

## Slap on the Wrist Time (But hopefully not yours!)

A couple of concerns have arisen in recent weeks, the first of which we have usually reminded people about, in our June issue but opted not to this year. This relates to all householders with hedges, trees or shrubs that overhang footpaths, asking that you ensure that they are cut back throughout the summer. Judging from observation and the number of complaints we have received, this remains a problem in many places.

Please have a walk outside your property, imagine you are over 6 feet tall and are pushing a child's buggy and remember that vegetation hangs much lower when wet. If you are likely to be impeded at all, please act now because even as autumn approaches, it won't get better by itself!

The second concern relates to fly tipping. This is defined as the "illegal dumping of waste" and although there has not been much evidence of an epidemic there is some concern that the dumping of garden waste in particular is becoming a problem in some locations, chiefly the railway embankment and along the river. As the locations tend to be close to housing it is probable that local residents are responsible.

The County Council and the Environment Agency have the responsibility for controlling fly tipping and are proactive in prosecuting offenders.

If you have garden waste that you cannot compost in your own garden there are a number of options open to you. The County provides a garden waste collection service from March to November which, for £26 per annum, will regularly empty a bin of green waste from your premises. In addition, bins for composting garden waste can also be obtained from the County Council at very competitive prices, £17.98 for 220 litres and £19.98 for 330 litres. Buy two and the second is half price. These can be ordered on-line at

[www.getcomposting.com](http://www.getcomposting.com)  
or by telephone to 0844 571 4444 (quoting ref: NTH05L). We are also fortunate that we are close to the Recycling Centre at West Wylam which takes all sorts of waste including garden waste. You can also put small quantities in your normal waste bin.

So please, don't dump your garden waste on public land or other people's property, subscribe to the County Council scheme or take it to the tip!

## Well Done

Congratulations to those who manage Wylam Institute, which has recently become only the second hall in Northumberland to achieve the prestigious "Hallmark 2" status. The organisation had to demonstrate, amongst many other things, the proper

running and recording of all committee meetings and the AGM, an annual report had to be submitted to the Charity Commission, financial practices and policies were also examined and approved. The policies and risk assessments for Health and Safety and the care of vulnerable people (including children) were closely questioned and found to be excellent as were the hiring conditions and arrangements.

The condition of the building, both inside and out was assessed, along with the fire risk assessment and the placement of extinguishers.

Insurance policies were checked together with inventories of all items kept in the building.

All in all an excellent and gratifying result. Yet another illustration of why we should all be proud of the Wylam Institute Community Association and grateful to those who ensure it functions so efficiently.

## Drama Society

The next production by Wylam Amateur Dramatic Society will be "Snake in the Grass" by Alan Ayckbourn, with performances on November 26th, 27th and 28th at Wylam Institute at 7.30pm.

"Snake in the Grass" is described as a creepy suspense drama about murder and blackmail, not without some comedy. It promises to be eerily enjoyable.

## Trying to Sort Out a Problem?

The Citizens Advice Service provides free, confidential information and advice on a wide range of subjects including, debt, benefits, housing and employment problems.

To access help you can either telephone the Northumberland Adviceline on 03444 111 444, which is "open" between 10.00am and 4.00pm Monday to Friday, or you can call at one of their "drop-in" session, either at the Spetchells Centre on Front Street, Prudhoe (Tuesdays and Thursdays, 10.00am to 2.00pm) or The Community Centre, Gilegate, Hexham (Wednesdays and Fridays, 10.00am to 2.00pm).

## Forthcoming Events

The following events will take place in Wylam Institute, unless indicated otherwise.

### Fri 11 Sept

Family Film, "Mary Poppins", in aid of Cancer Research UK, 4.30pm

**Mon 14 Sept** - Parish Council, 7.00pm

### Sat 26 Sept

MacMillan Coffee Morning, 10.00am to 12 noon

### Sun 27 Sept

Village Harvest Festival Service, St Oswin's, 10.00am

### Wed 30 Sept

Quiz and Supper for Christian Aid, "Fox & Hounds", 7.30pm

### Fri 2 Oct

Rev Professor David Wilkinson, "God and the Big Bang", 7.30pm (see article).

