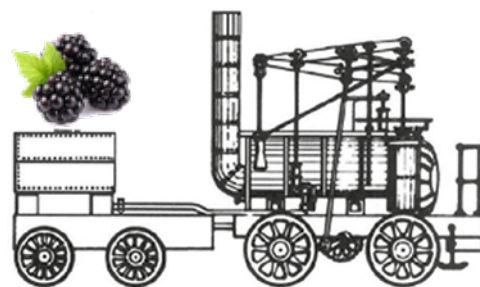


THE WYLAM GLOBE

Newsletter of Wylam Parish Council



Autumn 2020

Issue No. 136

FANTASTIC COVID RESPONSE!

As the extent of the coronavirus hit home in early April, the Parish Council held an extraordinary meeting to decide on how to coordinate a response across the village. A hotline and Facebook page (Wylam Community Help COVID-19) was set up and linked to the 'What's on Wylam' and Parish Council pages.

By early May, our list of volunteers was some 92 strong and after the initial surge, the hotline was dealing with a handful of calls each week as the various routines became established. The Facebook groups were moderated by councillors Jacq Henderson, Jim Martin and Jos Joures and quickly built up to 1100+ followers, enabling us to give good information and help to those with or without internet access.



Cards from the Brownies



WI Posies

Invaluable help from the Women's Institute (WI), the Methodist and St Oswin's Churches and Age UK Northumberland, alerted us to other vulnerable, isolating folk. The local businesses were a tremendous help. The Spar, Stobo's, the Coop, Wylam Pharmacy, the Ship and the Black Bull all rallied round, with deliveries, food parcels or offers of help. Their staff worked flat out to keep their businesses running.

Overall, we regularly used 15 volunteers to help with pharmacy runs, food shopping, odd jobs and food parcels. Dave and Mike at the Bull were very kind and donated 102 Sunday lunches, complete with all the trimmings, which our volunteers took round to a dozen households during May and June. In addition, Debbie, Jacq and Mags made 126 fresh soups and Karen Quinn baked 32 delightful Victoria sponges, lemon drizzle and carrot cakes all of which were scoffed over a 6-week period.

In June, we used 80kgs of food provided by the charity Fareshare to hand out basics such as bread, UHT milk, tea, coffee, cereals and pasta to those who were isolating.



Over the two months that we ran the scheme, we had many heart-warming stories – vulnerable people stuck indoors with no near relatives looked forward to meeting our volunteers and having a chat, even if it was through an open window! Those who had been making do with microwaved meals really enjoyed our twice weekly calls. One day our volunteers came to the rescue of a lady who had been lying in her hall for several hours and quickly got paramedics to help her.

On the 8th May we celebrated VE day with themed soups and cupcakes and Jacq suitably dressed for the occasion!

On behalf of Wylam, the Parish Council wish to thank them for all their efforts.

Mention should also be made of Mike Ewart who linked into our hotline and set up a first aid service using the skills of Lizzie, Anne and the Brownies who drew some wonderful cards for those who were stuck at home. Thanks also to Viv Smith and the WI for the 14 gorgeous posies they made up to accompany the Sunday lunches on the 16th May. *Jim Martin*

Celebrating VE Day

RELOCATION OF RIVERSDALE SURGERY

Those of you who are patients of the Riversdale Practice will be aware that the surgery in Wylam, closed its doors at the end of July and relocated to the Oaklands Medical Centre, Prudhoe.

Although intensive lobbying resulted in a further round of consultation and engagement with patients, the NHS Northumberland Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), after considering feedback along with the needs of the practice, approved the proposal to relocate.

The Practice has written to its patients stating that whilst it recognised that this would be disappointing news for some, as Woodcroft Road was a convenient and valued GP practice, it believed the decision was the best option for the Practice and its patients. It stated that the relocation to Prudhoe will enable them to build a stronger multi-professional team and continue to provide high quality care and support for patients.

The feedback gathered as part of the community consultation showed that the greatest concern patients had was in relation to travel, especially access to public transport.

In coming to its decision, the CCG considered the impact and current ways of working introduced as part of the Practice's response to the Covid-19 pandemic which saw telephone and video appointments being used and only seeing patients face to face, either at the surgery or at home, depending on clinical need. The Practice has confirmed that these new flexible ways of consulting with patients worked well and will continue.

Although this new approach reduces the need to travel to the surgery the CCG asked the Practice to explore options with community partners, for example, by using volunteer drivers.

