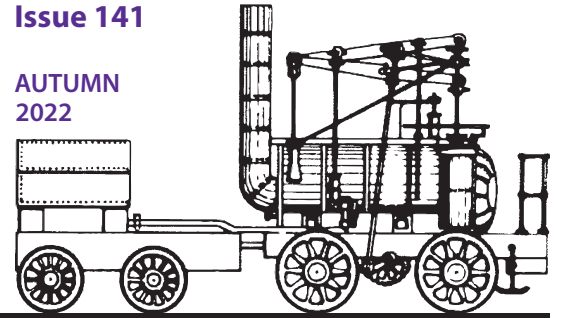


THE WYLAM GLOBE

NEWSLETTER OF
WYLAM PARISH
COUNCIL

Issue 141

AUTUMN
2022



WYLAM REMEMBERS HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II

Wylam residents sign a Book of Condolence and lay floral tributes in memory of Queen Elizabeth II - *see page 2*

WYLAM ON WHEELS

The very first Wylam on Wheels cycling event was a great success - *see page 3*

TYNE BATHING STATUS

An update on the application for bathing status for the River Tyne - *see page 5*

A TALE OF TWO WYLAMS

Luke Hilliard visits Wylam Alabama! *see page 6*

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PLANNING

Making Wylam more resilient in the event of an emergency - *see page 8*



COVER PHOTO : Wylam viewed from the hills to the south of the village by Ian Murdoch

CLIMATE ACTION GROUP : RESULTS OF VILLAGE SURVEY

In the previous issue of The Wylam Globe we included a survey on transport and home insulation/heating intended to assess the current status of Wylam households and gauge interest in potential community schemes to make Wylam more energy efficient and reduce our collective carbon footprint.

The Parish Council is very grateful to all the 111 households who completed and returned the survey. We also thank Rowena Ward and her family who diligently analysed the data.

These results will help the Parish

Council develop a local approach to issues relevant to climate change. We noted that, among those who responded, there was strong support for community schemes: community energy (69%), home insulation (66%) and solar panels (65%). Members of the Parish Council are currently exploring funding options for a feasibility study into community energy generation with Northumberland County Council and the NE Local Enterprise Partnership.

The full survey results are available on the Parish Council website :

www.wylamparishcouncil.org.uk

111

Responses received

78%

Have seen an increase in the cost of heating their homes

Want to use their cars less

47%

Would like to improve or replace home insulation

50%

WYLAM PAYS TRIBUTE TO HER MAJESTY QUEEN ELIZABETH II



The Book of Condolence at St. Oswin's Church

As this issue of The Wylam Globe was originally due to go to press, we learned of the sad news of the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II.

The Parish Council immediately arranged for a Book of Condolence to be placed in St. Oswin's Church for villagers to write messages with their memories of the Queen and collectively share in the period of national mourning and reflection.

The Book of Condolence has now been taken to the County Archive

where it will be stored for posterity.

Charlie's Corner was temporarily designated an area for remembrance and reflection where floral tributes were placed during the period of national mourning.

The bells of St Oswin's were rung at noon on the day following the Queen's death, with the clappers fully muffled, producing a softer sound, as



Floral tributes at Charlie's Corner



The bells of St. Oswin's were rung fully muffled

is tradition following the death of a sovereign. A quarter peal, in honour of the Queen, was rung later in the day.

We took the decision to delay publication of The Wylam Globe until after the Queen's funeral and period of national mourning, and this issue features **purple** titles in her honour.

GEORGE STEPHENSON'S BIRTHPLACE AND WYLAM RAILWAY MUSEUM OPEN FOR HERITAGE OPEN DAYS



George Stephenson's Cottage opened to visitors

The Heritage Open Days scheme in September saw a tentative step towards fully reopening George Stephenson's Birthplace, owned by the National Trust, and extended opening hours for Wylam Railway Museum in the Falcon Centre.

There was much publicity, and it was originally planned to open both locations between 12:00 and 16:00 on the weekends of 10th and 17th September. A guided walk was planned for the second weekend.

The first weekend went ahead as

planned. We saw 60 visitors each day to George Stephenson's Birthplace and 30 to the Railway Museum, much higher than the normal weekly total.

