so it can be done.

We are getting more outside bookings and the new showers, which guarantee everyone gets a hot shower, have definitely helped with the number of overnight group stays, word must be getting round!

We have gained a couple of new committee members this year but we would very much welcome some more, new active people to join us.

The outside of the hall needs repainting this summer and we are looking to do this with volunteers to enable our precious funds to be directed at the program of improvements, anybody is welcome to help with this even if it just to do one small job, every little helps.

Finally thanks to the Parish Council for all there help and advice.

b) Hawkshead Market Hall Trust

The financial position of the hall is very healthy with reserves and a surplus of income over expenditure in the last year, the income comprises hall lettings and the rental income from the cottage.

Emma Lightfoot took over caretaker and cleaning duties which has resulted in some very positive feedback and she is now taking over the booking management of the hall.

A repair café has been set up and been well received and proving to be successful, there will be evening sessions in June, July and August.

It has been agreed to progress the fitting of a stair lift for access to the upper room. Planning permission is required (listed building) and the majority of the funding is to come from the Freemasons who are regular users of the hall.

c) Hawkshead Grammar School Foundation

The Grammar School Trust gives out educational grants. 15 grants awarded in October 2024. 11 for university education, 1 for vocational training and 3 for 16-18 year old's school transportation.

Applicants for the transportation grant were received because the Westmorland and Furness council fund ran dry. Of the 15 grants awarded, 4 were for Claife residents. In terms of the Museum, 2024 was a successful year, with maintained visitor numbers and increased income. International visitor numbers continued to increase. In November 2024, a grant was awarded from the W&F Council via Arts and Heritage Fund of £31,199 to purchase secure and environmentally safe display cases to house books. These were installed in February 2025. The inaugural exhibition is entitled "Rawlinson 350" showcasing the oldest books donated to the library which was founded in 1675 by Daniel Rawlinson himself, 350 years ago. It is the first time these books have been on public display. Accessibility is encouraged by placing one display case on the ground floor and a digital exhibition upstairs. One extra member of staff has been recruited for the season to encourage more behind the scenes work to be done. All staff are local. The Trust owns several properties, all tenanted. The

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Headmasters Room is now open. There is a lot of work being done on book conservation to preserve the old books to stop the pages drooping. It will take a number of years to complete. There is still no public access to the library itself.

d) Windermere Ferry Group

At the 5-year maintenance and refit in 2024 the Mallard was returned to the water spruced up and painted. Unfortunately, she was no more reliable and there continued to be mechanical breakdowns which took her out of service. A new engine was fitted early in the year and this and other refit issues resulted in the ferry being out of service for a month, including over spring half term School holidays. Westmorland and Furness agreed to give contract holders an extra month when renewing their contracts.

33/2025 Public participation

Resident attending raised concerns about the reliability of the Ferry, the speed in which potholes are being repaired and dog fouling. Cllr Brodie confirmed that she always reiterates the ferry reliability matter at the Windermere Ferry Stakeholders meeting to keep the matter high priority.

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