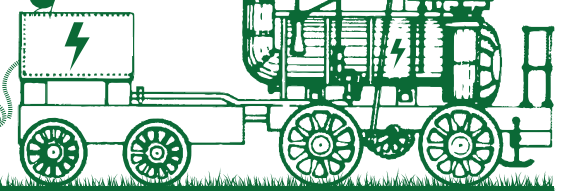


# THE WYLAM GLOBE

NEWSLETTER OF  
WYLAM PARISH  
COUNCIL



## WYLAM CLIMATE EMERGENCY SPECIAL ISSUE



**COVER PHOTO** : A poster by Lauren Tetley from Ovingham Middle School Eco Council, which was displayed at the Wylam Climate Action Event

**At its meeting** on November 8th 2021, Wylam Parish Council declared a Climate Emergency.

Subsequently, on November 20th 2021, the Council organised a special Climate Action Event at Wylam Institute.

This was so well attended and positively received in the village that we decided to publish a unique special "Green" issue of The Wylam Globe comprised of articles from those who helped to make the Climate Action Event such a success.

We hope you enjoy reading it!



The Climate Action Event took place at Wylam Institute on November 20th 2021



# INTRODUCTION & THANKS

Parish Councillor  
John Hanley



A packed hall at Wylam Institute during the Climate Action Event

Wylam Parish Council has declared a climate emergency! So what? What does climate change have to do with the Parish Council?

With recent global and national events, the climate crisis seems to have slipped out of the headlines. It's only a few months since the United Nations COP26 conference, in Glasgow, when governments from around the world made a range of pledges to reduce carbon emissions to counter the warming of the planet. The mood was summed up by one speaker:

**“Make this the moment when we began irrefutably to turn the tide and to begin the fightback against climate change”**

You might expect this quote to be attributed to Sir David Attenborough, or any number of climate scientists, but it was actually our own Prime Minister, Boris Johnson.

We can already see the effects of climate change close to home. Recent severe weather events have led to power cuts, property damage, increased flood risk and changes to the behaviours of plants and animals. Climate change is as much a local issue as an international issue.

The UK Government has set out a strategy to achieve “Net Zero” by

2050. Many experts think this is not ambitious enough to prevent significant global warming. That remains to be seen but what is clear to everyone, apart from a diminishing number of “climate sceptics”, is that we all need to contribute to the challenge of dealing with climate change in whatever way we can.

This may involve changes to the way we are living, how we travel, how we heat our homes or what we eat. We all need to think about this and take some action.

There's much we can do as individuals, but what can we do as a community? That's where the Parish Council can have a role, and this special issue of the Wylam Globe aims to drive discussion.

Following the Climate Action Event, Wylam Parish Council formed a Climate Action Group which has now been joined by many residents. Several projects looking at transport, home heating / insulation and river health are already underway. If you would like to get involved, please contact the Parish Council Clerk (contact details on page 8).

We would like to thank everybody who helped organise the event in November, and all those who attended. Special thanks must go to Robin Piette and the WI who provided

essential refreshments, and to Wylam Institute for hosting the event.

We hope you find this special issue of The Wylam Globe an interesting and thought-provoking read. If you have any comments or feedback, please contact the Parish Council Clerk (contact details on page 8).

## CLIMATE & WASTE

Hannah  
Davison



Hannah Davison from NCC at the Climate Action Event

Measures brought forward by the Environment Act will see local authorities across England transform their recycling and waste services to better benefit the planet.

Northumberland County Council expects these measures, mandating collection of various recyclables, will see residents more empowered to recycle their waste and reduce emissions from the residual waste stream.

The transformation of waste services awaits guidance to be released later this year and will require careful planning and modelling to implement across the county.

The guidance to be published is anticipated to allow assessments of the benefits of introducing new services to avoid unintended adverse impacts.

Other provisions such as the Extended Producer Responsibility and Plastics Tax will place obligations on producers and distributors of plastic packaging and will help to fund the measures required to be implemented by Local Authorities.

Across the wider climate brief, the team at Northumberland County Council have been pushing projects across all seven of the priority action areas as outlined in the Council's climate change action plan.