Sadly, Covid cases among the team, and the period of national mourning for the Queen intervened and during the second weekend only the Railway Museum was open, attracting around 20 visitors each day.

The planned guided walk was postponed and has now been rearranged for Sunday 30th October. It will be formed of two parts :

From 10:30-12:00 there will be a walk around Wylam from the Old Station Car Park to Points Bridge and back. The guide will share stories about the history of railway lines and local railway pioneers in Wylam.

On returning to the car park, the second part of the walk will continue to George Stephenson's Birthplace, which will be opened especially for the day, with an opportunity for visitors to discover how Wylam's most famous son spent his early life.

The walking tour is free to join, but

spaces are limited to 12 and **you must book in advance to secure your place** through the George Stephenson's Birthplace website.

For further details, including how to book, go to :

www.nationaltrust.org.uk/george-stephensons-birthplace



Wylam Railway Museum saw increased visitor numbers through longer opening hours

“WYLAM ON WHEELS” WAS A HUGE SUCCESS!

SARAH GRAINGER



Martha Carr (aged 9) and Esther Carr (aged 5) finish the “Wylam on Wheels” bike ride

The weekend of 17th and 18th September saw the success of cycling events in the village: Wylam on Wheels and Waggonway on Wheels. Over 250 cyclists took part with all ages and abilities included. Thanks to all the volunteers who helped make both events such a success.

Local cycling group, the Wylam Sprockets, organised Wylam on Wheels with the option of either a shorter 25km cycle or a more challenging 60km route which included Hedley on the Hill! Refreshments were provided at feed stations in Bywell and on Kiln Pit Hill, and all cyclists were rewarded by a fantastic home-made afternoon tea on the Jubilee Playing Field. The atmosphere was fantastic and there was excellent entertainment from local band, The Wild Women of Wylam.

The event was generously supported by many residents of the village. The afternoon tea was particularly impressive with a wide range of delicious cakes baked by numerous local volunteers. A huge thanks to the Spar who provided major sponsorship for the event. All entry fees were donated to the Wylam Community Playing Fields Association, who are responsible for the upkeep of the Jubilee Playing Field. In total £5000 was raised, which

Hannah Stanton. There was also a display of electric bikes. The event was supported by the Prudhoe charity, Cycling Without Age, who provided free rides in their amazing trishaw bikes. There were also a range of adapted bicycles, borrowed from Newburn Leisure Centre, suitable for cyclists with different needs.

The events aimed to encourage cycling for all and have put Wylam on the cycling map! The youngest cyclist was only two years old and



Tara Tolchard and Jake Hodge enjoy one of the adapted bikes at the “Waggonway on Wheels” event

was a great effort!

Waggonway on Wheels, an event designed to promote inclusivity within cycling, marked out a 3 mile route along the Waggonway, towards Newburn. The route finished in the Stephenson Arms campsite field and participants were welcomed with music from the Sunshine Panners Steel Band and talented local singer,

the oldest 89! Many were new to cycling and others dusted down their bike from the garage and got cycling for the first time in years. Hopefully, we will continue to see many out on their bikes enjoying the fresh air and our beautiful countryside. After the success of this inaugural event, we hope to organise more cycling activities next year.

WYLAM WAGGONWAY RESURFACING - SECOND PHASE



Work is now complete on the second phase of resurfacing work to Wylam Waggonway

Work was undertaken earlier this year on the first phase of resurfacing Wylam Waggonway, covering the section east of Wylam towards Newburn.

Northumberland County Council has now completed the second phase of work, covering the section of Waggonway from Wylam Old Station Car Park to Hagg Bank Bridge.

With both phases complete, walkers and cyclists can now benefit from an improved, high quality surface all the way from Hagg Bank to Newburn.

SMART METER ADVICE



Smart meters can help improve the accuracy of energy bills

Citizens Advice Northumberland has received funding to offer information and guidance about the benefits of smart meters to Northumberland residents, allowing them to make an informed choice about options for their household. It comes at a time when energy prices are at their highest and set to increase further in October this year. Individual appointments will be available and public events will be held across the county.

