

THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council

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DISEASE HITS WYLAM— Dutch Elm Disease Confirmed

The disease which has been killing thousands of elm trees in the south of England and the Midlands, has spread to the north east counties and has recently been confirmed on several elm trees in Wylam.

Dutch Elm Disease is caused by a fungus which is introduced into a tree by the feeding activities of the Elm Bark Beetle.

The first sign of the disease is a yellowing of the leaves on part of the tree. Such symptoms may appear as early as June but are more often seen from July onwards to leaf fall. Usually the foliage soon withers and the affected branches begin to die back from the top.

The main method being used by local authorities and the Forestry Commission in combatting the spread of this disease is to fell diseased elms as soon as they are discovered and to destroy the bark.

However, it is possible to protect elms from the disease by a yearly injection with a special fungicide. This treatment is normally only carried out on elms in fine condition, and in prominent positions in public areas or private gardens.

If anyone has elm trees in their garden or grounds which they want to protect by injecting a fungicide, please write to Mrs. Fairless, the Clerk of the Parish Council, and she will give you further information. If sufficient owners in the area are interested in having their elm trees protected the cost could be as low as £5 per tree per year.

Look for wilting of shoots
and yellowing and
browning of leaves.



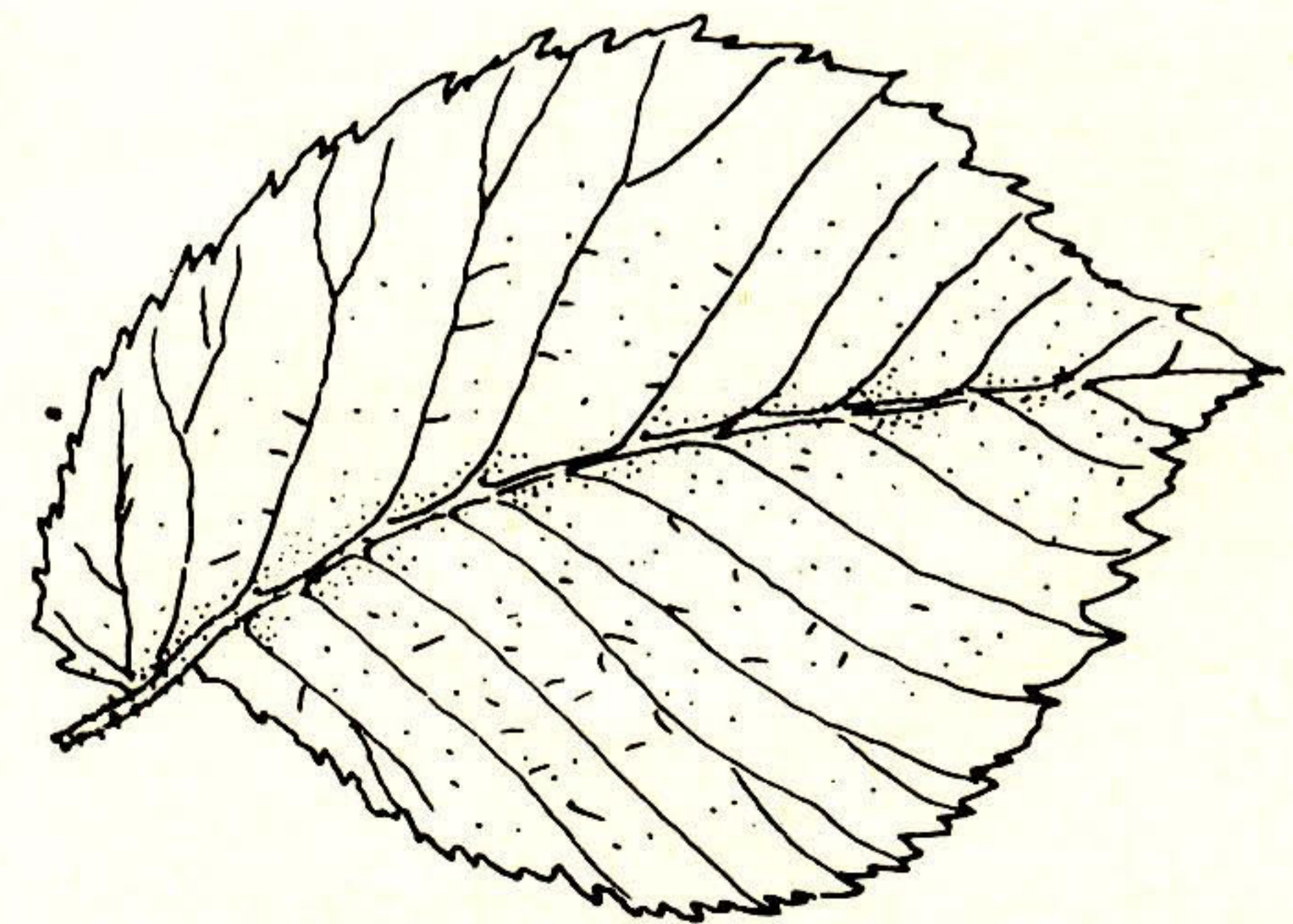
Your Help requested in identifying Diseased Elms

