

Report from Chairman Cawthorne Parish Council

I was elected to Chairman 1st May 2025. Councillor Stephen Eyre was elected as vice chairman.

In June last year work was undertaken in the churchyard to cut back and make safe two trees, a Holme Oak & and an Ash Tree. A faculty was obtained by the church council before the work could be done.

The hedge at the junction of Darton Road and Horncroft has been a cause for concern throughout last year as it was encroaching over the footpath. After several cutbacks by the owner the council did the work which hopefully should have resolved the issue.

In June last year the council's internal auditor Ken Arundel informed the council that after offering his services for many years, without any cost to the council, he has decided to retire. Fortunately, Ken has supplied the name of someone else in the village, a Mr Richard Helliwell who if approached may be willing to take over the position of internal auditor.

Two issues that are raised in members reports on a regular basis are:-

1) the problem of dog fouling

2) parking on the double yellow lines and also pavement parking. Both of these problems are difficult to monitor and control.

Several members of the council attended a very informative presentation held in the reception room in the Town Hall, entitled "councillors code of conduct and conflict of interests".

In July last year the council agreed to give a grant to fund one of two commemorative blue plaques, to remember the two Dundas brothers who were courageous World War two fighter pilots.

Additional resurfacing work was carried out on Dark Lane on the 4th August, this was to ensure it was safe for both horse riders and vehicle use.

Issues concerning the work being undertaken by the tenant at front of No. 9 Church Street caused concerns.

The tenant had followed the Berneslai Home permissions process and had applied for permission to construct a hardstanding area for parking.

It does appear that there is a precedent with the neighbouring two houses. It is understood that Landlord permission had been granted subject to the tenant following the procedure.

As part of the process, the tenant was advised that it is his responsibility to obtain any necessary approvals from Building Control and Planning if applicable. We understand that tenant has made the necessary contact.

The council agreed to fund half the amount required for 20 m.p.h. flashing speed indicators (to be located on the approach to Cawthorne School) after Cllr Alex Burnet obtained a ward alliance grant for half the required amount.

One of the highlights of the year was the poppy displays throughout the village.

The displays were widely admired by residents and visitors and served as a powerful mark of remembrance.

An absolutely wonderful job done by all concerned.

I know the members of our council have worked to the best of their ability to improve our village to the benefit of all residents of Cawthorne.

John Walker (Chairman) 30/03/2026

Report from Cawthorne Parish Council Budget and Finance Committee

The committee met on 11 December 2025. The contractors for gardening services, hedge cutting in the cemetery, tree work and care of cremation plots were discussed and confirmed. A sum of £4000 was agreed for grant aid including recurring grants of £50 to the Royal British Legion for the poppy wreath and £1000 to the Village Hall, leaving a balance of £2950 for applications in the 2026/27 financial year. An amended budget for 2026/27 was discussed and agreed and a precept of £26,000 was set, the same as for the previous financial year. The date of the next meeting of the Budget and Finance Committee was set for 10 December 2026.

Report from Cawthorne Parish Council Staffing Committee

The Staffing Committee has met a number of times during 2025/26 and has taken over responsibility for all employee issues and the review of the Clerk's training, salary, remuneration and working hours.

A series of extraordinary Staffing Committee Meetings were held in June 2025 to deal with a complaint relating to the conduct of one of the Councillors and culminating in a Complaint Hearing on 25 June 2025. The matter was successfully resolved.

The Staffing Committee met on 22 October 2025 to review the terms of reference of the Staffing Committee and also the role and performance of the Clerk. The Clerk's salary and conditions of service were reviewed and a salary increase agreed and implemented.

The date of the next meeting of the Staffing Committee was set for 30 April 2026.

Cllr J Wilson 30.03.2026

Annual Parish Meeting – Cemetery Committee Report 3rd April 2025

The Cemetery Committee meet several times per year to inspect the Churchyard and cemetery and decide upon an appropriate schedule of works required.