Funding continues until December, and the advice is open to all, but the work is particularly targeted towards the over-65 age group as there are some particular benefits for older people. Having a smart meter in your home means no reading meters which can sometimes be a very difficult or dangerous task for older people, depending where their traditional meter is located. It also means that bills will be accurate, which is really important for people who may be at home a lot and use more gas or electricity than the average household.

To find out more, contact Citizens Advice Northumberland, who can also provide assistance to anyone who may be struggling with their energy bills :

01670 339749

or

[energy@](mailto:energy@citizensadvicenorthumberland.org.uk)

citizensadvicenorthumberland.org.uk

To request installation of a smart meter, speak to your energy supplier directly. Note that you should not be charged for having a smart meter installed and have the right to decline the offer if you so wish.

GAS MAIN WORK CONTINUES



Work in progress on Woodcroft Rd in early October

Major work by Northern Gas to replace the gas mains in Wylam has progressed to Woodcroft Rd and Ovingham Rd and will extend as far as the old gates to Wylam Hall. This section of work should be completed by the end of October.

Northern Gas will then return to Wylam in January for a very small section of works on Holeyn Hall Road. Four properties are expected to be affected and the owners will be contacted directly by Northern Gas later this year with further details.

WYLAM COMMUNITY PLAYING FIELDS ASSOCIATION UPDATE

ROWENA
WARD

It's been a busy year for Wylam Community Playing Fields Association! Our monthly meetings resumed in September and we've been delighted to welcome new members to the committee following a recent village leaflet drop.

We do hope to reinstate the Summer Fair in 2023 but this will depend on support from the village when organisation starts in October.

The Field has looked beautiful this summer and we are extremely grateful to everyone who cares for it, including those who cut the grass and who regularly litter pick or monitor anti-social behaviour.

The grass is looking much better, partly due to grant funding for the Wylam Rockets enabling us to bring in contractors for slitting, over-seeding and fertilising. Our work on the boundary hedging continues. We've planted additional hawthorn, hazel, hornbeam and dog rose whips, all kindly donated by Northumberland County Council and planted with help from Prudhoe RAF Cadets.

Some of our play facilities have had a much-needed refresh. We have weekly safety inspections from Northumberland County Council (NCC) which feed into our development plans alongside requests and ideas from the community. We consider longevity, sustainability and aesthetics when choosing a piece of equipment but you'd be amazed at how much it costs to acquire, install and suitably landscape each piece. We are thankful to Wylam Parish Council for their financial support and to an NCC Community Chest grant which helped fund our replacement swing

frame, the new activity trail and surface repairs.

A defibrillator is now in place on the Pavilion. We've logged its location with the British Heart Foundation and NE Ambulance Service. Thank you to the FA who provided it as home ground for Wylam Rockets.

We would like to thank local cycle group Wylam Sprockets for all the work they put into making Wylam on Wheels a success (*see page 3*) and to all the riders, cake makers, sponsors and volunteers who made this a fantastic village event.

Our Music Quiz will be on Friday 11th November and our Jumble Sale is booked for 14th January. We very much look forward to seeing you all.

You can contact us at any time via Facebook :

[@wylamrockets](https://www.facebook.com/wylamrockets)

or email us:

wylamrocketsfc@hotmail.com



RAF Cadets helping to plant hedgerows

PLANT A NEW TREE TO CAPTURE MORE CARBON DIOXIDE

The amount of Carbon Dioxide (CO₂) captured by Britain's forests is at historically low levels due to our failure to replace trees as quickly as we have felled them.

Data shows that the amount of CO₂ captured peaked in 2009 but has fallen steadily every year since then.

The UK has committed to planting 30,000 new trees per year by 2025 both to replace trees which have been felled and increase the overall

tree cover of the country.

Even with this significant commitment, it will take well over a decade before we see levels of carbon capture return to those of the 1990s and early 2000s.

We can help, in a small way, by planting a tree in our garden. It doesn't have to be a huge tree; every tree counts!

Why not encourage your friends and family to do the same?



Planting a tree will help capture carbon dioxide

RIVER TYNE BATHING STATUS APPLICATION UPDATE

STEPHEN WESTGARTH

Work continues apace with the application for the Tyne at Wylam to be awarded Bathing Status by DEFRA.