The local authorities have to rely on help from local people in reporting diseased elms and the drawing on the right shows what an elm tree affected by Dutch Elm Disease may look like.

If you're not sure how to identify an elm tree the drawing of an English elm leaf below should help you. The leaf is less than 3" long, thick and leathery with a hairy under-surface.

Another type of elm common in the North East, is the Wych Elm which has larger leaves 3"—6", rather similar in shape to the English elm leaves but with a rough upper surface.

If you see an elm tree anywhere in the County (not only Wylam) which you *think* may be affected by Dutch Elm Disease please contact the Landscape Section of the County Planning Department, County Hall, Newcastle. (Phone (9) 26613.)



English Elm leaf (life size)

LOST IN THE LONG GRASS?

Many justifiable complaints have been heard about the very untidy condition of the grass on roadside verges within the parish, particularly in the centre of the village.

Arrangements for cutting the various grassed areas have never been very satisfactory because different authorities are responsible for different areas, which are cut at different frequencies—by different teams of men!

Tynedale District Council cut about 75% of the "public" grass on the built up parts of the village, with the County Council Highways Department doing most of the remaining 25%.

Efforts by the Parish Council to get the County and District Councils to co-ordinate their grass cutting activities in the village—preferably arranging for either the County or the District Council staff to do all areas rather than having two different teams (as at present), have so far failed, but we shall keep trying because it should mean a cheaper and more consistent service.

The standard of cutting has also deteriorated recently—partly due to poor adjustment of the machines but also due to the speed with which the work is being done!

The untidy condition of the areas outside the Post Office, on Chapel Lane and near the Black Bull Inn is the result of a new policy introduced by the County Highways Committee to reduce the frequency at which the grass verges in built-up areas are cut to only four times per season, i.e. about once every five weeks. This is quite obviously insufficient for prominent areas in the centre of towns or villages—even in the current difficult times!

The Parish Council have therefore protested to the County Council and requested that this new policy be modified to include for more frequent cutting of grass in villages and towns.

If, however, the County Council are unwilling to revise their new policy, the Parish Council may need to consider alternative arrangements.

But whichever of the local authorities cuts the grass on these verges and open spaces, it will be a charge on the rates.

Although some of the areas of "public" grass—either verges or open spaces and play areas—are too large or inconveniently situated for nearby residents to "adopt" them and cut them when they do their own lawns, there are quite a lot of verge areas which could be cut better, more conveniently and more cheaply by the adjacent householder rather than by the Council.

Most of the houses in Holeyn Hall Road, Woodvale Gardens, Woodcroft Road, Ingham Terrace and Stephenson Terrace have grass verges in front of them, and in many cases the nearby residents regularly cut these areas; but there are some who, for one reason or another do not do so—and we should like to ask those residents who do not already do so, to consider cutting their verges, if at all possible. Clearly, where there are elderly or disabled residents, it is unreasonable to ask them to do this—but where there are healthy (and fit!) adults, perhaps they could help out.

If local residents were regularly willing to assist in this way, it would help to keep the rates down and also make the village more attractive.

Footnote: *Both Tynedale District Council and the County Council have indicated that they will be completely reviewing their policies and arrangements for grass cutting before next season.*

UP TO DATE INFORMATION

It is intended soon to revise and reprint the yellow Information Card which was produced in January, 1975.

Any suggestions about improvements or additional information which you feel might usefully be included, or of corrections to information shown on the present card should be sent to Mrs. Fairless, at 31 Falcon Terrace.

RAISED STATION PLATFORM: Present Position

In our last issue, we pointed out that there were some problems about raising the level of the short length of platform in front of the waiting shelter, and ensuring that the scheme does not detract from the important historic station buildings.

