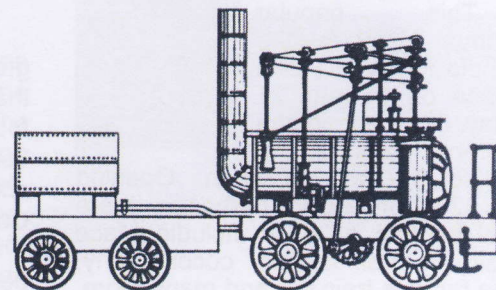


THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council



Spring 2017

No. 124

A Neighbourhood Plan for Wylam?

At the Annual Village Meeting in May 2016, the Parish Council was asked to give serious consideration to making a Neighbourhood Plan for Wylam.

A Neighbourhood Plan is a community-led framework for guiding the future development and growth of an area. It relates to the use and development of land and associated social, economic and environmental issues. It may deal with a wide range of issues (like housing, employment, heritage and transport) or it may focus on one or two issues that are of particular importance in the local area. It will be subject to examination and referendum and, if passed, will form part of the Local Development Plan. This statutory status gives Neighbourhood Plans far more weight than some other local planning documents such as the 2003 Wylam Parish Plan.

Following consultation with, and advice from, David English, the County Council's Communities and Infrastructure Manager with responsibility for Strategic Planning and Housing, the Parish Council is asking you for your Wish List for the Wylam of the future. David English has agreed to examine the Wish List and guide the Parish Council as to which issues and projects listed by residents fall within the scope of a Neighbourhood Plan.

How do you see Wylam in ten years' time? What would you protect? What changes would you like to see? What aspects of village life could be further developed? What projects would you like to see implemented or developed further? What are the important issues that affect Wylam?

Please send your thoughts for our Wish List by letter, email or via our website, to the Parish Clerk, Mrs. Diana Carney (contact details at the end of this newsletter).

Stephenson's Cottage Row Rumbles On!



The sudden and totally unexpected decision by the National Trust to close the birthplace of George Stephenson, together with the associated Tea Room, to the public for a year, with no firm indication that it will then open again, has sent shock-waves throughout Wylam, other local communities and places much further away.

We assume that the widespread media coverage which followed this decision will mean that most people will already know a good deal about this story.

Wylam Parish Council considers this property to be a valuable part of our local heritage, in an area where some of the most important pioneering railway developments took place. Although small, the cottage offers a fascinating insight into domestic

living in the early part of the 19th Century. We believe that improved direction signs and publicity, together with the establishment of better links to the Parish Council's own Railway Museum, are just a few of the things that could contribute to this site remaining viable.

Wylam Parish Council reacted swiftly in writing to the Trust to express dismay at the decision, particularly without any prior public consultation and based on what appear to be very tenuous arguments.

The Parish Council has a meeting scheduled with the National Trust and you can be assured that we will continue to argue very strongly for the closure decision to be reversed, particularly during the busier summer months.

We know that many other groups and individuals are also adding their voices to this campaign and we hope this will continue. As we go to press we do know that an on-line petition has already drawn nearly 2500 signatures. If we do have anything significant to report after this newsletter is published, it will appear on our website.

Village Litter Pick

It soon comes around, doesn't it! As usual, we hope that this issue will reach you in time to encourage many of you to help out.

On Saturday 25 March the Parish Council invites you to assemble from 10.00am at the Country Park Car Park.

Help is invited from individuals and groups and each volunteer can nominate a village organisation to receive a small donation – as long as that organisation has a bank account.

Children are welcome but must be supervised at all times by an adult. Suitable old clothing and strong footwear is essential and we will require everyone taking part to observe basic health & safety advice, which will be provided before you begin.

You will be asked to clean up within a specific area of the village but we try to accommodate personal preferences where possible. Work usually finishes by lunchtime, but if you can only spare an hour or so, please come.

Thank you, in anticipation of your help.

"Jump for Joy"

This popular annual event for the whole family will take place on Sunday 21 May this year in the serene grounds and hall of St Oswin's Church. Opening at 12 noon with a barbecue, there will be lots of stalls including face painting, bell ringing, coconut shy, the famous train set and many more. There will, of course, be scrumptious teas and the event will feature the flight of parachuted teddy bears descending from the clock tower! The Sunshine Panners Steel Band will also be playing again this year.

It's an afternoon not to be missed, so book the date!