**Mon 12 Oct** - Parish Council, 7.00pm

### Wed 14 Oct

Men at Home, "The Geology of Hadrian's Wall", Brian Young, Methodist Centre, 10.30am

### Sat 17 Oct

Film Club, 7.30pm, "The Imitation Game".

### Fri 6 Nov

"Race Night", St Oswin's Church Hall, 7.00pm

**Sat 7 Nov** - Christmas Fair

### Sun 8 Nov

Village Remembrance Sunday Service, St Oswin's Church, 10.00am and at War Memorial 11.00am

**Mon 9 Nov** - Parish Council, 7.00pm

### Wed 11 Nov

Men at Home, "The Challenges Facing the Hospice Movement in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century", George Bell, Methodist Centre, 10.30am

### Sat 21 Nov

Christmas Fair at Methodist Church Centre, 10.00am to noon  
Film Club, 7.30pm, "Of Gods and Men"

**Thurs to Sat 26, 27 & 28 Nov**

Dramatic Society Production, "Snake in the Grass", 7.30pm. (See article).

### Wed 9 Dec

Men at Home, "The Building of Durham Cathedral", Michael Jackson, Methodist Centre, 10.30am

### Sat 12 Dec

Film Club, 7.30pm, "Paddington"

**Mon 14 Dec** Parish Council, 7.00pm

**Please note:** In addition to the above events, Coffee Mornings in aid of Wylam Institute continue to be held on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Wednesday of every month 10.30am to 12 noon, and "Friends of Wylam" Coffee Mornings are fortnightly on Tuesday mornings from 10.00am.

## Deadline for material for the next "Wylam Globe" Monday 9 November

Correspondence relating to this Newsletter should be addressed to:

**Mrs. D. Carney,**  
The Clerk to the Parish Council  
Wylam Institute, Church Road, Wylam  
NE41 8AP  
Tel: (01661) 852498  
[e.mail: wylampc@btinternet.com](mailto:wylampc@btinternet.com)

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# THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council

Autumn 2015

No. 118

## Go-ahead for Wylam Hills Development

It's now 14 years since the Graham family, who had been tenants at Wylam Hills Farm for 80 years, re-located their business, which included nearly 200 dairy cows at the time, to West Newham, near Belsay, while continuing to farm the land at Wylam.

Although the Grahams now own much of the land at Wylam, the owners of the remaining redundant farm steading have tried, throughout this time, to find a developer. Following a public consultation by Gentoo Homes Ltd in August 2014, it was in November that year that the company submitted a planning application for what would be, by far, the largest development in Wylam since the Dene Estate was built in the late 1960s.

This first application was turned down but a modified plan, submitted in March this year, has led to a period of detailed discussion between the developers and County Council Planners, during which further refinements have been made. The plans were finally passed in early August.

Throughout this time, Wylam Parish Council has supported, in principle, the development of this site, which has increasingly become an eyesore and a consequent concern to many local residents. However, the Parish Council had reservations over several aspects of both the original and subsequent applications and made these very clear to the Planning Officers.

In a final letter to the Parish Council, the Planning Officer states that; "the issues raised by the Parish Council have now been addressed by the applicant and properly considered by the case officer", adding that; "there are no significant planning issues outstanding".

It would probably take the whole of this issue of "The Globe" to explain all of the concerns of Wylam Parish Council and how these have been addressed but one major concern has been the location of the entrance to the main development in relation to the existing road configuration. Parish Councillors continue to have reservations about this but improvements to sight-lines have been included and the County Council Highways Officer states that this aspect now meets the necessary "national criteria".

The letter of approval also contains nearly 30 specific conditions which the developer has to conform to, many requiring prior approval of the County Council and a lot of them having to be addressed before any work on the site can commence.