At that time, we expressed the view that it should be possible to devise a satisfactory scheme which ensures the safety of passengers without spoiling the appearance of the buildings, and the Parish Council wrote to British Rail suggesting that if the work of raising the platform by the required height (just over one foot) was carried out on the long stretch of platform between the end of the station buildings and the path up to the Castle Hill Hospital, but leaving the short length in front of the waiting shelter at its present level, this would still provide more than sufficient length of the raised platform to accommodate the two-carriage or four-carriage trains which use this line. The only slight inconvenience this would create would be that trains would need to halt at the end of the waiting shelter a few yards short of the present stop.

In spite of various requests that their proposal should avoid adversely affecting the station buildings, the scheme put forward by British Rail proposed raising the platform in front of the open waiting shelter, and erecting railings along the back of the platform (between the pillars of the waiting shelter.)

Since it was considered that this scheme would have detracted unnecessarily from the appearance of the station buildings, which are listed as buildings of Special Architectural or Historic Interest, planning permission was turned down by the District Council.

All eight members of the Parish Council are unanimous in their agreement on the need to raise sufficient length of the present platform to enable all passengers, (particularly the elderly, the disabled and young children) to get in and out of trains without difficulty and in safety, and British Rail are being asked to modify their scheme to eliminate the work proposed which affected the historic buildings, and confine it to raising the platform to the east (left) of the buildings. This would achieve all the necessary improvement for the benefit of train users, without spoiling the buildings.

ELECTION FEVER—Congratulate yourselves!

Whether or not the candidates you voted for were elected in the Parish and District Council elections on 6th May, congratulate yourself that almost 75% of the people eligible to vote in Wylam did so. This was amongst the highest poll turnouts in the county—and shows that local democracy and interest in local government in the village is commendably high.

It was also encouraging that so many able candidates were willing to stand for election—a marked contrast to the sorry situation in some parishes, where they were unable to find sufficient individuals to fill uncontested vacancies.

Thank you to all the candidates—successful or unsuccessful. It's now up to you, the local residents, to ensure that the new councillors are aware of your views so that they can represent the village over the next three years.

Here are their names, addresses and telephone numbers—and don't hesitate to contact them if you have any "local" problems:—

District Councillors:—

Peter M. Bennett, O.B.E., East Hill, The Crescent. Tel.: 2439.

Alan Butterfield, Elton, Elm Bank Road. Tel.: 3122.

Parish Councillors:

Philip R. B. Brooks, 20 Bluebell Close. Tel.: 3520.

Alan Butterfield, Elton, Elm Bank Road. Tel.: 3122.

Harry J. Helm, B.E.M., J.P., 11 Hedley Road. Tel.: 2548.

M. Ellen Jacobson, 14 Algernon Terrace. Tel.: 3598.

J. Isabel Jardine, Eskdale, Elm Bank Road, Tel.: 2118.

Jim B. Robinson, Haverbrack, Elm Bank Road. Tel.: 2493.

Monica D. Rowbotham, Fairholme, Elm Bank Road. Tel.: 3247.

John S. Stephenson, West Mews, Ovingham Road. Tel.: 2197.

WYLAM'S AMERICAN CONNECTION

How many people know of Wylam's close links with the American War of Independence?

Not many, we guess—the clue is in the name of one of the terraces in the village, and of an English General. The "common" name is Burgoyne. Elizabeth Burgoyne (after whom Burgoyne Terrace is named) was the wife of Christopher Blackett IV (Squire of Wylam 1829 - 1847 and son of the famous railway pioneer, Christopher Blackett III) and the mother of J. F. B. Blackett, founder of Wylam Institute and School.

Elizabeth Burgoyne was born in May, 1781, (a few weeks before George Stephenson) and was daughter and co-heir of Montague Burgoyne of Sutton, Bedfordshire; her grandmother was a cousin of General John Burgoyne, who commanded the English Army which was defeated at Saratoga in September, 1777—a turning point in the American War of Independence.

So now the residents of Burgoyne Terrace can boast of their American connection!

ANOTHER LINK WITH U.S.A.

Some of you will know that earlier this year a Mr. Tommy McCutcheon from Wylam, Alabama, U.S.A., spent a short time in the village during a holiday in Britain.

He created a strong impression on all who met him, by his friendliness and openness.

It appears that Wylam, Alabama was named after "our" Wylam in the late nineteenth century, and that the Martin Memorial United Methodist Church in Wylam Alabama was founded by a Mr. Thomas Martin who emigrated from this village to the States in the 1870's.

Following Mr. McCutcheon's visit Glynn Lister, the Methodist Minister has been invited by the Martin Memorial Church to undertake a two week preaching mission in September.

We hope that this will be the start of close links between the Churches and the two communities.

