

Clerk's Report and update on actions – 13 November 2023

Village Handyman

- No update received from M Hadden
- Outstanding items
 - List of blocked drains.
 - Purchase safety items related to role.

Interactive Speed Signs

- Ongoing work with Northumberland County Council. Date requested from Highways Department for date of repair to signs in the middle of the village.
- Original company who fitted signs identified, engineer visiting Wylam to assess the four speed signs and quote for two new signs (Station Road and Holeyn Hall Road) and advise if we require a maintenance contract or repairs if necessary. Advice is that the signs rarely fail.
- Dates of both actions to be confirmed.

Meeting with Northumberland County Council Tree Officer

- Following the action agreed at the WPC 11 September meeting, Michael Armer, NCC Trees and Woodlands Officer, visited Wylam on 19 October. The meeting was attended by D Carney and the Clerk. L Bray (Voluntary Tree Warden) was unable to attend the meeting. Areas looked at in the village were, Wylam Institute Garden, Cherry Tree Lane, Engine Dene, Jackson Road and the Pit Heap trees.
 - **Wylam Institute Garden** – advised two of the trees require pollarding. The trees identified hold the Christmas lights. Michael advised to leave the work until 2024 removing the lights to allow the pollarding of the trees and re-attach them. There is also an issue with ivy in the Institute garden. The Institute have been advised of this and it will be raised at their next Committee meeting. Advice was also given on the raised footpath due to tree roots outside the garden, this has also been raised as an issue by residents, and is a potential danger area for a visually impaired resident in the village.
 - **Cherry Tree Lane** – The disfigured tree was reported to the PC by a resident. Michael confirmed that this is NCC land and the tree will be reshaped. The resident who raised this concern has been informed.
 - **Engine Dene** – the walk around Engine Dene identified a number of Ash trees with die back (as raised by L Bray in the VTW Annual Tree Report). Michael advised the PC to arrange surveys of the trees by Tyne Valley Woodlands for quotations and timescales for necessary work.
 - **Jackson Road** – NCC had marked a number of trees to be removed. They had been reported as unsafe and a threat to adjoining properties by residents. Advice was given on other PC trees that would need to be removed, in line with advice given during the consultation visit by D Carney, L Bray and TVW. The quote for this planned work is to be received and will be done in stages to allow for budgeting.

- **Pit Heap Trees – 2 Beech trees** – The tree roots of the larger of the two trees are visible on the riverside area and on inspection by Michael the roots on the upper bankside appear stable. Advice is the trees will need to be pollarded to reduce pressure on the exposed roots. A report will be prepared by Michael and a full inspection and report is required by Tyne Valley Woodlands on stability of roots and timescales for work. Following the reports a risk assessment of the trees will be forwarded to the insurance company.

A report on the areas visited is to be prepared by the NCC Tree and Woodlands Officer and will be added to a future agenda for discussion.

Town and Parish Council Annual Conference

- The Town and Parish Council Annual Conference took place on 5 October and was attended by D Carney and the Clerk.
- The Conference included speakers from the National ALC, NCC Fix my street team, an update on Local Services from Paul Jones, Director of Environment and Transport and a presentation by Nick Johnston, Senior Project Manager (Climate Change) at NCC's Environment and Climate Change department. The main section was the annual update from the Leader of the Council, Glen Sanderson.
- A number of stalls were available, including Road Safety, Climate Change, Neighbourhood Planning. Useful contacts were made through these stalls.
- The Leader of the Council opened the floor to Q & A from delegates, asking what County Council could do better to support Town and Parish Councils. A number of issues were raised, with the suggestion that the Conference being held every 6 months rather than annually.