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The Parish Council has written to the Practice to ask that it be involved in these discussions so that the views of patients can be represented. In response, the Practice has said that once things have settled following the move, it will be liaising with the CCG on this issue and welcomes the opportunity to work with bodies such as the Parish Council.

It is also important to note that Andrew Nicholson and his team at Wylam Pharmacy continue to provide a vital service to local residents including prescription collections and deliveries, flu jabs and other community pharmacy services.

FALCON CENTRE

The Falcon Centre started life as the village school in 1910. In 1974 the school moved into new buildings up the road and the building, owned by the County Council, became vacant. In 1976 the County reopened part of the building as a branch library. Other rooms were set aside for community use and in June 1981 (bicentenary of the birth of George Stephenson) the Parish Council opened the Railway Museum at the east end.



Falcon Centre

Parts of the building are well used when open, but hours are limited. Other parts are less used with new activities limited by layout, and the former playground is just sitting there. Many people living or working locally believe a rethink is needed and that new ideas should be brought forward and assessed. This could well include community based businesses (social enterprise is the jargon) as part of the mix.

The Falcon Centre Action Group has been formed to look at the building's future with the possibility of it expanding into a community hub. The Group is working towards commissioning a feasibility study and in preparation recently sent out a resident survey. There is also ongoing consultation with existing community organisations.

The Group had planned to organise a public meeting over the summer with residents and local businesses, but Covid stopped that. The group would welcome new members and if you would like to get involved now, please get in touch with Steve Grinter at stevegrinter@yahoo.com.

WYLAM SIGN LIVES AGAIN!

The Holeyn Hall crossroads have once again been graced with the magnificent Wylam Sign. Following on from a car crashing into it back in 2017, the stonework and sign had been carefully stored in Tom and Joe's nursery. In June, the Parish Council made the decision to replace it. The original cast sign was painstakingly cleaned and painted by Jay and Daniel (staff at Tom and Joe's) and the village team of Edward and Robert Hodgson brought their fine stonemason skills to the job and carefully reconstructed and strengthened the sign on its original location, adding a beautiful planter to the base.

Lavender plants from the nursery complete a splendid 'welcome' to our village.

As background, the 'Puffing Billy' locomotive was designed and built in 1813 by William Hedley for Blackett who owned Wylam colliery. It was probably the inspiration for George Stephenson who would see it puffing past his house along the Waggonway.

A lovely surprise was that all the works, materials and plants were given free of charge. Edward and Robert reflecting on their 7 decades of living in the village (!) and Tom and Joe's on being a much loved local business. Many thanks to them all. *Jim Martin*



Edward and Robert by the New Wylam Sign

CYCLING ON WYLAM BRIDGE

For several years it has been noted that some cyclists using the footpath over the bridge have conflicted with pedestrians. Following a long campaign by the Parish Council, and direct complaints from local residents, Northumberland County Council (NCC) has now confirmed that plans are being developed to address the problem. This longstanding issue in the Village has been made worse by increased numbers of cyclists and pedestrians using the bridge in recent months.

NCC is proposing changes to signage and road markings from the southern end with modified road markings to the north to make the route clearer. A meeting is being held with Northern Rail to discuss these and the results will be shared with the Parish Council. We welcome this focus on pedestrian safety and will keep you updated.

CRICKET

During the early summer there were plenty of times when we thought no junior cricket would be played in Wylam at all this year and we watched the glorious cricketing weather of May and June with heavy hearts. Thanks to the efforts of the Wylam Junior CC coaching staff and the accommodation of the WCPFA we managed to get plenty of training in and played great games in July and August.

We now have 3 age groups running, U9's U11's and U13's and the junior section of the club goes from strength to strength. The season is drawing to a close but there will be many youngsters in Wylam who will have the pleasure over the Winter months of remembering 'that' perfect cover drive or the diving catch where they 'leapt like a salmon' or the 'unplayable' delivery they bowled to get out the opposition's key batsman.

If you or a family member are interested in joining us next year please get in touch with Lead Coach Richard Opie on 07798718321.



Wylam U11s cricket team

2020 POPPY APPEAL

It will come as no surprise that the Poppy Appeal 2020 is NOT immune to Covid-19 and the normal processes are suspended. There will be NO house to house collections this year. Deliveries of Poppies, collecting cans and all the collectables on offer to the shops and pubs etc. is NOT going to happen. My role this year is simply ordering Wreaths and a School pack, but I am on standby should things change.

