



## **October 2025 Update**

### **Swarland Wood Boating Lake**

The event to remove invasive species on October 11<sup>th</sup> was very successful and there is now a much more obvious path along one side of the lake. There was a great turn out of volunteers from the community who were keen to do more and it was

agreed to explore this further by first inviting NWT to have another look from a habitat perspective and then discussing the next stage of work with FE. There is also an opportunity to make a link with the Heritage Group re the Hall etc.

Carolyn will make contact with Graham Holyoak from NWT in the first instance.

### **Dead Hedge Workshop**

Rob is happy to run a workshop to create a dead hedge in the area of the bug hotel and hibernaculum in Vyner Park. It was agreed that this would be open to children if accompanied by an adult and would run on November 22<sup>nd</sup> from 10 – 12.

Rob / Carolyn to liaise about publicity.

### **Bus Service**

Liz and Carolyn have had further discussions with NCC about the bus service. Having previously agreed to run a three month trial of a one day a week weekday service (in addition to the Saturday service), NCC have now said that they don't think there is sufficient evidence of demand for this. This is frustrating as SNAC had been asked to provide feedback on preferred days for the service, not evidence of demand.

NCC are however positive about the success of the Saturday service, and the current cost to them which is of the order of £8/journey. However, there are concerned that a weekday service has the potential to reduce the numbers on a Saturday making it less financially viable.

A number of options have been discussed, and NCC have agreed to talk to NEED about changing the current Wednesday NEED service into a hybrid one in which people could still pay the registration fee and book a door to door service, but other members of the community could use the bus on a 'hail and ride' basis at bus stops without having to book, if there are spaces.

NCC have indicated that it may be possible to offer four services on a Saturday rather than the current three. SNAC will be consulted on what the new timetable might look like and will ascertain when this might start.

SNAC has also been asked to gather evidence of demand for a weekday service. This will need further thought about the most appropriate way to do this and when.

We will meet again with NCC once they have had discussions with NEED.

### **Ideas for SNAC**

Liz gave a short summary of what SNAC has done since it was formed in 2022. While there are a good number of people on the mailing list, the numbers coming to meetings is fairly low and most of the organisational work falls to Liz and Carolyn.

The question for the group was – what works and what doesn't, what would you like to get from being part of SNAC, should we meet less frequently, what would you like meetings to consist of – and would others like to get involved in helping with organisation.

There were a number of suggestions for events and talks, including –

- A litter pick around known problem areas, including the Bari Bar and Shiel Dyke area. Agreed that we should contact Percy Wood re the Bari Bar areas.
- Talks – including on fungi and foraging, renewable energy sources, ponds.
- Guided walks – woodland flora and fauna, medicinal plants, bird walks.
- Visits – to the Suez recycling centre
- A focus on wild areas in gardens, including asking people to tell us about what they've done and perhaps an 'Open Wild Gardens' event.
- Ways to share surplus produce and plants, perhaps a pop-up stall, or use of the bus shelter.

Liz and Carolyn will take these ideas and put them into a plan for the next 12 months to be shared at the November meeting.

### **Neighbourhood Plan Consultation**

SNAC is one of the consultees for the draft Neighbourhood Plan, and members are encouraged to have a look at the Plan and submit comments – especially about the policies that relate to the natural environment.

The Draft Plan and supporting documents can be viewed on the Newton on the Moor Parish Council website at <https://newtonswarlandpc.org.uk/> . Printed copies of the Plan are available at The Jubilee Hall, Newton on the Moor; Swarland Village Hall and Nelson's café in Vyner Park, Swarland when they are open. You can also pick up a Representations form for your comments.

You can send comments direct to [commentsontheplan@gmail.com](mailto:commentsontheplan@gmail.com) or by printing and posting the representations form to Newton on the Moor and Swarland Parish Council, 16 Newton on the Moor, Northumberland NE65 9JY. Drop in events are organised for 4<sup>th</sup> October at Swarland Village Hall and 18<sup>th</sup> October at Jubilee Hall (10.00-12.00). Final closing date for comments is 1<sup>st</sup> November.

### **Hawthorn Berries needed**

Judy Fortescue is still collecting hawthorn seeds and crab apples. Put collected berries into paper bags and contact [judy@andrewrobinsonfarms.co.uk](mailto:judy@andrewrobinsonfarms.co.uk) with any questions or to arrange collection.

### **Coquet River Action Group event**

Annual event highlighting the work of the group and projects for the next year, plus speakers from Rivers Trust and Natural England.

Thursday October 24<sup>th</sup> at 7.30 in Swarland Village Hall.