### So, what's coming?

After demolition of most of the existing farm buildings, the overall development is for 35 houses, comprising 22 new dwellings (a mix of 3, 4 and 5 bedrooms), 11 affordable houses (a mix of 2 and 3 bedrooms), the retention of the existing farm house (which is a Grade II listed building) and the conversion of the stone-built former stable block into a single dwelling. The main development will be on the west side of the road but the 11 affordable houses will be on the site of the former silage clamp, on the opposite side of the road.

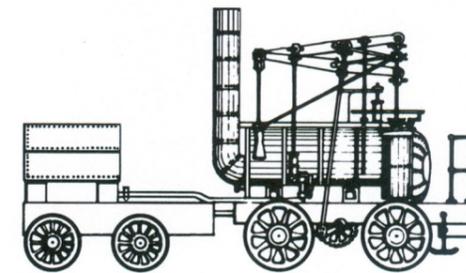
### The Affordable Houses

There are, we are told, some 8000 people on the Housing Register in Northumberland. To assist these people, Northumberland County Council wishes to see the provision of over 2000 additional affordable houses by 2018. Some of these will be built by the Local Authority, some by Housing Companies and others, including those on the Wylam Hills site, under what is known as Section 106 Agreements, where private developers are required to include a proportion of affordable houses within their plans. Affordable housing is described as; "housing as defined by the National Planning Framework that will be available to persons who cannot afford to rent or buy housing generally available on the open market".

The affordable houses on this site will include some at an affordable rent and others at a discounted purchase price. The eligibility criteria are complicated but include provision for local residents or those with strong local connections to be given priority.

### Play area

A covenant imposed upon the developers is that they provide a specified play area or areas within the site and that this area is tendered to Wylam Parish Council for adoption in return for a significant bursary towards the long-term maintenance of this area. At present we have no idea how soon the development might begin, but work has to commence within 3 years of permission being granted.



## Wylam Post Office

If you have been following developments nationally, you may be aware that Post Office Ltd are in the middle of what is describe as a Transformation or Modernisation Programme. Put simply, this programme aims to relocate all smaller Post Offices in alternative retail premises, usually convenience stores, open for 12 hours a day 7 days a week. These new Post Offices are not able to offer all the services currently available at Wylam Post Office. Most significantly, they are required to be financially viable without any direct payment from Post Office Ltd.

We are including this note with the permission of Steve Loveday, our Wylam Sub-Postmaster, who is at present under immense pressure to accept the incentives currently offered to him to close, or to accept a new and totally unrealistic contract in the near future which would offer him no "core tier payment" (salary).

You will probably be aware that Wylam Parish Council owns the Post Office premises, but not the business, and although this Council has fully supported Steve at every stage, Post Office Ltd have chosen to over-ride all the assurances given to both parties in the past and it appears that negotiations, such as they have been, are now at a critical stage. We expect to be able to provide more information in our next issue.

## Station Car Park

We reported in the previous issue of "Wylam Globe" that Wylam Parish Council was contacting Northern Rail for an explanation for the sudden introduction of a £2 per day charge to park at Wylam Station, particularly while parking at several other stations remains free.

The explanation we have received is that it is, "to some extent, to close the financial gap created when the subsidy from The Department for Transport was cut last year".

The charges have been introduced at those car parks that are owned by Northern Rail.

Meanwhile the company states, and some may be unaware of this, that they offer a discounted season ticket for parking, which costs £8 for a week, £25 for a month or £250 for a full year.

Network Rail has agreed to review the effectiveness of the charges, particularly if there is evidence that it is discouraging travel. At the moment we have no evidence of this ourselves, so do let us know if you have any. However, what is clear is that people are simply parking elsewhere rather than using the station car park and the Parish Council continues to view this as unacceptable.