The RBL have told me that they are arranging for the public to buy Poppies but that mechanism has not been disclosed yet. I have placed an order for Wreaths badged to the usual recipients and hope that we can have as normal a Remembrance service as possible. *Maurice McNicholas*

HAGG BANK, JUBILEE FIELDS PLAY AREAS

Users of the Play Area are reminded that to prevent the spread of Covid-19 the following guidance must be carefully followed:

- You must **maintain social distancing** from others unless they are from the same household/support bubble and consider wearing a face mask for the safety of others.
- All users and parents/carers to **wash hands or use hand sanitiser before, during and after using the equipment.**
- The equipment is checked regularly for damage and wear and tear, but **play equipment and benches are not cleaned, sanitised or disinfected.**
- The equipment is used at your own risk.
- Do not use the equipment if you or any member of your household has coronavirus symptoms, or are self-isolating.
- Nobody should use this equipment if they are clinically or extremely clinically vulnerable.
- Children should be encouraged to avoid touching their faces.
- Some equipment can only be used by one child at a time while social distancing.
Please ensure your family waits at a safe distance if the equipment is in use or return later to use the equipment.
- Try to avoid busy times.
- If your family is wearing disposable PPE, please take it home with you – **Do Not Litter**
- No eating or drinking in the play area.
- Wash your hands when you get home.

Your co-operation with this is greatly appreciated.

PROMISING TIMES FOR GIRLGUIDING IN WYLAM

2 weeks before Lockdown, a brand new Rainbows unit opened in the village. Providing opportunities for girls aged 5-7 years old, the new unit adds to the Girlguiding family in the village. Although Rainbows, Brownies and Guides have not been able to meet as usual, the volunteers of all 3 units have continued to provide as many opportunities as possible via virtual meetings and challenges at home. Wylam Girlguiding now has over 50 members aged between 5 and 14 years old, with over 100 badges and awards gained since lockdown began!

Many of the girls enjoyed a virtual camp in July as part of the Tynedale East Division, and some showcased their amazing talents from music to magic and more. We enjoyed 'songs round a campfire' and lots more. Many girls have focused on the 'be well' part of the programme, which encourages keeping mind and body healthy through a range of activities. The Brownies have been busy creating wildlife challenges and raising funds for the NHS, not to mention helping to break a world record! Volunteers are always welcomed with open arms and very much appreciated. To enquire about joining us or for a place in one of the units, please visit the Girlguiding website at www.girlguiding.org.uk.

WYLAM HAUGHS NATURE RESERVE

There are a number of trees at the nature reserve that were planted as "Memorial Trees" to commemorate local people and events. A few are identified thanks to having metal plates on them.

Do you remember such a tree being planted? If so could you help identify what was planted and where? Could you provide more details of who or what was being celebrated? We would like to safeguard any special trees and would be very grateful for your help.

The nature reserve is currently being surveyed to assess its ecological importance and provide information that will help the Parish Council prepare a management plan to protect native plants and wildlife for current and future generations to enjoy.

Please contact Jacqueline Henderson (Parish councillor) on jhenderson.wpc@yahoo.co.uk or Liz Bray (Tree Warden) lizbray6052@gmail.com or leave a message with our clerk Marie Moore at the institute on 01661 852498. *Jacq Henderson*



WAGGONWAY RESURFACED

Those of you who regularly use the Waggonway, between the Stephenson's Arms and George Stephenson's Cottage, will no doubt be delighted to have seen a major surface improvement completed in August by Northumberland County Council. Over recent years users have had to negotiate huge puddles and plenty of mud along this stretch so the new surface will make a huge difference.

In designing the scheme, the County Council have ensured that the surface is suitable for horses and their riders, with a top dressing of stone chip to give it a suitable grip.

It is hoped that the section between Wylam and Hagg Bank will also be improved in future with the possibility of funding being requested as part of the 2020 -21 Local Transport Plan. The Parish Council will continue to press for this improvement.

The Waggonway is a 'Shared Use' route to be enjoyed by walkers, runners, cyclists and horse riders alike so it is vital that all users are respected and warning signs adhered to. *Colin Percy*



Waggonway resurfacing



ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Following on from a Summer spate of unusually rowdy drinking and partying along the river from the Jubilee Field to Points Bridge, the Parish Council took matters in hand. We got in touch with the County Council, including Karen Quinn, and Parish Councillors Jim Martin and Jacq Henderson met with PC English – local beat officer - and the Senior Community Safety Officer, Emma Beniams. At first Dispersal Orders were issued. These were valid for 48 hrs and quickly issued by the local Inspector. We had some success with these, but during August, problems reappeared including vandalism at the allotments, the school and Falcon Centre.