Handy Help Needed

Wylam Institute is looking for a volunteer "handy person" for simple DIY jobs (such as changing light bulbs), usually at short notice! Anyone interested should get in touch with Fiona or Marg at the Institute Office, telephone 852498 or email wylaminstitute2@gmail.com

Annual Village Meeting

Although all meetings of the Parish Council are open to members of the public and an opportunity is provided for questions to be put to the Council, each year we are required to hold an additional meeting, primarily for the Council to report more generally on the activities of the year and to address any current issues of general interest.

This year the meeting will take place on Wednesday 26 April at 7.30pm in St Oswin's Parish Church Hall. We hope you will try to come along.

It is our usual practice to invite someone to speak to this meeting on a topic of current interest and importance. As we go to press a decision about a speaker is still to be finalised, so do look out for public notices about the meeting, which will be displayed around the village nearer the time and will indicate the full agenda for the meeting.

Mystery Solved!

Our previous issue described the mystery of the missing decorative "Wylam" plaque from the top of Holey Hall Road.

We are pleased to report that the owner of "Fallen Tree Farm" had recovered it after the plinth collapsed and thoughtfully passed it to a member of the County Council Highways staff. It was eventually tracked down to one of their depots. The plaque is now safely back in Parish Council hands and consideration is being given to exactly where and how it might conveniently and safely be re-sited

A Wake Up Call - Elections Coming Up

Thursday 4 May is a date of great importance. It's the chance that only comes around once every four years when everyone eligible to vote has the chance to play a part in choosing who will serve on our County and Parish Councils.

For many years there have not been sufficient nominations to actually require a contested ballot for the eight seats on Wylam Parish Council, and so nominees have been automatically elected.

We do know that four members of the present Parish Council are not intending to stand this time, which increases the need for others to seriously consider if this is the time for them to put something back into the community.

Being a Parish Councillor requires no specific qualifications. It does require a commitment, but the time demanded can vary, depending

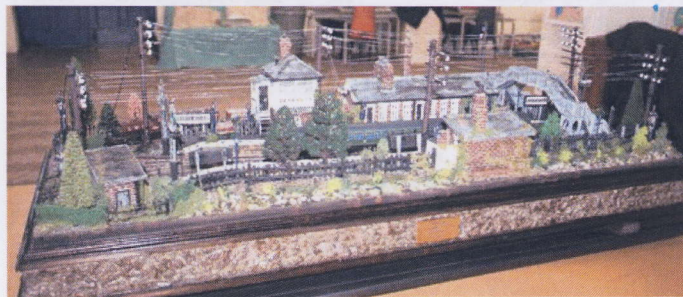
on the circumstances of the individual.

Ask any of the retiring members and we are sure they will all confirm what a privilege it is to serve the community in this way.

The official notice of the election is to be published on 20 March, with the close of nominations at 4.00pm on Tuesday 4 April. The necessary forms will be available either electronically or from County Council Information Centres.

Please note that, by law, completed nomination forms must be hand-delivered (by the nominee or another person) to local election offices or to County Hall. Further advice is available from the Clerk to the Parish Council and the Clerk or any current member of the Council will be pleased to answer any questions you may have about the Parish Council and its activities.

New Exhibits



The Parish Council has recently received two new items for the Railway Museum at the Falcon Centre.

One is a model based on the North Wylam Railway Station, which was of course located on the site of what is now the Country Park Car Park.

The model, shown here, was made by and very kindly donated to us by Dariusz Sobon, a Polish man from Oxford who has made a number of visits to Wylam with his friend Michael Pearson, who was born and brought up in Wylam and whose mother still lives here.

We are very grateful to Dariusz for his hours of painstaking work, which was based on limited photographic evidence and a certain amount of thoughtful imagination. Dariusz says that Wylam is a place he has come to love, and this affection can be seen in the care he has obviously taken with this model.

The other item, though very much smaller, is the original North Wylam Station Master's Bell, donated to us by David Bixby. David

was born in Wylam and attended the school on Falcon Terrace in the 1940s. He inherited the bell from his father, to whom it had been given by a former

employee of the North Eastern Railway (NER), which was incorporated in 1854 and became part of the London and North Eastern Railway (LNER) in 1923.



In the second picture Dariusz can be seen holding the bell while talking to Vice-Chairman Tom Martin when his model was received into the museum.

Houses Taking Shape

The development by Gentoo Homes has experienced some delays, with the "affordable" houses on the east side of the road, now not expected to be finished before May.

The three of these houses at the south end have already been reserved at a discounted market sale value, the other eight having been sold to "Arch", the property and investment wing of Northumberland County Council, to be let at a discounted market sale value.

