

Wylam Nurseries: Report re 2018 seasonal planting

Hanging Baskets

Historically Tynedale District Council supplied wire, moss lined hanging baskets to villages and towns. Large strong brackets were placed high on buildings (do not know how sites were selected) and summer flowering baskets were supplied and put up by parish councillors throughout the village. They were watered by the village handyman. When Northumberland became a unitary authority, the supply at no cost by NCC ceased. For the first couple of years NCC supplied baskets at a cost, this then stopped and then WPC had to fund. WPC sought quotes and Wylam Nurseries started to supply hanging baskets.

The number of baskets has reduced over the last few years (there used to be baskets on Wylam Garage) and Wylam Nurseries has voluntarily watered and fed the baskets alongside the village handyman who waters (only) the baskets one day a week. Obviously the frequency of watering varies depending upon the weather, this year e.g. at times baskets were watered every two days. Moss lined baskets (that can be planted through the side of the basket as well as the top) take a lot of watering and significantly in Wylam those south or west facing dry out faster than those north facing. Plastic or wicker baskets (10" to 14") that are only planted on the top can need less water, however they tend to smaller diameter baskets.

Approx 10 years ago a company called 'Amberol' patented what is known as a 'self watering baskets and planters'. (See leaflet attached). Made from a significantly stronger plastic, they are a larger size, approx 16" to 20" in diameter and are double skinned. Initial watering is over the top (as with moss lined and smaller wicker and plastic baskets) and then only into holes in the top to fill the reservoir created by the double skinned design. This cuts down on watering and feeding. In comparison this year these baskets have been watered twice a week (see above) however filling the reservoir through holes in the top is best done from a water bowser with pump through a long lance, or a hose pipe from a water supply. The hangers in Wylam are very high and we hang a chain from them to enable watering with a watering can from a set of step ladders, watering via a lance would enable the baskets to be raised.

This year, as stated above, maintaining the baskets has been difficult but I feel generally the display has been fairly good.

Currently WPC pay for refill of baskets only as initially WPC still had some empty baskets. After the summer season the empty baskets are stored at Wylam Nurseries.

See prices for Amberol 'cup & saucer baskets on attached sheet. Wire or wicker baskets cost £5 and £7 respectively. Also maintenance of Amberol baskets, as noted above, is more complex.

Planted tubs

A number of years ago WPC bought 24" half oak barrels (not sure date) and sited them x1 outside Post Office, x2 entrance to Woodvale Gardens, x2 entrance to Falcon Terrace, and x2 entrance to Playing Fields. Planting sites were also identified below 'entrance plaque' on Station Road and old concrete litter bin outside the Post Office. Over the years the oak barrels have been replaced when necessary by WPC and donation, but have slowly become 16" to 20" in diameter and in some cases have not been replaced (x2 entrance to Woodvale Gardens). These are planted up twice a year to provide summer, autumn, winter and spring colour.

When WN was engaged to provide plants and compost (approx 15 years ago), these tubs were planted and maintained by volunteers (Wylam Gardening Club). They are now planted and maintained free of charge by Wylam Nurseries.

This year, as stated above, maintaining the planted tubs has been difficult but I feel generally the display has been fairly good. The watering and feeding is only undertaken by Wylam Nurseries.

War Memorial planting

This area is planted up twice a year to provide summer, autumn, winter and spring colour. When WN was engaged to provide plants and compost (approx 15 years ago), this area was planted and maintained by volunteers (Wylam Gardening Club). It is now planted and maintained free of charge by Wylam Nurseries.

This year, as stated above, maintaining this planted area has been difficult but I feel generally the display has been good. This summer maintenance includes weeding, edging, watering and feeding and cutting the grass in the immediate hexagon to the War Memorial

Summary of historic positions of baskets and containers

Hanging Baskets

1x Wylam Institute
2x Coffee Tree
2x Bistro
1x Laburnum Tce (bracket poor)
2x Wylam Pharmacy
1x Wormald House B&B
1x Jools Hair Salon

Total 10

Containers

1x outside 3-4 Laburnum Terrace
2x entrance to Woodvale Gardens
2x entrance to Jubilee Field
2x entrance to Falcon Terrace
Wylam entrance sign, Station Road
Concrete 'litter bin' at Laburnum Tce

Total 9