A decision was reached to pursue a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) which is intended to deal with nuisance that is having a detrimental effect on the quality of life for those in the local community. This would cover the whole Parish with special mention of 'tombstoning' off Points Bridge and

general disorder / drinking along the river side. A PSPO allows police to issue on the spot fines of £90 and arrest repeat offenders. Once mandated by a judge a PSPO is valid for a year, renewable if needed. Northumberland County Council are leading on this process and more information will be made available in coming weeks.

As ever, the local police depend on us for information, so if you have concerns re ASB, please call 101 or report online <https://beta.northumbria.police.uk/our-services/report-an-incident/anti-social-behaviour/> . *Jim Martin*

WYLAM'S GROWING LITTER PROBLEM: WHY AND HOW TO ACT:

I have been doing a lot of research into why litter seems to be on the increase and what can we do to help keep our green spaces clean. Litter includes anything from crisps to takeaway cartons to discarded bags of rubbish and dog waste. Keep Britain Tidy says that even apple cores and banana skins should be taken home for food waste recycling. Fly-tipping, including larger, white goods such as refrigerators and toasters, is defined as the illegal deposit of waste on land, contrary to Section 33(1)(a) of the Environmental Protection Act 1990.

Although littering is illegal, research shows that people often break that law for many reasons. Studies show that the distance to a bin is the strongest predictor of littering, with people dropping rubbish rather than taking it to the bin. Sadly, this applies to a lot of environmental issues, we don't mind doing the right thing as long as it's not too inconvenient!

Studies show that the presence of existing litter was a strong predictor of littering behaviour. If a place is already highly littered, then people are much more likely to add to it than if they are in a place that is clean. Our volunteer village clean ups are not as futile as we might feel and DO make a difference.

Some Facts and Figures:

- So, who litters? "The crux of the problem is that all sorts of people litter all sorts of items for all sorts of reasons" Protect Rural England's litter campaign reported that many 18-25 year olds often see it as 'cool' to drop litter, but hauliers, smokers, users of fast food outlets and drive-through takeaways and commuters are all groups of society who litter.
- Nearly two-thirds of fly tipping involves household waste. Unlicensed small businesses that offer to take away household waste and simply dump it- also contribute. In law, a householder will be liable for prosecution if their goods are found in fly tipping. The most common place for fly tipping is on highways, which accounted for 48% of all incidents in 2014/15. Fly-tipping on footpaths, bridleways and back alleyways increased by 3.2% in England last year alone. Nearly a third of all incidents consisted of a quantity of material equivalent to a 'small van load'. In 2014/15, local authorities in England spent nearly £50million clearing fly tipping
- According to the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE), the three major culprits of litter waste are fast-food packaging, confectionery wrappers, soft and alcoholic drinks bottles made from plastic, tin or glass. Other items include energy gel sachets and tubes, food leftovers and dog excrement.

Wylam has all the above along with barbeques, socks and underwear (!) discarded along the riverbank. There is little worse than visiting a beautiful place and seeing litter; it detracts from the inspiration the

place should give us. There is also the impact on wildlife to consider. Shrews, bank voles, wood mice and other animals can get stuck or die within discarded bottles; they can also choke on 'yokes' – the ring pulls on cans. The RSPCA report badger cubs with plastic can holders embedded in their necks and hedgehogs with their heads wedged in empty tins.

Of course, this also effects our river life in the same way. Litter is unsightly – it ruins views, river walks, countryside rambles and drives. Fly-tipping of garden waste can allow invasive species such as Japanese knotweed to spread, as seen along the Waggonway.

What can be done?

CPRE believes that the key is to use economics to incentivise people and companies to do the right, rather than the wrong thing. "The plastic-bag charge did more than we could have done in 20 years of persuading people," says Samantha Harding of CPRE. "The same would happen with a bottle deposit." The Government is expected to "imminently" launch a consultation on a deposit-return system for cans and bottles of all materials (glass, aluminium and plastic) along with "disposable cups filled at the point of sale".