On the west side, the first seven houses although still at an early stage of construction, were apparently all reserved within days of being released for sale.

The Parish Council has recently met with senior representatives from Gentoo Homes to discuss a number of issues that have arisen, particularly with a view to achieving some financial benefit to the wider community, primarily in terms of recreation facilities.

Policing Matters

You may know from press reports that Wylam appeared to suffer from a spate of burglaries towards the end of 2016 and the start of this year. As a consequence the Police have been carrying out a number of both overt and covert operations in and around Wylam, which we can only hope are successful in both catching the offenders and preventing any repetition.

One recent incident, in which a local resident received abuse from a door to door salesperson who introduced himself as an "ex-offender, trying to make a fresh start in life", has led to the following advice from our Neighbourhood Policing Team:-

1. Nobody is obliged to answer their door to anyone, and you can just call through the door that you are not interested.
2. Anyone selling door to door in this area requires a licence from Northumberland County Council, and you can ask to see it.
3. If you are targeted with an aggressive sales pitch, contact the Police on 101 and report this. (The Police will only then come to your door if you ask them to.) If the person does not have the correct licence, their goods can be seized and they can be taken to court.

We have managed to obtain a few "No Cold Callers" stickers, which are available from the Parish Council office if you wish to put one on your door or in an adjacent window.



"Tombstoning" at Points Bridge

Spring is here and Wylam is an especially lovely place at this time and throughout the summer. The river is a beautiful part of the village and many people use it for fishing, paddling, swimming and relaxing. Last summer a few people were seen "Tombstoning" at Points Bridge (jumping from a high place into deep water), and we have been asked by Wylam Angling Club to share some real dangers about jumping in this way at that particular place.

When the bridge was built, and then during repairs down the years, many large wooden piles were driven into the river bed. Most of these are still there and can just be seen in clear and very low water sticking up, like rows of broken teeth. Many are sharp and partly snapped by floods. There is also a great deal of scaffolding there, dropped into the river during other repair work. Poachers have added to this crown of thorns, losing their illegal nylon nets on the spikes. These nets have become twisted and tangled and create a deadly snare for a leg underwater.

Points Bridge is a most dangerous place from which to jump or to swim nearby, so the advice is to please avoid it and to warn others. Experienced wild swimmers can pass reasonably safely under the bridge if they go close to the bank on the north side of the river, i.e. the left-hand bank facing down stream.

Wylam Scar Works

After the prolonged work in 2015-16 on re-profiling and stabilising the bank above the railway on the section between Wylam and Hagg Bank, where there had been a significant land-slip, there has been some concern about continuing problems alongside the line in the same area. Work has been on-going for some months and has mainly involved the re-pointing and maintenance of the retaining wall that supports the track next to the river. Noise of the work has caused a nuisance to some Wylam residents and curiosity for others. This work, carried out by Balfour Beatty on behalf of Network Rail, is now nearly complete and we are advised that the work compound in the station car park will be removed in the near future.

Wylam War Memorial



Following a period of consultation involving various agencies, Historic England has determined that our village War Memorial should be designated as a Grade II Listed structure.

The official report describes the memorial as "an elegant example of the cross type memorial, built in regional stone types and standing in a prominent position in the village. It commemorates those local servicemen who died in both the First and also the Second World War. Overall, it is considered that the memorial has special architectural and historic interest and meets the criteria for listing."

It also describes the memorial as "an eloquent witness to the tragic impact of world events on this local community and the sacrifice it has made in conflicts of the 20th Century".

It may be of interest to note that the War Memorial was unveiled on 10 March 1923 by CJW Blackett, who was described as Lord of the Manor. He also donated the land on which the memorial is erected. After unveiling, the memorial was dedicated by the Vicar, Rev HH Barff, and the Methodist Minister, Rev George Mills.

The cost of the memorial was recorded as approximately £700, which was raised by public subscription.

National Award for Community Orchard



Wylam Community Orchard has had some great news! The wildflower meadow, shown here, has won the UK Meadows and Grasslands Award 2016, organised by Save Our Magnificent Meadows (SOMM). SOMM was set up to transform the fortunes of vanishing wildflower meadows, grasslands and wildlife. The judges felt that Wylam Community Orchard's entry was "very inspirational for other people trying to conserve and educate about meadows". The committee is delighted that the hard work of the volunteer team has been rewarded. The prize includes a beautiful wrought-iron commemorative roundel, which will be put up soon.

