



Malhamdale Environmental Group

MINUTES of Meeting held Thursday 2 October 2025 in Kirkby Malham Parish Hall

Present: Jane Bagley (JB), Wendy Carr (WC), Peter Cummings (Deputy Chair; PC), Carol Douglas, YDMT (CD), David Howlett (DH), Eva Irving, YDMT (EI), James Powell (JP), Sue McWhinney (SMc), Paul McWhinney (PMc), Judy Rogers (JR), Jane Smart (Chair; JS), Michael Southworth (MS).

Apologies: Jonathan Heath, Annette Edwards, Laura Parker, Mick Parker, Stephen Phillips, Margaret Ross, and Leigh Weston.

Minutes of meeting on held 11 September 2025: These were agreed.

Matters arising	
Matters arising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • MS attended “Action on Empty Homes” to retrofit homes in Craven for energy efficiency, reporting that it was of limited use given it not an old solid wall house, typical of those found in Malhamdale. JR mentioned a Settle resident who has retrofitted an old house. • Dales House Nesting Birds Project: EI reported that YDNPA would be in touch with those who have applied for a nest box (270 boxes for the whole project area, so oversubscribed). It was agreed that applicants should receive a simple email acknowledgement after applying.
Summary of discussion with Action Points	
Tree Planting and Nursery	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JS explained that Mick Parker had kindly sent comments in advance • CD and EI welcomed to the meeting. • KMPC Ash Dieback (AD) Report and follow up: This issue is led by KMPC: MEG is supporting with advice, and in due course, assistance with plans for recolonisation / replanting. • DH reported that Diseased Ash Trees for felling/ monolithing have been marked up. The British Mountaineering Council (BMC) have offered to help remove loose rocks / trees at Gordale Scar and will attend the next KMPC meeting. • Woodland areas of both Malham Cove (2-3 acres) and Gordale Scar (both SSSIs) impacted. Timber to be left where possible. A thinning licence for the Plantation is needed. Total cost of removal c. £11K. • Apparently, KMPC, as a public body, do not need to get Natural England’s (NE) consent to carry out the work. • Current priority is removal of diseased trees from Gordale where the public footpath has been closed because of a large rock fall. Drone footage shows where the rocks have come from. Contractors have been engaged. • DH and JS will produce a Habitat Risk Assessment.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YDMT can help produce a Management Plan for Gordale, Malham Cove and the Plantation. Action: DH with JS to follow up • Replanting: meeting welcomed document circulated by JS: • Managing woodland SSSIs with a shoddy back to GOV.UK.pdf that contains useful advice on management measures that should be followed and approach to re-planting (species choice) / natural colonisation. YWT are also addressing the issue. • Meeting discussed species choice for replanting. Could include Yew at Gordale, and other species present in the SSSI. • JS pointed out damage that will be done by trampling and removal of tree trunks in affected areas. This must be minimised. • Some negative reaction from visitors and residents is likely; MEG members asked to assist by helping explain issues. • Publicity: article for Parish Magazine (see below); Craven Herald and Look North would likely be interested in covering issue.
<p>Tree Planting and Nursery cont.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • WC with JS requested this discussion. • Overview of aims of nursery: CD explained the role of herself and EI. It is MEG's community project. Nursery has focussed on rare species (given its location), notably willows. • JS said focus should be expanded to include species for re-stocking areas affected by AD. Agreed that Nursery is ideally placed to help re-plant with trees of local provenance. Bird Cherry suckers on WC's land should be utilised. JS reported offer by local resident to grow seedlings of seemingly resistant ash. It was agreed that this could be helpful. • JP asked if there are any records (including historical) from Gordale / Malham SSSIs. JS said that she will be investigating and in due course we can develop species list. • PMc asked about making willow sculptures in the glebe. These can be living structures for taking cuttings. JS questioned using rare willow species for sculptures; however, <i>Salix purpurea</i> may be suitable. It was agreed that the need to re-plant trees affected by AD however should be the overall priority. • Event on Weds 22 October in KM Parish Hall (10.00 – 15.00) seed box making / planting seeds / potting on seedlings: EI would like to know numbers attending; EI offered to make a poster. SMC mentioned need to promote event; she has included notice in October Parish News. • Planning for 2026: watering guidelines (new water butt); WC was disappointed with a watering effort this spring /summer. We need volunteers to water more often, especially in spring. • Agreed we need a water butt on shed next year. EI said YDMT has a donor.



	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to timely removal of tubes on newly planted trees and need for grants to cover tree maintenance (for thinning etc.). YDMT are utilising recycled tubes and are addressing the issue generally. Action: CD will send link about research into tubes. • MS asked when tubes should be removed. CD said it's a balance between protection from deer, rabbits, and voles against damage from tube/ overall health of tree. • YDMT can assist landowners with planting trees / hedgerows. Action: MEG to assist with encouraging landowners to ask YDMT for help.
Articles for Parish Magazine	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • November issue – Malhamdale Curlew Project. Action: DH will write article on Ash Dieback on behalf of KMPC. • December issue – MEG plans for 2026 (PC and JS). • Future issues: challenges of using plastic tubes for tree planting • (From previous minutes) article on recycling points (including blister packs collection in Malham and Airton) for assorted items that cannot be put into blue, green or brown bins. • Retrofitting houses in the Dales. • Action: All articles to be submitted via JS please, to ensure coordination.
Future MEG events / discussion items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • YDMT also mentioned course on identification of grasses in vegetative state at Muker on 24th November. • Meadow plug planting event to take place at Butterlands. Meeting expressed enthusiasm to help with plug planting. • Settle resident who has retrofitted her home for energy efficiency. • In person meeting with Ariane Heap, NYC Waste Prevention and Recycling Officer following online meetings in 2025 Action: PC to follow up. • Judith Allinson (expert botanist and all-round naturalist from Craven Conservation Group) to give a talk to MEG (JS to ask her). • The North Craven Woodland Research Group (Ken Timms) has agreed to speak about identifying 'shadow' and ghost woodlands. Date TBC. • Steve Heaton, NE willow expert: walk around Malham Tarn (arrange via YDMT). • Green energy event featuring experiences from local residents, including DH. DH to investigate further.
Dates and venues of 2025 meetings	<p>Dates and venues of next meetings (all on Thursdays at 7.30): 27 November (Malham Village Hall); to include roundup of the MEG year with / followed by Christmas drinks). Action: JR offered to bring a projector and help set it up. Please bring a bottle!!</p>
AOB	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • NY Climate Coalition promoting Net Zero; planning another conference in Harrogate in early 2026.