Tips to help keep our green spaces clean:

- Take your rubbish home. "Litter attracts litter" On a visit to the countryside, always take your rubbish home with you. It may sound obvious, but it is surprising how many people don't.
- Reduce your packaging. Ensure your picnics use the least amount of packaging. Bring sandwiches in reusable containers rather than cling film, use a refillable bottle and avoid products in plastic.
- Pick up rubbish. We are so lucky in Wylam, villagers take pride in our village and already pick up litter discarded by others. If you see a discarded crisp packet, can, bottle or any litter when out and about, pick it up. Keep a bag and protective gloves in your rucksack for litter-picking emergencies
- Spread the word. Tell others what you do and encourage them to respect the countryside. Post on your social media feeds about litter-picks you've done, and share recycling information.

Wylam Waste Warriors is a local litter picker group of like minded individuals who decided to act proactively in a bid to encourage everyone to take pride in our village and tackle grot spots in the area.

There are many unsung heroes who go out litter picking early in the mornings and over this Summer we saw many bin bags left for collection around the Bumble box bridge. I try to go out at least six days a month to help out. I believe 'Litter attracts litter' and feel I have a responsibility to help create a cleaner village along with setting an example to our children. The uplift you get from litter picking is amazing. It's a great activity that can help to build community pride and sets a good example for children.



If you would like to join the group, please get in touch through our Facebook page 'Wylam Waste Warriors'. *Jacq Henderson*

NEW BUS SHELTERS CONSIDERED

The Parish Council has been approached about the possibility of providing shelters at some bus stops in the Village. We know that some stops are better used than others and some are quite exposed to the elements. We would like to know which stops you feel should have a shelter installed, bearing in mind that it is not always possible given the space required and highway safety implications.

Please get in touch and tell us which stops you would like to see improved with a shelter. We will then draw up a priority list and look at designs to fit in with the character of the Village. The County Council will be involved in agreeing the final specification. Cost will be an important factor so we need to be realistic about how long it may take to install all of the shelters on the wish list! Please contact Marie, the Clerk on clerk@wylamparishcouncil.org.uk or leave a message at the Institute

OVERHANGING HEDGES AND VEGETATION

Could anyone who has a hedge or vegetation bordering a public pavement or path **PLEASE** ensure it is trimmed back. It is very difficult – especially for some older and disabled people and those with youngsters in buggies- to navigate the village in some areas, especially when it has been raining!

LIGHT UP WYLAM

Sarah Grainger writes - I know its early, but we want to give out plenty of warning to all the artists / exhibitionists in the village! - we are running the 'Light up Wylam' project over the Christmas period (aghh I've said it), this invites everyone to decorate their houses in aid of Fareshare North East. Fareshare are based in Westerhope and have been running foodbank deliveries across the region, including handing 80kgs to Wylam.

We especially encourage kids to get involved – put up lights and pictures in your windows, your gardens or even your streets. Local businesses will be involved and will be selling programmes in store showing what is going on so you can do a walking or driving tour to see the sights! If you simply want to donate to this great local charity please go to the Just Giving page <https://www.justgiving.com/fundraising/lightupwylam>

It all starts with the 'switch on' on the 13th December at 6pm with prizes for the best shows!

Any queries/comments/suggestions can be sent to: lightupwylam@gmail.com

PARISH COUNCIL VACANCIES

Following the resignation of Councillors Tom Appleby and Jos Joures there are now two vacancies on the Parish Council.

Notices of Vacancy have been posted around the Village giving electors in the Parish the opportunity to request an election to fill these vacancies. No such requests were made so the Parish Council can now make arrangements to co-opt people to fill the vacancies.

Would you like to get more involved with your local community and have a voice on some of the issues affecting Wylam and its residents? Are you interested in the heritage of the village, village amenities, local transport issues, the environment? If the answer is yes then why not become a member of the Parish Council?

The closing date for applications is **Friday 17th October 2020**. To request an application form please contact Marie, the Parish Clerk on clerk@wylamparishcouncil.org.uk

DID YOU KNOW?

That Northumberland County Council's website has a facility to enable residents to report problems including: fly tipping, missed bin collections, potholes, faulty street lights, road flooding, grass cutting and tree issues etc. All reports are logged so that they can then be dealt with by County Council Officers.

Go to <https://www.northumberland.gov.uk/Home.aspx> and 'click' on the 'Report' button at the top right of the page.

Similarly, if you need to apply for a County Council service such as a replacement bus pass, planning permission, a council tax enquiry or a copy birth/death/marriage certificate you just need to click on the 'Apply' button.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

All local events are currently working under Covid guidance.
Please contact your groups for further information.

Looking back...



Please address correspondence related to this issue and future editions to:

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