The ecology of the River Tyne has been suffering for too long. You may have noticed excessive foam on the surface of the river in places. Some is natural, but much is related to pollution.

The Rivers Trust has just published a recent report about the state of England's rivers. It makes for shocking reading. For example, a whopping **86%** of rivers fail to pass standards for ecological health. **100%** fail the chemical health assessment. Every single river fails! Farming and wastewater are the biggest offenders. Agriculture harms 62% of England's waterways and more than 50% are harmed by sewage effluent from our water companies. In 2020 there were over 403,000 raw sewage discharges into England's rivers in what are called "storm overflows". Despite the name, it is standard practice for them to occur when there is no storm.

So what is our plan? In short, to apply for Bathing Status. The purpose of the application is to ensure the Environment Agency increases river monitoring and works with those polluting the river to clean it up. We need this legal framework to ensure the pollution stops and that our rivers are not treated as cost-free open sewers.

DEFRA considers the bathing season to be from mid-May to the end of September, and thus requires user-surveys of the numbers of swimmers during that time when considering



The River Tyne at Wylam below Points Bridge showing signs of pollution

any application. We have been doing just that over the summer.

We have had discussions with Wylam, Ovingham and Horsley Parish Councils, and Northumberland County Council, all of whom have been most supportive of our efforts.

An application requires local consultation to consider views from a wide range of stakeholders such as bathers, residents, local environmental groups, businesses, councils, and other representatives. We are undertaking this consultation formally and fully through a specially created questionnaire which is available in the "What's on Wylam" Facebook group, and also at the following link :

<https://forms.gle/SnnsuyrXQriDNpUK9>

Please support our efforts to clean up the river by completing it and encouraging your friends and family to take part. It should take no more than 3 minutes to fill in.

Once the survey is completed we will submit the application to DEFRA by the end of October. DEFRA will then complete their own independent consultation before they respond. We should hear back from them by Spring 2023.

If you are super-motivated you can also write to our MP on this topic.

Please do contact me to share your views or for more information regarding the Bathing Status application :

drstephenwestgarth@gmail.com

A TALE OF TWO WYLAMS

LUKE
HILLIARD



7th Ave, Wylam Alabama in the 1920s

I've long been interested in British place names which have been adopted in other countries. You'll find hundreds of examples in English-speaking countries such as the USA, Canada or Australia, for example Boston, Calgary or Perth. I remember once passing a Truro (the city where I was born) in rural Iowa!

Each place name makes me think of the people who ventured there, hoping for a better life, yet feeling the need to name their new home after their roots.

I was curious to know how many other places named Wylam there were around the world. I discovered that there is only one, in Birmingham, Alabama. It was founded in 1886 by Joseph Martin, who was born here in Wylam (UK) but moved to the United States as a young man, opening a store and homebuilding business and naming the surrounding community after his birthplace. He also established a Methodist church, which is now named in his honour.

Like 'our' Wylam, Wylam Alabama was founded as a mining town. As it developed and expanded, many of its inhabitants worked at US Steel mills. It became a flourishing small town with a community made up of immigrants, many from North East England and Scotland.

Sadly, with the decline of industry



The Wylam Ice Company!

in the latter half of the 20th century, Wylam Alabama struggled. Many major employers closed down, and residents fled to more affluent areas. The situation was exacerbated by racist 'zoning' policies. Today it forms an impoverished suburb of the city of Birmingham, and still suffers from its loss of industry that the community so greatly depended on.

A Google News search for "Wylam Alabama" often brings up stories about recent murders and violence. It's clear to see that the two Wylams have taken very different paths despite their original similarities.

My research into the other Wylam might have gone no further, but luckily I was recently invited to a wedding in nearby Tennessee, so I decided to try to visit Wylam Alabama to find out more.

Before I left the UK, I posted on the Birmingham Alabama subreddit asking about the area. Sadly I was greeted with a lot of negative stories



Connie and Selina, from the library receiving one of the books

and told by several residents not to visit as the chances of getting mugged or shot were too high. Thankfully, others offered more positive advice and suggested I contact the local library. I emailed Janine Langston, head of Birmingham City Libraries, who put me in touch with their Wylam branch and recommended that I meet two of her friends, David Hamilton and Carmelo Aliano Jr, who both lived and grew up in Wylam Alabama and had a strong interest in its history.