The meadow is best seen in June and July, when the flowers are at their peak. It is used as an educational resource by Wylam First School, and the Community Orchard organises a Nature Exploration Day each summer with Northumberland Wildlife Trust Education Department, when the children have fun looking for bugs on the site and playing games with an environmental theme. The meadow is also an important space and corridor for local wildlife. With the help of expert naturalists, the group carries out surveys of butterflies, moths, bees, wasps, flowers and bats in order to assess its impact on biodiversity.

If you would like to become a member or help on site, either email wylamcommunityorchard@gmail.com, or just turn up at an Orchard Session, (accompanied children only). Sessions take place every fortnight for most of the year and the Orchard Diary for 2017 can be seen on village notice boards.



**Deadline for material
for the next "Wylam
Globe"
Monday 8 May**

Stop Press!

As this issue goes to press the Parish Council has become aware that the road through Wylam, adjacent to the construction site on Holey Hall Road, is to be completely closed to traffic from 3 April until 12 May. This is to enable large pipes, comprising a combined sewerage and water attenuation system to be installed.

Pedestrian and cycle access will be maintained but all motor vehicles will be diverted to Ovingham and then via Horsley Road to join the B2853 on the west side of Horsley.

We hope to persuade all parties to complete the work more quickly and are currently trying to find out how the Newcastle/Hexham bus service will be re-routed and possibly re-timed and how school transport is to be maintained. We will add information to our website when details are known.

Church Road, near the junction with The Orchard, will also be affected by related works for 2-3 weeks prior to the above dates, but only by traffic lights in this case.

Parish Council Budget

Towards the end of every calendar year the Parish Council is required to set a budget, which determines the precept for the Parish. This sum is then embedded within the Council Tax charged to individual properties.

Your Parish Council has agreed a budget of £39,000 for 2017-18, payable from April, which is an increase of 2.5% on 2016-17. This is equivalent to an average annual increase of approximately £1.20 per household, which we trust people will consider to be reasonable.

It may be worth reminding everyone that this figure includes £5,000 payable to the Ovingham Joint Burial Committee, being a proportional contribution with Horsley, Ovingham and Ovington Parish Councils, for the maintenance of the shared cemetery at Ovingham.

Forthcoming Events

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

Sat 11 March

Institute Annual Coffee Morning

Mon 13 March Parish Council, 7.00pm

Wed 15 March

Wylam Discussion Group, "Mental Health in Northumberland and Questions on NICE", Richard Tomlin (11 Dene Road), 2.30pm

Sat 18 March

Cancer Research Coffee Morning, 10.30am to 12 noon
Film Club - "While We're Young", 7.30pm.

Sat 25 March

Tynedale Matters Exhibition - *traditional mats* 10.30am to 4.00pm.

Sat 1 April

Ceilidh in aid of Syrian Refugees stranded in Greece, 7.30 to 11.00pm.

Sat 8 April

Film Club, "Miners' Hymn", 7.30pm.

Mon 10 April Parish Council, 7.00pm.

Wed 12 April

Men at Home, Alan Fearon, "The Composer, Kurt Weill", Methodist Centre 10.30am

Frid 21 April

Whist Drive, St Oswin's Church Hall, 6.00 to 10.00pm

Wed 26 April

Wylam Discussion Group, Visit To Vietnam", David Newbegin, at 1 Stephenson Tce. 7.30pm

Thurs 4 May County Council and Parish Council Elections - Polling Station at Falcon Centre.

Mon 8 May Parish Council Annual Meeting, 7.00pm

Wed 10 May

Men at Home, Peter Quinn, "Bewick", Methodist Centre, 10.30am

Sat 13 May

Playing Fields Asscn. Music Quiz, 7.30pm

Mon 15 May Institute AGM, 7.00pm

Wed 17 May

Wylam Discussion Group, Gail Burdis-More, Funeral Celebrant, at 34 Tynedale Close.

Sat 20 May

Film Club, "Machuca", 7.30pm.

Sun 21 May

"Jump for Joy", St Oswin's Church grounds and Church Hall, from 12 noon - see notes

Mon 12 June Parish Council, 7.00pm

Wed 14 June

Men at Home, John Derry, "Napoleon", Methodist Centre, 10.30am

Sat 17 June

Film Club, "What we did on our Holiday", 7.30pm

Please note: In addition to the above events, Coffee Mornings in aid of Wylam Institute are held on the 4th Wednesday every month, 10.30am to 12 noon, (except in December) and "Friends of Wylam" Coffee Mornings continue fortnightly on Tuesday mornings from 10.00am.

Correspondence relating to this Newsletter should be addressed to:

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