# THE IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNITY ACTION

County Councillor  
Holly Waddell



Holly Waddell speaking at the Wylam Climate Action Event

Thank you to Wylam Parish Council for inviting me to speak at the Climate Action Event. As your local councillor, I am a member of Northumberland County Council's Climate Change Working Group.

Northumberland has huge potential as a county to punch above its weight to meet the COP goals for the whole country. We can help

with mitigation and adaptation, be a major carbon sink, protect the vulnerable and restore wild habitats. We also have major opportunities for investment in green industries. As a large rural county with a low population, we have huge potential for carbon storage in natural resources.

I have already been outspoken on Northumberland Council's Climate Action Plan. I don't believe it goes far enough to tackle the Climate Emergency. It focuses only on the Council's own Carbon Dioxide Emissions but says nothing about the rest of the county.

Communities like Wylam are, therefore, essential to tackling this issue. Parish Councils declaring their own climate emergencies are leading the way. Since the Climate Action Event in Wylam other councillors in County Hall have stopped me to ask about the work Wylam is doing, and I hope to see other Parish Councils

following your example. Wylam is certainly making its mark.

NALC (The Northumberland Association of Local Councils) believes that collectively, across 10,000 local councils, we can tackle climate change locally and create more climate-friendly communities.

As individuals and small organisations we can often feel overwhelmed by the issue of climate change, but by taking action on a small level and working together, we can collectively make change. We have already seen the impact of the collective action of individuals with the school strikers - young people pushing environmental issues to the top of the agenda. While we still need to hold the big polluters to account, and to push our governments to take action, local communities and individuals are vital.

As Greta Thunberg so rightly says, no one is too small to make a difference!

# OVINGHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL ECO COUNCIL

Lauren  
Tetley

Hello, my name is Lauren. I am 11 years old and I am on Ovingham Middle School Eco Council.

I love our environment and everything to do with it. I am sure many of you are as passionate as me but did you know every day 8 million bits of plastic end up in the ocean? That is the same as a rubbish truck-full every minute! If pollution and over-fishing continue at their current rates, by 2048 there will be no fish left in our oceans.

Did you know that because of climate change the number of floods, droughts and wildfires have more than doubled in the last 40 years?

I love being on the Eco Council because I know I am making a difference. For example, we made a huge poster creating awareness about the environment throughout the school. We protected a hedgehog's habitat, therefore helping an endangered species. We did a litter pick around the school grounds possibly saving an animal from choking. So you see, even the tiniest things can make a huge difference. Even just not using a straw can be beneficial because plastic and paper straws are often not recycled.

Many things we take for granted



Members of Ovingham Middle School Eco Council at the Climate Action Event

as normal can be really bad for the environment – but they might not always have been. Chewing gum, for example, used to be made from natural ingredients like tree sap. But now it is made from a type of plastic that takes 500 years to decompose! So think about that before you go shopping.

Red meat is also not that good for the environment. Every cow needs a field, food, and lots of water. Cows also produce a lot of waste, for example methane gas. Forests are being cleared to make space for meat production. Try a few meals when you don't eat meat!

My favourite animals are bees. As well as making honey, bees pollinate lots of our foods like cherries, coffee plants, tomatoes and turnips! Unfortunately, though, bees are going extinct, so think again before screaming and whacking a bee for fear it will sting you because bees, although small, are very important. Think about growing a bee friendly garden. When you are tasting some delicious honey, remember that it is all because of the hard work of a bee.

Thank you for reading! I hope you have learnt that small things, and small people, can make a big difference!



# MANAGEMENT OF WYLAM HAUGHS NATURE RESERVE

Liz  
Bray



Volunteer Tree Warden Liz Bray, with Parish Councillors Martyn Jones and Diana Carney at the Wylam Climate Event

The Parish Council Nature Reserve Management Group attended the climate change event to show what progress we are making developing a Management Plan for the Nature Reserve and to ask attendees for feedback and input.

Improving biodiversity and protecting wildlife is important in the battle against the harmful impacts of climate change. Following an ecology report in 2019, we developed a draft Action Plan. Tasks have been identified, to be implemented over the next five years, to protect and improve our local wildlife.