At present we know very little about Mr. Thomas Martin who went from Wylam, U.K. to Wylam, U.S.A., and if anyone knows anything about him or his family, please let Mr. Lister or Mrs. Fairless know.

RUBBISH REMINDER

A reminder that the District Council will collect all types of rubbish (including reasonable quantities of garden rubbish) if it is put out in sacks or boxes next to your dustbin. If you have very large or awkward items of rubbish, which could not be taken as part of the normal weekly collection, the District Council will arrange a special "free" collection—just contact the Environmental Health Department at Prospect House, Hexham. (Tel.: 0434 4011.)

But don't—repeat **don't**, dump your rubbish in verges, hedgerows or on the riverbanks in the village—otherwise you will be liable to £100 fine.

THOSE CRAZY DRIVERS

We have drawn attention previously to the criminal stupidity of drivers who speed through the Dene Estate where there is a high "small child" population.

There is no need for any motorist to drive at more than 20 m.p.h. on roads on the estate—and those who travel at speeds in excess of 30 m.p.h. (some between 40–50 m.p.h.) along the top stretch of Dene Road are morons (to put it politely!)

Although we have been in contact with the Police, the County Surveyor and the Road Safety Officer, none have been able to offer much hope in permanently solving this problem. Since the main offenders are apparently a handful of local residents and tradesmen it ought to be possible to "persuade" or "educate" them, to drive more sensibly.

So, residents of Dene Estate, if you see a motorist driving dangerously on the estate roads, make a note of the vehicle registration number and pass the information on to the Clerk of the Parish Council.

GOOD NEWS AT THE WATERWORKS

In our April issue we mentioned that all the local parish councils (of Wylam, Horsley, Ovingham and Ovington) had agreed that the top priority road improvement scheme in the area was on the length of the Wylam to Ovingham Road in the vicinity of the Waterworks.

We're pleased to report that the County Surveyor has now confirmed that the County Highways Committee are intending to undertake some improvements on this stretch of road to reduce the hazards both to motorists and pedestrians. The details of the improvements are at present being worked out—but should include provision of a footpath from Howdene Burn up to the Waterworks and immediately west of it.



Old Schools and Schoolmasters house Woodcroft Road. Now the Wylam Assembly, the school was built in 1854 and was used until 1910.

WYLAM BIBLE CLASS

John Caudle has contributed the following report:—

"The Bible Class is designed to present Jesus Christ as Saviour in a relevant and meaningful way to today's teenagers.

It was started about 15 years ago, although the form and approach have changed over these years. We now start the session on the first Wednesday in September at 7.30 p.m. in the Old Schools, Woodcroft Road, and continue until Christmas.

During the 1975 session between 30–40 young people attended each week commencing with the Opening Night at which a free supper was served.

A typical programme starts with lusty, and we hope, tuneful (sometimes) chorus singing followed by quizzes, competitions and memory texts, split up by songs from a visiting group. These proceedings are rounded off with a short gospel message and then pop and crisps are on sale for those who want them.

We held a sponsored walk over 20 miles last October and again had fine weather, returning to the hall to have tea (or just collapse.) Over the past six years the Bible Class has sent £900 to help missionary work in various parts of the world, ranging from Africa to behind the Iron Curtain. We would like to thank everyone who has helped us in the past.

In December the hall was packed to hear youth evangelist Ian Leitch together with the gospel group The Pathfinders and we thoroughly enjoyed their visit. Ian was also able to visit Prudhoe Secondary School to take assembly and speak at the Christian Union.

We were really pleased to see so many people from the village at our Christmas Carol Service and if you couldn't get along why not make it a date for this year? Again on Christmas Eve we were able to go around the village carol singing.

We were rather concerned last year at the small numbers of 11 to 12 years old lads. If you know of anyone, or are in this group yourself, please come along and support us. Can we just close with a general encouragement for all young people (11 years upwards) to come along in September. We know that you will enjoy it, so remember that you and your friends will be most welcome.

Further details can be obtained from me, (John Caudle) at 16 Stephenson Terrace (Tel. 3178.)"

BETTER LATE THAN NEVER: New Library to open on 2nd August

The need for additional redecoration work and other problems have delayed the opening of the new library in the old school on Falcon Terrace, But it is now definitely to open on 2nd August. Details of opening times were included in our last issue, any anyone who is not already a member of the County Library service can easily join by calling at the library and completing a registration card.

We hope that local residents will now make full use of the new library service which many people have pressed the County Council to provide.

