



## Malhamdale Environmental Group

### MINUTES of Meeting held Thursday 28 November 2024 in Kirby Malham Parish Hall

**Present:** Wendy Carr (WC), Gordon Carr (GC), Peter Cummings (Deputy Chair; PC), Jonathan Heath (JH), Neil Heseltine (NH), Laura Parker (LP), Mick Parker (MP), Stephen Phillips (SP) James Powell (JP) Margaret Ross (MR) Michael Southworth (MS), Jane Smart, (Chair; JS), Sue McWhinney (SMc).

**Apologies:** David Howlett (DH), Rita Layton, Paul McWhinney, Judy Rogers (JR) and Leigh Weston (LW).

**Minutes of meeting on held 31 October 2024:** These were agreed.

### Summary of discussion with Action Points

	Matters arising
Minutes of the last meeting	<b>Action:</b> JS and PC to ask KMPC (Phill Dewhurst and Chris Wildman) to post the minutes on the KMPC website (from April 2024)
	<b>Summary of discussion with Action Points</b>
Nature and climate friendly farming	Neil Heseltine joined for discussion of the “Sweet Spot” approach to farming. A report circulated before the meeting <a href="#">Farming at the Sweet Spot.pdf</a> provided background for the discussion. This is an approach that involves reducing costs of farming by reducing or eliminating fertilisers, pesticides and supplementary feed - that also results in benefits to nature (including the soil), as well as a more climate-friendly approach to farming. All engaged in the discussion, focussing on some of the challenges in modern farming, agreeing that our discussion was beneficial to understand better the issues involved. It was agreed that there was no particular action to be taken at present but that MEG should re-visit the issue in 2025. Neil was thanked for his attendance and for leading an interesting and very informative discussion.
Malhamdale Curlew Project (Results 2024; plans for 2025)	JH gave a full report of the results of the survey work this year. See the December – January Parish Magazine for the details. JH emphasised that curlews arrived late, laid late but had good feeding opportunities owing to the weather. It is too early to determine information on trends (need 5 years of data). JS emphasised that although curlews can still be seen in Malhamdale, they remain highly threatened. JH noted with appreciation that farmers often cut silage late. <b>Action:</b> For 2025, we are applying to YDMT for support. JS thanked JH, LW, the farmers involved, Cath Crisp, all the volunteers as well the consultant Ciaran Rowett; SMc for the Church Curlew exhibition; also, RSPB, BTO, and YDNPA (who have offered ongoing support), on behalf of MEG. RSPB can offer some training. Following discussion of how farmers



	could help with curlew conservation it was agreed <b>Action:</b> that the Chair would write to Natural England to ask about the development of a specific subsidy to support curlew-friendly farming practice.
Tree Nursery and Tree Planting	YDMT cancelled tree growing workshop owing to staff illness. MP reported that some additional tools, compost and sand are needed for the Tree Nursery; <b>Action:</b> MP will compile a list of requirements and ask for support from YDMT. Future tree planting dates were shared. MP is in touch with a local landowner re planting trees on one of the car park fields.
Orchard Planting	PC reported that the Clapham Environmental Group's orchard scheme involved a survey of existing fruit trees and land available. They received a grant of £450 for this. Residents were invited to plant the trees in their gardens and a record of locations and audit of the maintenance of the trees over time. NH reported on the scheme being developed by himself and LW. They are planning to plant the Croft field with varieties of apple, pear and gages. They will plant a boundary hedge. They also have a hedge that is to be laid with MEG assistance. GC mentioned the damsons that are growing well at Windy Pike. Useful information on fruit species growing locally was shared on the MEG Chat.
Peat bog monitoring (Eyes on the Bog)	Canes on survey plots are being replaced with posts. Surveying to resume in March 2025. NH has been in touch with YPP regarding surveying his land on Scosthrop High Moor.
North Yorkshire Climate Coalition	Awaiting report back from DH on outcome of survey to determine future of <a href="https://www.nyclimatecoalition.org/">https://www.nyclimatecoalition.org/</a> (that aims to become a legal entity).
Tarn House and Malham Tarn Estate	No updates since Parish Council's meeting with NT at Tarn House.
Recycling issues: Blister packs for pills and Corks, including plastic corks	Blister packs: KMPC has kindly agreed to fund one large Terracycle recycling box (at a cost of £210) to match the contribution made by Malham WI. Two large boxes per year needed (£420 per year). MEG expressed sincere thanks to KMPC. MS reported that a local resident has agreed to coordinate the collection of blister packs around Airton; he will transport them to Malham. However, this is not widely known. <b>Action:</b> Explain through Parish Magazine article Corks: The Vic in Kirkby Malham is participating and other pubs have been approached. Soft plastics: MP reported that Settle Co-op take soft plastics for recycling; he recommended reading their website.



Renewable energy in Malhamdale	<p>PC reported that he is meeting Chris Wildman to finalise a specification for research into and feasibility of renewable energy sources being installed in Kirkby Malham Parish and the potential for establishing a local micro power grid. The specification will be issued to five companies which promote and install renewable energy systems.</p> <p>The possibilities of solar panels in Malhamdale to be explored further through article in the Parish Magazine (see below). GC has 12 years' worth of monthly records of wind and solar energy from Windy Pike. He can share if needed.</p> <p>The meeting was alerted to the "Big Switch", an initiative of NYC that allows local residents to participate in an auction, through a broker, for the cheapest renewable energy. The energy provider has already been selected however, despite the 4 December deadline.</p>
Upper Aire salmon Safari	<p>A local resident is taking part in a YDNPA programme to survey for salmon. His survey area comprises the becks and gills in Malhamdale. MEG members may join future surveys of the river banks. <b>Action:</b> PC undertook to contact the local resident for more information about the programme.</p> <p>The Wild Trout Trust is a good source of advice on river/beck management (Jonathan Grey).</p>
Future events	<p>Talk on NT's <i>Heart of the Dales</i> proposed for 2025. <b>Action:</b> JS to ask NT. SMC suggested publicising widely. Explore possible Farm Shop event in spring featuring suppliers. <b>Action:</b> JS to speak to Chris Wildman</p> <p>Other ideas to be firmed up in 2025.</p>
Parish Magazine Feb 2025 and beyond	<p><b>February 2025:</b> David Howlett to be asked to write a piece on his newly installed solar panels in Malham, describing his experience of the planning process, as well as costs and benefits (e.g. charging his EV) with facts/figures.</p> <p><b>March 2025:</b> JR offered to write article on recycling points (including blister packs collection in Malham and Airton) for various items that cannot be put into blue, green or brown bins</p> <p><b>Future articles:</b> Report on COP29.</p> <p><b>Action:</b> <i>All articles to be submitted via JS to ensure coordination.</i></p>
Future meetings Dates & venues	<p><b>Dates and venues of next meetings:</b> Dates for 2025 meetings (all on Thursdays): 23 January (Zoom); 6 March (Malham Village Hall); 3 April; 1 May; 12 June; 11 September; 2 October; 27 November (Malham Village Hall); venues to be confirmed in due course.</p>
AOB	<p>WC said that she had learnt from attending a U3A talk in settle that Wild Inglebrough (Ellie Parker, YWT) has as many volunteers as they could cope with. <b>Action:</b> PC to follow up and point out that MEG often requires additional volunteers.</p> <p>GC says that he can make bird nest boxes if requested (good to link to Birds Nesting Project – to be discussed at a future meeting )</p>