## Essential Work Re-Opens Fine Views

The sight in early August of a large work site between Wylam Wood Road and the railway line (or possibly you heard the chainsaws), was evidence of work being carried out by contractors on behalf of Network Rail. This work is expected to be a three-month project to stabilise the bank above the railway line, which has threatened the track for a considerable period of time, requiring regular monitoring and maintenance.



The scheme that is under way at present will provide new drainage and stabilise the slope. A by-product of the work, which involves removal of many of the trees, has been the re-opening of the views to "Points Bridge", shown here, and further across to the village itself, the Wylam road bridge and east towards Newcastle.



Some Wylam residents may remember that for six months in 1968, the line through South Wylam had to be closed whilst major work was undertaken to stabilise the bank and the track in this location. At that time the line through North Wylam had recently been closed but the track and signals remained and so it was quickly reopened whilst work was carried out on the line through South Wylam.

When repairs had been completed the closure of the North Wylam line and the lifting of the track went ahead and some years later was converted by Northumberland and Newcastle Councils into the Wylam Waggonway, part of the Country Park that we are familiar with today.

## St Oswin's Bells

Andrew Cairns writes:-

St. Oswin's Church has six bells, the largest weighing over a ton. They are hung in the English Style with rope and wheel allowing "changes" to be rung. For those interested, a fuller explanation can be found at: [www.cccbr.org.uk/changeringing/](http://www.cccbr.org.uk/changeringing/). Like any other instrument, bell ringing is a skill that needs frequent practice over many years.

Over the past few months there have been several instances of special bell ringing in the village. On 9 May, at the request of the Government (and along with many other towers across the country) we rang to mark the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of VE Day. On 14 June we joined the national "Striking a Blow for Democracy" initiative to mark the 800<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Magna Carta, which involved a special touch of 800 changes, rung in 28 minutes. A visiting band from the South West rang a quarter-peal on 9 July and there was also ringing to mark St. Oswin's Day on 20 August. By the time you read this we hope, on 9 September, to have rung to mark when Queen Elizabeth II became the longest reigning monarch. On 10 October we plan to mark the 130<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the casting of the bells at Loughborough in 1885. A visiting band will be ringing on 28 September, between 3.30 and 4.30pm.

We continue to practice regularly every Monday evening, 7.30-9.00pm and ringing for Sunday Service 9.30-10.00am. If you are interested in learning or just wish to have a look at what we do, please contact Andrew Cairns (details below).

If you have a special date or anniversary, then why not consider having our regular ringing dedicated to mark it? For a donation to church funds we will dedicate our Sunday ringing and provide you with a certificate to mark the event.

Andrew Cairns (*Tower Captain*)  
[andrew@anycairns.co.uk](mailto:andrew@anycairns.co.uk)  
or phone 07890 506 941



## Wylam Bird Club

Wylam Bird Club is looking to interest new members in joining the Club.

The Club meets for six indoor sessions in the Autumn and in the Winter/Spring periods, on Wednesday evenings in the Methodist Church Centre, from 7.30 to 9.30pm.

There are also six visits to outside locations in each of the Autumn and Winter/Spring periods. The location for these range from coastal places such as Druridge, Boulmer, Hauxley, Warkworth, Lindisfarne, and inland, to places like the Harthope Valley and other appropriate venues, depending on circumstances.

Items discussed at the indoor meetings range from Migration, Bird Behaviour, Current Bird News, What's Happening in Local Gardens and other similar topics.

The first meeting in the coming season is an outside visit to Druridge on Sunday 4 October and the first indoor meeting will be on Wednesday 7 October. Fees for each period are £30

Anyone interested, please contact Secretary, Bob Doughty, 01661 853398; Treasurer, Doug Hamilton, 01661 853300 or Chairman, Frank Phillips 01661 853589.

## "God and the Big Bang"

Professor David Wilkinson, who is a regular contributor to Radio 4's "Thought for the Day", will speak on this most thought provoking subject in Wylam Institute at 7.00pm on Friday 2 October. David is that rare combination of a Theologian and Astrophysicist who holds PhDs from Cambridge University in both disciplines. A minister in the Methodist Church he is currently Principal of St John's College, Durham.