In September 2024 the committee met on site to look at various trees and shrubs that had been reported as in need of action. We made reference to the last tree safety report carried out by AWA Tree Consultants dated July 2023. There were some trees that were dead, some with dead branches in the canopy and some diseased. There was also several trees and shrubs that required pruning to allow headroom for pall bearers to access the grave plots. Some of the larger diseased trees were in danger of damaging walls/gravestones/the mausoleum. We met on site with a contractor who gave advice on what was required and that as the site was in the conservation area a 'Notification of proposed Works to trees in a Conservation Area' application was required to be sent to BMBC.

The committee again met on site to further discuss required works before submitting the application in November, we were advised that if we hadn't heard back from BMBC within 6 weeks work could commence.

During the storms in the winter further damage was done to one of the trees earmarked for felling and it was decided to take action on all the dangerous trees immediately, the 6 week period after the application to do the work had expired so it was carried out in late January.

Further quotes were requested for the remaining work including stump grinding where trees were to be felled and a further meeting on site was held in March when it was decided that due to the bird nesting season, work should now be delayed until late summer. At this meeting we discussed the Saxon cross which was almost invisible behind shrubbery that required pruning. It was agreed that a cemetery tidy up day be arranged so that this and other general tidy up work could take place. The committee also noted that there are several large Laurel trees that have become overgrown and require heavy pruning.

Cllr Eyre

Chairman of Cemetery Committee

Annual Parish Meeting – Planning Committee Report 30th March 2026

The Parish Council voted at the PC meeting on the 1st May 2025 to invite former Parish Councillor Tony Butterworth on to the Planning Committee, his wealth of experience will be an asset to the committee.

The planning meeting arranged for the 15th of May could not proceed as the attendees were not quorate.

There were fewer planning applications to consider than in previous years and some scheduled planning meetings were cancelled due to no applications being received, therefore it was agreed not to hold a separate meeting if an application was minor and non-contentious, as a result several recommendations to full council were taken by email consent.

Most applications were 'approved' some with minor recommendations, several applications were objected to but unfortunately mainly overruled by BMBC. Concerns were raised by residents and councillors alike regarding 'surveying' activity on land adjacent to Darton Road that has in the past been earmarked for housing but is currently 'protected' until 2033.

Following the election of a new Government in 2024 reforms to the planning system have been introduced to kick start housebuilding and Nationally Significant Infrastructure Projects. This could well impact on our Neighbourhood Plan going forward.

Cllr Eyre

Chairman of Planning Committee

Financial Report as at 30 March 2026

The Parish Council continues to be on a sound financial footing.

The accounts for the year ending 31 March 2025 were audited by both the internal and external auditors last summer and were found to be in good order. In accordance with legislation, the audit report was displayed on the Parish Council notice board for 14 days after receipt and is now available on the Parish Council website.

As at 31 March 2026, the bank balance stands at approximately £55,539.75. Of this:

- £8,000 has been earmarked for expenditure on the Traffic Regulation Order (TRO), covering the installation of road markings including double yellow lines (project ongoing).
- £8,400 has been budgeted for the purchase of speeding signs.

Income and Expenditure 2025/26

- Total receipts for the year were approximately £31,342.55, including:
 - £1,703.00 VAT reclaimed from the previous financial year
 - £1,550 hanging basket sponsorship income
- Total payments amounted to approximately £28,163.72 which is less than anticipated.

This underspend was primarily due to delays in the TRO project, the speeding signs and cemetery maintenance. These projects will be rolled into the next financial year.

Grant Aid

A total of £2270.00 out of the £4,000 grant aid budget was distributed in 2025/26.

Grants were awarded to:

- Cawthorne Toddlers
- Crafty Ladies
- Cawthorne Chapel
- Church Council
- The Summer Fete Committee

Precept and Reserves

The precept for 2025/26 was £26,000, and BMBC passed on the Council Tax Support Grant, allowing the Parish Council to receive the full precept requested.

Reserves remain adequate to meet unforeseen events.

A Winstanley (Cawthorne Parish Council Clerk & Responsible Finance Officer)

30.03.2026