

## **Wylam Parish Council**

**8 October 2018**

### **Update on discussions on trees and footpath at The Orchard with Gentoo**

The last meeting of the Parish Council in September received a report on a site meeting with representatives of Gentoo, which looked at (a) the possible route for a footpath connection across a corner of Parish Council land by Church Road and (b) on the request sometime previously from Gentoo for the Council to fell some trees on the site boundary at the company's expense.

The Council in September agreed the principle of the footpath on the basis of a sketch plan, but resolved to ask Gentoo to submit a formal request to cross Council land and to confirm maintenance would be by the highway authority. On the subject of the trees, the Council meeting noted that at the site meeting one Gentoo representative seemed to query the need to fell the trees. The meeting therefore agreed to include in the letter a request for confirmation that Gentoo would still pay for the felling of trees if organised by the Council.

Since the last Council meeting I have met residents of two of the three properties in the new development facing on to the trees (the other property still being vacant). They confirmed they would both like to see some felling of trees to give them more light. They referred not only to the smaller trees, mainly elms, but also to too much larger ash trees with ivy growing through them, which they would prefer to lose as well.

The resident in the easternmost house said that the large ash in front of him was very unsightly, due in large part to significant lopping (thus bare wood and stems) by, it is thought, the developer some time ago. He said it did not look in particularly good health, as well. He asked if the Tree Warden could take another look at from his side. The Tree Warden has done this and confirms her view that she would prefer this tree to stay, at least for the time being, to see if it could regain its health after the lopping. She has indicated the felling of the two larger trees might have to be paid for by the residents if this happened sometime in the future after any Gentoo funding had stopped.

At the time of writing there has been no reply from Gentoo on the path or the trees, though efforts are being made to get one before the meeting. The letter and possible meeting with The Orchard residents has been held back until this is received and the way forward clear.

As agreed at the September meeting, a letter has been sent to the County Council on a number of issues to do with this site, but again no reply has been received as yet.

Colin Percy

03-10-18