Entrance is by ticket only, which are priced at £15, including supper. For tickets, phone 07798 724631 or Email [wylaminstitute2@gmail.com](mailto:wylaminstitute2@gmail.com).

If you would like further information please contact Michael Bird at [mbird206@btinternet.com](mailto:mbird206@btinternet.com) or telephone 01661 852328

## Cricket Team Success

Congratulations to Wylam Cricket Club's 1<sup>st</sup> team, which has won the O'Neill Richards West Tyne League Knock-out Cup.

In an exciting game played at the Tynedale Club's ground at Hexham on 19 July, Wylam were victors over Hexham Leazes. As we go to press the Wylam team are also strong contenders for the runner-up place in the league competition.

The Cricket Club are always keen to see new players coming along, whether young or older. It may be a bit late for this season, but if you are interested in playing next summer, have a word with Club Chairman, Pete Smith (01661 853713).

## Summer Fair Proves a Great Day Once Again

Once again our Village Summer Fair, organised by the Wylam Community Playing Fields Association, was blessed with fine weather, at least until late in the evening. Amongst the stalls and activities there were many old favourites but several new attractions including a falconry display, basket weaving and a very fine display of motorbikes. Entertainment throughout the afternoon, provided by the Prudhoe Community Band, the Cherry Pickers, Feet First, Wylam School Choir and the cheery Scottish Dancers, was enjoyed by huge crowds.



Prudhoe Community Band. Always popular at the Summer Fair

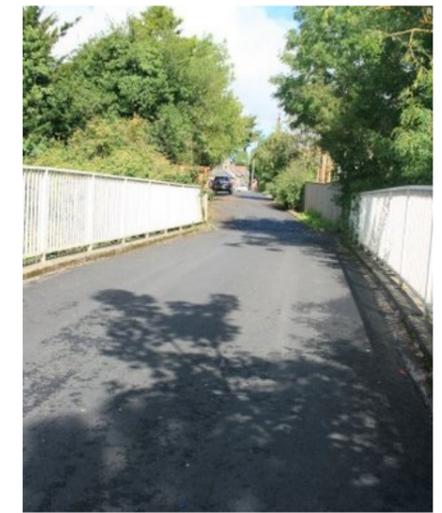
"Wired for Sound", the evening musical extravaganza, was attended by fewer people than in previous years but the bands were really varied with some outstanding performances.

The whole day proved to be very profitable once again, raising in excess of £12,000, all of which will be used for further developments and maintenance of the Playing Field.

None of this would be possible without huge efforts on the part of the Playing Fields Committee who just about manage to maintain their sanity in the months of planning and on the day itself.

The Committee wish to particularly thank the many volunteers who help on the day and the support received from local businesses. Planning for 2016 will start soon and the Playing Fields Committee would be happy to accept new ideas and, importantly, more volunteers for next year's event.

## That Smooth Walk is now a Reality



In the previous issue we described the plans to clear the overgrowing vegetation and surface with tarmac the very rough track leading from Woodcroft Road to the Playing Field entrance. In the event the Parish Council, with a contribution from Councillor Paul Kelly's "Small Schemes Allowance", was able to continue the new surface, part of which is shown in the accompanying photograph, as far as the foot of the slope which leads on towards the Nature Reserve, allotments and riverside.

The Parish Council is grateful for the great many expressions of appreciation from local residents, which have demonstrated how much the improvement was needed.

## Ovingham Bridge



For those who haven't seen the bridge recently, this picture might at least reassure you that work is progressing.

You will probably remember that the bridge was expected to re-open in June this year but, when that time came we were told that, due to unforeseen problems that had come to light, the re-opening had been put back to "by November".

There was therefore understandable concern when, in mid-August, the County Council applied for an extension of the Road Closure Order to February 2016. We are told that this is a precaution, just in case further problems arise, but is anyone taking bets?