On arrival at the library, the staff greeted me with open arms and were extremely interested in learning about 'my' Wylam. I had brought with me a couple of Philip Brookes' books which I presented to the library staff.

To them, Wylam (UK) appeared quintessentially British, they were impressed with our four pubs and contribution to railway history.

Mr Aliano and Mr Hamilton had brought with them a number of documents pertaining to the history of the area, including school records, memories from citizens of the time and photographs of the town in its heyday. They were both exceptionally knowledgeable and shared a lot of memories about what it was like to grow up there.

There had been previous connections between the two Wylams through the Methodist Church with some of the congregation visiting Wylam Northumberland in the 1980s. As far as they were aware, I was the first resident from 'our' Wylam to visit Wylam Alabama.

I was then taken on a tour of the area which was extremely interesting but also rather sad.

Everywhere you looked there



Luke's hosts, David Hamilton and Carmelo Aliano

were run-down buildings which had been boarded-up and left to rot. Mr Hamilton pointed out the old bank, creamery, churches and factories which were now just shells of their former selves. The school, however, had recently had investment as had the library, much of it driven by Mr Aliano.

Before leaving, I was very kindly presented with books containing a wealth of information and photographs, including a vast number of names of former Wylam Alabama residents. I've donated this material to the library in Wylam (UK). Feel free to peruse next time you are there.

In future, I hope the two Wylam libraries can become partners, sharing resources and knowledge for those interested in local history.

WEFIBRE INSTALLATION CONTINUES

WeFibre's installation of Full Fibre Broadband in Wylam continues with the network now due to go live in November 2022. WeFibre have an "earlybird" offer of £20 per month on a 12 month contract for those who sign up before the launch date

If you are already in a contract with another provider you can still sign up to secure the earlybird offer. You'll be connected and you won't have to pay anything until your existing contract runs out. Terms and conditions may apply.

If you have any questions regarding the installation, please contact WeFibre's Community Engagement Manager, Linda Jamieson :

linda.jamieson@wefibre.com

or

07868 636 019



Signs around Wylam advising of ongoing installation work

WYLAM INSTITUTE MEMBER SUBSCRIPTIONS

SUE NICHOLSON

Many of you will have attended an event at Wylam Institute, and will be aware of its value to the village. You may not realise that we are a self-funding charity which is run by a voluntary Management Committee.

Annual Membership Subscriptions form a valuable part of our income and are essential to secure the future of this valuable village asset. Please consider supporting the building by becoming a Member. Annual subscription rates are :

Patron £15

Family £12

Single £7

Payments can be made at the Institute Office or by BACS :

Account number : 24351080

Sort Code : 09 01 54

If you prefer to set up a standing order, forms can be obtained from the Institute Office.

As with many other village organisations, we currently need new members to help with the management of the Institute. The Management Committee meets every two months, providing support for our officers and our two clerks. If you would like further information on the role, please email me :

suefromwylam@hotmail.com



Wylam Institute is a valuable village asset and a focal point for community events and activities

WYLAM HAUGHS NATURE RESERVE OPEN DAY



Liz Bray and Diana Carney at the Nature Reserve Open Day

On Sunday 3rd July, the Wylam Haughs Nature Reserve Management Group held an Open Day for visitors to explore the Reserve and learn more about its history and some of the flora and fauna which can be found there.

We were lucky to be joined by Denis Peel, who brought with him a wealth of material and knowledge from the time of the creation of the Reserve in the 1990s, including some fascinating photographs.

The Nature Reserve was created from former allotments which used to extend all the way to Points Bridge from their current boundary at the edge of the Reserve. Indeed, if you look carefully within the Reserve, you may find some plants which were originally planted within an allotment!

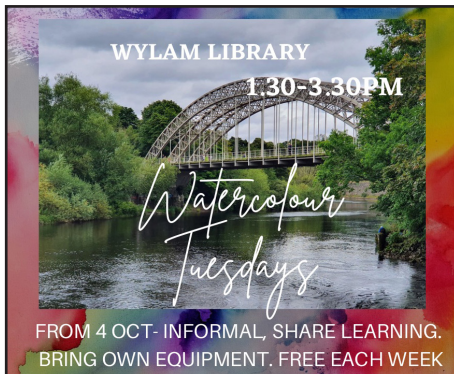
At 1pm, Denis took visitors on a tour of the Reserve, explaining how it was originally developed and how it has changed and matured over time.