After a four year period when very little work was done in the Reserve, we made some progress in 2021 :

- A small pilot area was thinned and coppiced.
- Three areas of very tall brambles were cleared. We discovered a hawthorn tree completely submerged under brambles!
- Thorny shrubs close to the paths were pruned back.

- Main path verges in the reserve were strimmed twice in the summer.
- The meadows were strimmed in the autumn. A group of volunteers raked off the cuttings.
- A record of wild flowers found in the Reserve was made. This was last done in 2012. There were pleasant surprises new to the list and we have discovered that there is an established patch of locally scarce dune helleborines (orchids).
- Three small areas in the meadows were seeded with yellow rattle, a native species recommended by the ecologists to improve the diversity of wild flowers (rattle is parasitic on grass roots).
- New specially designed signs were installed at the entrances to the Reserve.

For 2022, there will be some more selective cutting of dense bramble and thorny shrubs, the idea being to tackle a small portion each year in rotation, retaining plenty of wildlife cover. The meadows and verges will

be cut again and a modest amount of coppicing may take place.

There is a proposed schedule of tree work for late 2022 to remove 12 semi-mature trees: 2 are diseased and dying, 6 are affecting the allotments and 4 are shading out other trees and vegetation below, inhibiting growth. We will plant replacements for any trees removed. Dead wood



New signage at the entrances to the reserve

will remain on the Reserve for invertebrate habitat. No work to trees and shrubs will happen after the end of February because, by then, birds are nesting.

The Management Group aim to create a Friends Group for the Reserve and establish a regular team of volunteers. There are lots of opportunities for adult volunteers to suit different abilities and interests.

Are there any botanists out there who would like to conduct a regular survey or volunteers to put up nest boxes and feeders for birds, bats and red squirrels?

For more information or to volunteer please get in touch by emailing the Parish Council Clerk (contact details on Page 8).



Volunteers Jennifer Power, Denis Peel, Martyn Jones, Sam Todd and Liz Bray raking the meadows

## CHANGING THE WAY WE PRODUCE FOOD

Chris  
Morrison

Concerns about food miles, supply chains, pesticides, water management, plastic wrapping, food security, and environmental sustainability led to a plan to acquire some land and set up a community owned farm.

We decided that to be more sustainable we needed to be producers as well as consumers, and discovered that we were not alone in our desire to demonstrate alternative ways of producing food for our communities. There are



## CLIMATE, COVID & COMMUNITY

Andy Haddon



Paul Fletcher from GO Local at the Climate Action Event lots of examples across the UK of Community Supported Agriculture. See the CSA Network website for more details :

[communitysupportedagriculture.org.uk](http://communitysupportedagriculture.org.uk)

A changing climate presents new challenges which the flexibility of smaller scale farmers and growers are more equipped to deal with. Over the past 10 years GO Local Food has learnt a great deal about soil, pests and plants. It is, of course, a voyage of discovery and has been by no means an easy journey. Today we have over 100 members of our co-operative, grow seasonal veg on 4.5 acres of land across two sites (Ovington & Matfen) with five poly tunnels and an ambition for much more!

To find out more about us, visit :

[www.golocalfood.org.uk](http://www.golocalfood.org.uk)



Andy Haddon demonstrates baking and beekeeping skills

As I write this, yet another storm blows through Wylam and I feel, like many, that old certainties have been blown away by the challenge of Covid we have faced in recent years.

Huge challenges can lead to a sense of individual hopelessness, then inaction. To counter this, the power of community action in Wylam, and elsewhere, has brought hope and helped many through these strange times.

Climate change is a similarly huge challenge facing all of humanity. Again, the risk is that we become despondent and inaction follows. What brings hope is the increasing number of people, concerned for our future, taking individual actions such

as cutting out car use or buying food without plastic packaging. Individual actions are important but developing solutions at the community level is the step change required.

An example is heating and electricity. With the recent power cuts and price hikes, maybe now is the time to consider district heat schemes at the community level in Wylam using the minewater in the workings under much of the village, or a local electricity power grid with battery storage to avoid future power cuts. These solutions can address environmental concerns whilst saving individuals money and providing reliable heat and power.

