

Hirst Park Liaison Meeting

A meeting has been scheduled for Monday 9th October, which will be reported at the November FGS meeting.

Enhanced Neighbourhood Services Partnership Meeting

A report of the meeting held on 19th September will be brought to the November FGS meeting. At that meeting it was agreed to hold the meetings more frequently; the next meeting is 21st November.

At that point there should be feedback on the impact of altered schedules for cleansing. It was discussed that LEQ inspection by the senior leadership team had fallen behind schedule, which did not reflect the work carried out, but understandably these need to be picked back up.

ATC Neighbourhood Services

The programme to repaint a number of public seats in the town is complete this year and three bus shelters will be painted in the North Seaton area before the winter season.

The warm and wet weather has provided challenges with weeds on the planting on Station Road and entrance features but as planting develops and fills out it is expected that this work will not be as onerous in future summer seasons.

A focus for work in the coming month will be the cleaning of a number of the towns bus shelters.

Speed signs

Thanks to County Cllrs Lynne Grimshaw and Brian Gallacher, speed signs have been installed; Sarah will complete the reclaim via MLIS Funding as soon as all invoices have been paid. This now takes the total of speed signs in the town to 15.

The speed sign on North Seaton Road is currently with the supplier and under repair and expected to be back in position by the end of October.

College Shops

Works to the College Shops area was completed in September. Work includes repainting of fencing, rendering to walls and public seats. New litterbins have been installed as well as new shrubbery planting and the replacement of a dead tree with a new silver birch.

Litter Bins

Work to update litter bins continues, also thanks to County Cllrs Caroline Ball and Mark Purvis further bins have been purchased to expedite replacements and new bins in their wards. The reclaim via MLIS Funding will be completed on receipt of the paperwork, all invoices have been paid.

Work has taken place to replace some of the older litterbins around the town as well as repairs to damaged bins in the Peoples Park area.

We are consulting with NCC on the possibility of replacing future bins with larger bins were possible. Therefore, replacement may not always be like for like, but depending on the potential for a larger bin. We need to bear in mind the impact of larger bins where waste is more likely dog bags, space available and visual amenity.

Planting and Enhancements

Bulbs have been ordered to enhance the gateways and station road beds. We are seeking costs to establish a more substantial border at the town gateways (in keeping with the structures, and ground level to remove the issue of untidy grass), as well as cleaning the structures in place.

New bulb planting and wildflower schemes have been ordered as agreed, a start date is expected soon.

The old summer planting has been removed from troughs and floral towers and winter planting will be installed by the end of the month.

Memorial Garden

Plans are being investigated to enhance the memorial garden. Additionally, in view that the train station will instigate changes in this area, we are looking at entrance and exit points and if these remain functional.

A weed and tidy of the Memorial Garden will take place in the run up to the Remembrance Day Service in November.

Events and Engagement

Engagement Event at YMCA

Verbal update will be given.

Remembrance Sunday - 12th November 2023

Plans are underway in consultation with Ashington Branch of RBL and Churches Together. The service will include the usual act of remembrance and wreath laying, and hymns supported by the band and choir. There will not be a parade this year.

Sharon is contacting all groups to coordinate the ordering of wreaths and is drafting the order of service. The Council will ensure the Memorial Garden is set-up with gazebos, chairs, and sound system. As usual the Ashington Branch of RBL will host afterwards in the cricket club. Further information will be updated as soon as it is available.

Christmas Lights Switch-On – Thursday 30th November 2023

The first planning meeting for the event was held on 3rd October.

Annual Governance and Accountability (AGAR)

Information has been published and is open to public inspection as required.

<https://www.ashingtontowncouncil.gov.uk/news/news.php?s=2023-09-28-completion-of-external-audit-for-year-ending-march-2023-a-clean-bill-of-financial-health>

Basic Parish Allowance and Expenses

Northumberland NALC have requested information from the Moderating Team who will report back.

The RFO has advised on the payment of expenses as a rounded sum. Further information has been requested which will be provided.

Jack Charlton Statue and Ashington's Football Heritage

Jack will be professionally cleaned, and rewaxed in the coming months. This is likely an annual maintenance requirement as the copper in the statue oxidises quickly due to being near the coast.

Planting has been maintained externally but will come to ATC after October. We are looking at the capacity of the NSO team, and what could be better sourced externally, whilst retaining and better utilising the skills within.

Carbon Literacy Training

The Council's achievement in this regard has been published across several forums, including NCC and NALC, and more widely via Carbon Literacy Trust and Save our Shropshire.

<https://www.ashingtontowncouncil.gov.uk/news/news.php?s=2023-09-20-empowering-change-celebrating-carbon-literacy-training-triumphs-towards-a-sustainable-future>