Informative signs were placed at key points around the Reserve, and specially designed trail maps were printed for visitors to guide themselves around.



Denis Peel guides visitors around the Nature Reserve

WYLAM WATERCOLOUR TUESDAYS



Try your hand at watercolour painting on Tuesdays at 1:30

Wylam resident Helen Walker is starting a new free weekly watercolour painting session, every Tuesday afternoon at 1:30pm starting from October 4th 2022.

Come along and celebrate the beauty of Wylam in your own style whilst having fun and staying warm. Beginners and artists of all abilities are welcome.

COVER PHOTO COMPETITION

Why not enter our front cover photo competition? Congratulations to **Ian Murdoch**, who was the winner for this issue.



Photos should be :

- Taken in, or around, Wylam
- Ideally landscape orientation
- JPEG format, as high resolution as possible
- Colour or black & white
- Your own work (no copyright images)
- Not manipulated (beyond minor retouch)
- Not containing identifiable persons

Please send entries to the Parish Council Clerk via email
(see information to the right of this page)

Parish Councillors will choose a winning entry prior to publication. Note that there is no cash prize.

COMMUNITY RESILIENCE PLANNING

Community Resilience is the sustained ability of a community to use available resources to respond to, withstand and recover from adverse situations. Communities that are resilient are able to minimise any disaster, making the return to normal life as effortless as possible. By implementing a community resilience plan, a community can come together and overcome disaster, while rebuilding physically, economically and socially.

Following the devastation and hardship caused by Storm Arwen, when thousands of households across Northumberland, including those in some areas of Wylam, were left without power for an extended period, Northumberland County Council is keen for local communities to have a Community Resilience Plan in place to coordinate with the County's own structure for responding to crisis events. This is an urgent need in all communities, given the difficulties people are likely to experience during the coming winter due to the projected increase in energy bills and the cost of living more generally. In addition, further extreme weather events cannot be ruled out.

Wylam Parish Council was represented at a recent Community Resilience event organised by the County Council. This article is a preliminary report on that meeting, and more detail is to follow.

The presentations focused on the provision of Warm Hubs and drop-in Warm Places in the community which would provide shelter and support during crisis events and, it is hoped, throughout the year. Certain buildings would be designated as Community Response Hubs.

Funding of £100,000 is available from Northumberland Communities Together and Northern PowerGrid has a £7.5 million fund available to community organisations. Community organisations can register their interest in their facility being registered as a Warm Space. A Locality Coordinator will help with registration and there is an accompanying information pack and a 'promise' to sign up to. There is no need for the Warm Space to be open 24/7.

The Parish Council intends to work

with village organisations to identify the need for Warm Spaces in Wylam and will be looking to compile a directory of what is available and when. Some funding from the Parish Council may be available. We will also be meeting with former Parish Councillors and our County Councillor Holly Waddell to review the lessons learned during the Covid pandemic and associated lockdowns, when community support for the most vulnerable was both efficient and compassionate. All this will be discussed at the Parish Council's meeting on 10th October, when it is also likely that the Council will accept an offer from the Environment Agency to design a Flood Resilience Plan for Wylam.

As we make progress, updates and further information will be posted on our website and Facebook page.

READING FRIENDS AT WYLAM LIBRARY

Why not drop into Wylam Library on a Thursday morning between 10.15 and 12.00 for coffee, biscuits and a chat? This is a new venture, organised by our ever-resourceful Librarian, Margaret. Chat is not limited to what you're reading, although that could be interesting!

Browse the wide-ranging collection of books in the Library while you're there and be inspired to read even more!

GET IN TOUCH!

We'd love to hear from you!

Please contact :

Marie Moore

Clerk to the Parish Council



clerk@wylamparishcouncil.org.uk



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Wylam
NE41 8AP
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www.wylamparishcouncil.org.uk



Wylam Parish Council



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