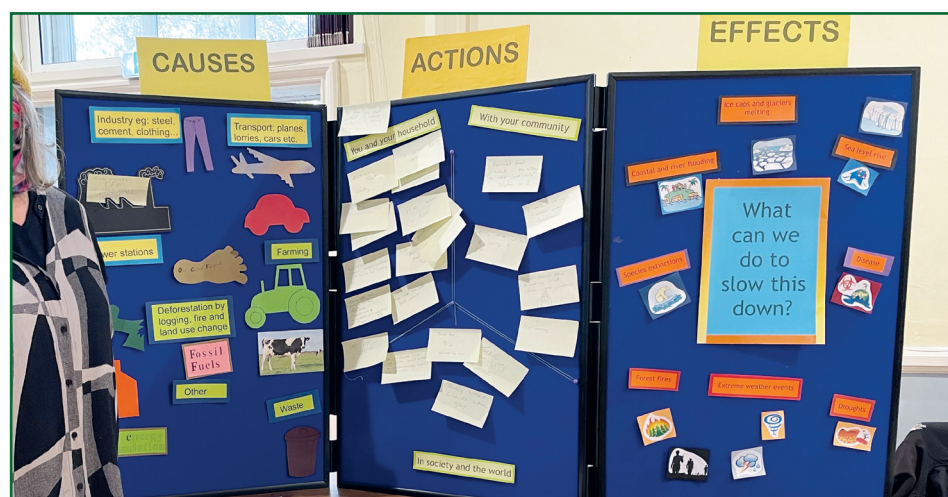
Examples of smaller community projects have been suggested such as car club cars for the village or a community hub for local businesses to create a social hub and reduce the need to travel by car. I am sure you also have ideas, large and small.

Some of the greatest ideas which heralded carboniferous capitalism came out of Wylam. So it would be great to see ideas come from Wylam for a sustainable future.

So get your thinking caps on and get involved to make Wylam a leading light showing other communities what a truly sustainable community can be.

## CHANGE BEHAVIOURS TO CHANGE THE WORLD

Wendy Wood



TWiG display at the Wylam Climate Action Event

This thought-provoking display was loaned by the climate action group called TWiG (Transition West Gateshead). It is a simple way of showing the causes and effects of climate change, challenging us to think about how our actions as individuals, households, as a

community and a nation can help to slow down climate change.

Visitors to the climate event made pledges via Post-It notes on the central "ACTIONS" board of the display. The pledges fell into five broad categories:

- Food (make meat a treat or opting

- for a vegetarian or vegan diet)
- Recycling/upcycling/Freecycling (repair rather than buy new)
- Personal transport (use public transport or cycle rather than drive)
- Household energy (turn heating down/off, consider other heating technologies or insulation improvement)
- Consumption (buy local/seasonal produce and fewer consumer goods)

Pledges on community action came from local councillors, Wylam Scouts leaders, Wylam WI, Wylam Community Playing Field Association, and Wylam Rockets. These included pressing for meaningful action by principal and local authorities, encouraging awareness of the environment, having green policies in place, hosting rescued food events, car sharing and tree planting.

Lots to think about and we've made a good start!



# THE CLEAN TYNE GROUP

Stephen  
Westgarth



The River Tyne at Wylam (Photo credit Paul Macchiarelli)

Winston Churchill spoke of another river when he said;

**“The Thames is no ordinary waterway, it is the golden thread of our nation’s history.”**

Yet that sentiment has even more meaning for us in Wylam when we think of our evocative River Tyne. The Tyne is only a small river by comparison to the Nile, Amazon or Ganges, but it has a big reputation the world over for coal, shipyards, and as the source of the Industrial Revolution.

The Tyne flows through our village and our lives. We see some wildlife and people involved with the river. An occasional salmon, otter, or kingfisher. The anglers, paddle boarders, swimmers, and walkers on its banks.

The Tyne was cleaned up through Acts of Parliament in the 19th and 20th century. Wildlife got a chance to get a foothold again. But it is desperately polluted once again, and there are too many threats for the Tyne to absorb. England’s rivers are the most polluted in Europe, according to a recent major report. I defy anyone who disagrees with me to drink a glass of Tyne water. Yet we use it for our leisure, and expect wildlife to live in it.