NATIONAL PLAYGROUP WEEK—Report from Lyn Hares

As June 12th to 19th 1976 had been designated "National Playgroup Week" by the Pre-School Playgroup's Association, Wylam Playgroup decided to hold a small fair on June 12th this year instead of running pancake races as in previous years. The event was held on Charlie's Corner and included as its main attractions a Grand Fancy Dress Parade past the Old Peoples' Bungalows, during which the children "played" various "musical" instruments, and a puppet show, featuring two of the "Mr. Men" stories, apart from the usual sales of cakes, biscuits, fancy goods and balloons, plus games for the children.

The event was enjoyed by all, and our thanks go to all who helped in any way. It was followed by Open Week in Playgroup itself when anyone who was interested could come in and see for themselves what Playgroup's motto, "Playing is Learning for Living" is all about. The Wylam children also made a tableau of one of their favourite books, "The Hungry Caterpillar," which was on show in Prudhoe Library during the week and much admired by entomologists of all ages!

DENE ESTATE—Use of open spaces

Many of you will remember the problems which occurred about two years ago, concerning the use of the open spaces and landscaped areas on the Dene Estate.

Fortunately common sense prevailed and there have been no complaints about the misuse of these areas, until the last month or two.

We are therefore taking the opportunity of reminding you of what we said in the "Globe" in July 1974—which is still applicable today.

1. Two areas are available as general play areas (including informal ball games) for children of all ages. These are in Engine Dene (behind Nos. 5-9 Dene Road) and in the north-east corner of the Dene Estate (on the footpath to Rift Farm.)

2. None of the other areas within the Dene Estate is suitable for use by children over eight years old, since these areas are small, landscaped and close to houses.

The nine year olds and above (including adults) should use the general play areas in Engine Dene or in the north-east corner of the estate (mentioned in 1 above.)

In any high density housing development like Dene Estate it is particularly important that everyone adopts a reasonable attitude, whether it concerns the use of open spaces, the control of dogs, or in the volume of noise from late-night activities.

We therefore ask everyone to use the open spaces sensibly, avoiding damage to trees or neighbouring gardens, and not allowing dogs to foul these areas or the verges.

Good use is now being made of the Engine Dene and the N.E. corner, for informal games of cricket and football—and parents are requested to ensure that the older children use these two areas for play—and not the smaller areas. We hope that parents themselves will also set a good example to the children.

ADULT LITERACY . . . Can you help?

Did you know that help is now available in this area to adults who have difficulty in reading? This help is free, is private, and is on a one-student/one-tutor basis. Each student may choose where and how he has his tuition—alone, with a friend, in his own home or in any of the many centres throughout the county.

To get this free, private help with reading, writing or spelling, contact must first be made with

Miss M. Dodd, Prudhoe 32998.

Miss Dodd sees that a suitable tutor is given the sole job of concentrating on that one student's needs and problems.

How can you help? Talk about the scheme to your friends. Even if you don't know of anyone with a literacy problem, it is just possible that your friends know of someone. Your help is needed to reach that person in order to give him or her the opportunity of doing what you are doing now—reading for pleasure.

P.S. We hope that you read this newsletter for pleasure! If you know of anyone who has difficulty in reading, writing or spelling, suggest that they contact Miss Dodd—you may be doing them a good turn. (Editor)



Bumbler Box bridge (off Woodcroft Road). Repairs in progress May, 1976. Now completed.

OLD RAILWAY TRACK AND RIVERSIDE— Improvements in progress

The County Council will be carrying out further work to improve the old railway track including the provision of barriers to stop it being used as a racetrack by motorcyclists, the construction of a new ramped path from the track up to the Bumbler Box bridge (the one off Woodcroft Road) and minor levelling work on the riverside open spaces. A Portaloo toilet unit is also to be provided in a well-screened position on the riverside (just west of Stephenson's Cottage.) This is intended as a temporary measure until such time as a permanent toilet block is built in the old station yard car park.

WHO'S ON WHAT

At its first meeting following the elections, the Parish Council unanimously elected Jim Robinson as Chairman and Philip Brooks as Vice-Chairman for the forthcoming year. John Stephenson was appointed to the Blckett and Gregson Charity Trust and Alan Butterfield and Isabel Jardine were appointed to the Ovingham Joint Burial Board (not quite such a depressing job as it might appear!)

The two Parish Council representatives on the Wylam School Managers will be Philip Brooks and Ellen Jacobson. Harry Helm has been appointed to the Tynedale Sports Council.

All correspondence relating to this Newsletter should be addressed to Mrs. D. Fairless, The Clerk of the Parish Council, 31 Falcon Terrace, Wylam.

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