

PARISH COUNCIL NEWS

The latest meeting of the Parish Council was held on 10th November when the following was discussed:

Planning

A number of planning applications have been made in the last few weeks.

Plans for a dwelling in the grounds of Dotland Grange had already been rejected by the planners before our meeting.

A proposed pole barn at Steel and two new polytunnels at the Lee were both supported. Modifications and a small extension to Peth Head at Juniper were also supported.

Plans to convert an existing building into a holiday let at Chapel House were accepted in principle.

We have no further news on the planned shooters tracks on Hexhamshire Common. The planners had asked the Estate to prepare an environmental assessment before it could be taken any further.

Another consultation on changes to the Northumberland Local Plan is taking place over the next few weeks. This mainly involves a new garden village at Dissington and does not affect local interests.

Highways

The grit heaps have now been replenished in readiness for the winter.

The bridleway above Viewly is badly eroded but is unlikely to be repaired before next spring.

We are awaiting a reply from Highways about the repair options for Dalton Bridge and an alternative HGV route from Hexham to reduce pressure on the bridge.

A blocked drain near Lilswood Bridge is causing problems.

A number of problems have also cropped up on the Lee road. The edge of the road has been eroded by traffic avoiding the overgrown hedge on its north side. The junction at the Juniper end is dangerous due to poor visibility and there are dangerous trees overhanging the road at the west end. This will all be reported to the Highways department.

Broadband

By the time you read this we are hoping the planning application for broadband masts at Viewly and Walley Thorn will have been made. Once they are installed the signal will be beamed from Kiln Pit Hill and residents with line of site to the two new masts will benefit from the improved service.

There is a delay in improving the green box at Whitley Chapel. Openreach hope this will be ready by the end of March 2017.

The EE mobile service is now operating from the Haggwood mast.

Smelting Arches

An end of season clearing up day was held in October when a number of volunteers made short work of the overgrown vegetation. Two or three similar sessions will be needed every summer in future years to keep the vegetation in check.

Subject to the transfer of remaining funds, Friends of the North Pennines have now relinquished control of the site.

Copies of the book *Images of Industry* are still available, contact Greg Finch for details.

Wetland

An overflowing ditch has been cleared out to prevent flooding of the track.

The willow group has agreed to make allowances for the public footpath when planting new areas and may plant hazel as well as willow. We have agreed they can lay a small hardcore parking area next to the hut.

It was agreed livestock grazing should continue on part of the site from May to September, subject to a written seasonal grazing agreement.

Parish Hall and Sportsfield

The David Southern Folk night was a great success with over £1,000 raised.

The WI curtain fund now stands at over £1,300, all raised at the monthly soup lunches.

A joint WI/Young Farmers event is planned for the New Year.

All tables for the Christmas Fair have now been sold.

The new kitchen is now almost complete. A path and lighting from the sportsfield to the back door of the kitchen would improve the running of outdoor events.

An estimate to resurface the BMX track was approved.

A request has been made to remove moss from the tennis court.

Alastair Stevens

Vice chairman