We know that Water Companies use “storm overflow” rules to discharge sewage many hundreds of times a year. They often do this when there is no heavy rain. We know that septic tanks are often poorly maintained, continually dribbling untreated sewerage into

the river. We know that some farming practices poison upland streams, where manure heaps or synthetic pyrethroids from sheep dips drain. There are too many pollutants to name here.

What can we do? It seems insurmountable.

The nearby River Wharfe is cleaning up its act. Ilkley locals started a website :

[www.ilkleycleanriver.uk](http://www.ilkleycleanriver.uk)

Their aim is to protect the river from pollution, for wildlife and people to enjoy. They have started cleaning up the river, and using water sampling, legislation and public pressure on polluters who use the river as a free source of disposal. They have had real success.

I want to do the same in Wylam for the Tyne. This is not a six month process, but a long term project, needing input from many stakeholders, and over years, if not decades.

If you are interested in helping, coming to meetings and delivering some action, writing to our representatives, signing petitions, using the river, water sampling, or even just in encouraging us, then get in touch with me. We will make a start.

[DrStephenWestgarth@gmail.com](mailto:DrStephenWestgarth@gmail.com)

We have also started a Clean Tyne Group Facebook public page which you can follow for updates :



Clean Tyne Group

# HUMSHAUGH NET ZERO

Herbie  
Newell



Herbie Newell speaking at the Wylam Climate Action Event

Humshaugh Net Zero was formed as a Community Interest Company by Humshaugh residents with the aim of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2030.

A household survey demonstrated that current Humshaugh residential carbon dioxide emissions are about 5,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> per annum, with an additional 2,500 tonnes of CO<sub>2e</sub> per annum due to agriculture.

Achieving net zero carbon dioxide emissions in Humshaugh will involve a combination of:

- Increased carbon dioxide sequestration by woodland.
- Reduced household, transport-related and agricultural emissions.
- Access to genuinely low-carbon electricity, generated either locally or nationally, at a level that meets all the needs of Humshaugh.

Independent consultants have identified PV solar, wind turbines, electricity storage, heat networks and energy trading as priority areas for further evaluation in reducing the carbon footprint of Humshaugh.

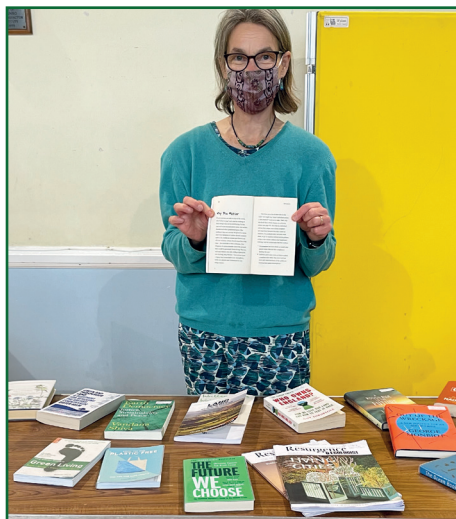
The community and key stakeholders both within and beyond Humshaugh are being engaged and current projects are:

- An evaluation of the contribution of agriculture and non-residential properties to the carbon footprint of Humshaugh.
- Preparation of the first draft of a comprehensive action plan for achieving net zero by 2030 in consultation with the community and local and regional stakeholders, including: landowners, farmers, business enterprises, Humshaugh Parish Council, Northumberland County Council, Community Action Northumberland.



# THE POWER OF GREEN BOOKS!

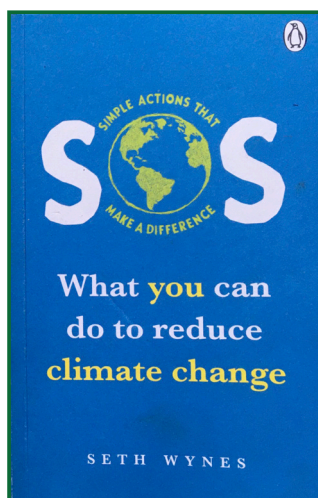
Jennifer Power



Jennifer Power with a selection of 'green' books

On a mission to feel more optimistic and to nudge myself into action over Climate Change, I have been book browsing. Here are two books that were enjoyable and helpful :

## SOS: WHAT YOU CAN DO TO REDUCE CLIMATE CHANGE BY SETH WYNES



A small booklet that asks two big questions:

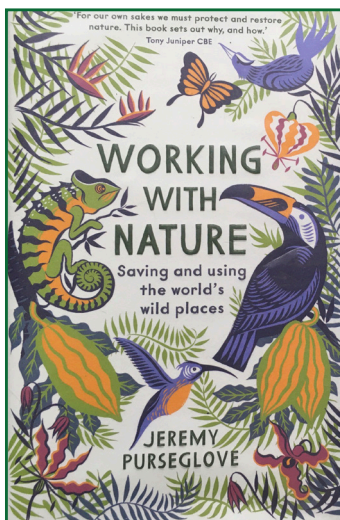
- Do my individual actions matter at all?
- What actions matter most?

It convinced me that yes, what I do does matter because we rarely act in isolation: we post travel photos, eat meals with others etc. And social research shows that people's behaviour is influenced by what they see others doing, creating a ripple-on effect.

So which actions will create the most ripple in reducing CO<sub>2</sub>? The authors confirm what other researchers have found, that for us in the Global North, the three 'biggies'

are Transport, Food choices and our Home energy use. Seth Wynes' book suggests clearly how we can start to reduce our own carbon output which I think is very challenging but helps us start somewhere.

## WORKING WITH NATURE BY JEREMY PURSEGLOVE



This is a wonderful book; an easy, action-packed read with marvellous anecdotes from a childhood in Singapore, Trinidad and Kent and from forty years working "on the frontline of global nature conservation". Jeremy Purseglove shows that we can reverse or at least mitigate damage, whether that is in the palm oil plantations destroying Borneo's rainforest or the cereal monocultures of Britain. He believes passionately that harvesting the earth's resources carefully is the best way to protect them. One lovely example is from Trinidad, where cocoa farmers growing sustainably-certified (and more profitable) cocoa need to keep the rainforest for a canopy to shade their precious crop. They have a far bigger incentive to protect the forest from loggers than distant governments or international bodies.

I loved reading this book, but in the final chapter Jeremy Purseglove also sets us a challenge: How much 'stuff' do I really need to consume? As he puts it, "We can nibble away at the cocoa forest but we cannot afford to swallow the whole lot".

Both these books are available through Wylam Library. Margaret, the Librarian can produce a range of books about biodiversity and climate change for adults and children.

# RENEWABLE ENERGY HEATING

Mike Domingue



Mike Domingue at the Wylam Climate Action Event

The average house produces 2.7 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub> every year from burning fossil fuels like oil and gas. We can drastically reduce the amount of fossil fuels we use by replacing gas boilers with renewable heat alternatives such as solar thermal, air source heat pump, ground source heat pump and biomass.

Time is running out to take advantage of the current government incentive for homeowners to switch to renewable heating. The Renewable Heat Incentive (RHI) offers regular payments over a period of 20 year to homeowners, based on the heat output of your heating system.

If you are interested in the RHI, you need to act immediately as the scheme will close at the end of March 2022, and your new heating system must be installed before you can apply for funding :

[www.gov.uk/  
domestic-renewable-heat-incentive](http://www.gov.uk/domestic-renewable-heat-incentive)

The RHI is expected to be replaced by the Boiler Upgrade Scheme (BUS) in April 2022, previously referred to as the Clean Heat Grant. This new incentive will run for 3 years and the government has set aside a budget of £450 million for the project.

Like the RHI, the new incentive will offer home and small business owners a grant towards the installation costs of renewable heat technology through vouchers that could cover upfront costs of up to £5,000. More information can be found here :

[www.ofgem.gov.uk/  
environmental-and-social-schemes](http://www.ofgem.gov.uk/environmental-and-social-schemes)



# WYLAM COMMUNITY ORCHARD

Kate Jones



Apple trees in Wylam Community Orchard

The orchard project began in 2010 with the aim of producing organically grown fruit for the local community and increasing the biodiversity of the whole site.

Members can learn how to grow and maintain the trees, fruit bushes and wildflowers and we share our skills and knowledge with other communities, encouraging more people to set up their own orchard projects or just to develop an interest in nature.

All members can share in the harvest and enjoy many varieties

of apples not available in the supermarket. Some fruit is sold to local restaurants who are keen to put locally sourced fruit on their menus.

Our award winning wildflower meadow attracts a wide range of insects to help pollinate the fruit trees, and annual surveys show that our bird and bat boxes are well used. Autumn surveys have found both common and soprano pipistrelles on site.

Members can support the orchard in many ways: joining in the work sessions, helping to run orchard

events, taking part in biodiversity surveys, raising wildflower seedlings at home, picking fruit or simply through their £5 individual, £10 family or £20 corporate annual subscription.

The orchard is situated in the First School grounds. Visitors are welcome so why not come along to one of our fortnightly sessions. The next sessions are on Sunday 6th and 20th March, 1-3pm.

Email us for more details :

[wylamcommunityorchard@gmail.com](mailto:wylamcommunityorchard@gmail.com)

or see our Facebook page :



Wylam Community Orchard

## WYLAM ON WHEELS

"Wylam on Wheels" is a fantastic new cycling event, being organised by The Wylam Sprockets' cycling group. It will take place on Sunday 18th September and aims to cater for all abilities with 3 routes.

'Couch to 25k' and 'Couch to 50k' are routes for novice cyclists or those a little out of practice. The hilly '60k Challenger' route is for those who cycle regularly. All routes start from and finish at the Jubilee Playing Field and will be well signed, through beautiful countryside, on relatively quiet roads. Feed stations are provided mid-way. Afternoon tea will be served on the Jubilee Field after the ride and non-participants are encouraged to come down and join us. Funds raised will go to Wylam Community Playing Fields. For more information, or to enter please visit :

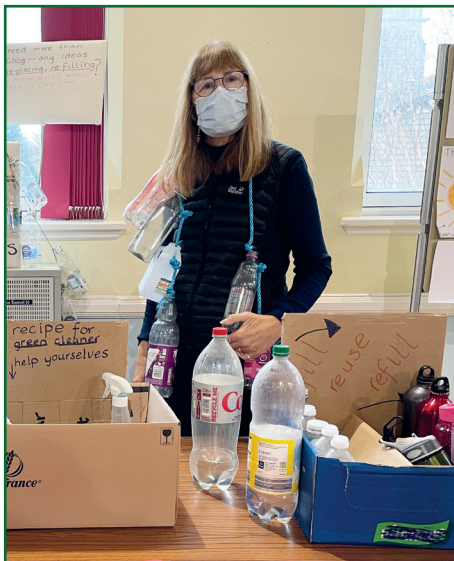
[www.wylamonwheels.co.uk](http://www.wylamonwheels.co.uk)

or email :

[wylamonwheels@gmail.com](mailto:wylamonwheels@gmail.com)

## CUTTING SINGLE USE PLASTIC

Lynne Wood



Lynne Wood with a selection of single-use plastic items

Plastic has become an unavoidable part of modern life, prized for its flexibility. It has also been identified as a destroyer of animals and their habitats. Indeed very soon the weight of plastic in the sea will be greater than the weight of fish! We must

use our imagination, creativity and sense of urgency to push back this plastic tide. Some of the single use plastics we have to fight are plastic bottles, wet wipes, straws, bathroom containers and many more

The key words are :

**Recycle, Rethink, Reduce, Refill**

We will need to adopt different habits, for example replacing shampoos and conditioners with soap bars, plastic bottles with refillable sports bottles and chemical cleaners with home-made products. To help, here is a recipe for homemade surface cleaner: 1 cup white vinegar, 1 cup water, 10 drops essential oil, 1(used) spray bottle.

Spread the news and we can make a difference! A big thank you to all the people who collected plastic bottles to adorn the stall, to Jean Firth who paraded with a banner so effectively, and all those at the event who promised to say goodbye to single use plastic water bottles!

## GET IN TOUCH!

We'd love to hear from you!

Please contact :

**Marie Moore**

Clerk to the Parish Council



[clerk@](mailto:clerk@wylamparishcouncil.org.uk)

[wylamparishcouncil.org.uk](mailto:wylamparishcouncil.org.uk)

[www.wylamparishcouncil.org.uk](http://www.wylamparishcouncil.org.uk)



Wylam Parish Council

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