



REG

NEWSLETTER

April 2025



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What is Ryedale Environment Group (REG)?

REG is a developing grassroots organisation and has been a registered charity since 2023 (Registered Charity Number 1202762). We exist to help local communities reduce Ryedale's carbon footprint, by promoting positive projects that tackle environmental impacts across the district.

We also act as a discussion forum for established environmental groups in Kirkbymoorside, Pickering and Hovingham, as well as fledgling groups in Helmsley, Malton/Norton, Lasingham, Kirby Misperton, Allerston and Slingsby.

New groups and interested individuals are encouraged to join our monthly online meetings, which are open to all and designed to allow attendees to share successful initiatives and brainstorm new ideas. We are strictly apolitical and welcome new members from all political persuasions and walks of life.

REG Talks

Our online talks via Zoom remain popular, and recent topics have included:

- Keep Ryedale Buzzing with Claire Ivey from the Bumblebee Conservation Trust
- Nature-Friendly Farming with Mark Palmer from Systems4food
- A Swift Recovery: Keeping the Skies Alive with Edward Mayer from Swift Conservation
- Geothermal Energy in Ryedale
- The Green Transformation of Community Buildings with Ray Newton from Monk Fryston and Hillam Community Centre
- Slowing the Flow in Pickering, with help from beavers

Please visit www.ryedaleenvirogroup.co.uk for details of future events and recordings of previous talks. We're also always delighted to receive ideas for topics you'd like to hear about!

A Date for Your Diary

Following on from the roaring success of last September's inaugural **Restoring Ryedale conference**, we are delighted to announce that this special nature-focused event will return to Kirby Misperton Village Hall with more inspiring speakers on **12 September 2025**.

www.ryedaleenvirogroup.co.uk

Restoring Ryedale: Local Rewilding Action

Pickering

At the start of this year, Pickering Environment Group received the encouraging news that North York Moors National Park agreed to include the town's wildflower verges and the Community Park wildflower meadow within the scope of their Grubs Up! Project. This will provide access to help to carry out biodiversity surveying and any enhancement work needed, and could bring in extra volunteers to supplement those from the Council, local environment groups and local residents.

PEG has also been given permission to use one of the community allotment plots to create a wildflower factory for sowing seeds and raising young plants to be transplanted into the Community Park meadow and beyond. If anyone else would like to get involved with this, the group is open to offers of help, especially with the practical work.



Kirby Misperton

At the time of writing, a group of volunteers has just completed the first cut-and-collect of the year. For the last 3 years, this has been done just twice a year, as part of the plan to increase biodiversity in the roadside verge as you enter the village from Amotherby—look at for the blue heart signs!

Not only did the team spot the first shoots of yellow rattle (sown in the autumn) emerging through the grass this weekend, but they were also able to try out one of the two new strimmers purchased for use in local rewilding projects, thanks to an "Inspire" grant of £1000 from NYC and £400 from local councillor Steve Mason's locality grant.



Helmsley

Wendy Rushton recently shared her story of creating a wildflower area on land owned by Yorkshire Housing Association on Elmslac Road. After surveying local residents to gather their views, Wendy led a team of volunteers from Helmsley Bloomers, along with local residents, to clear the grass from the site and plant wildflower plug plants purchased from a specialist nursery using a YHA grant. Three years later, the plot is thriving and there are plans to add more species and ensure the area remains aesthetically pleasing, whilst providing a boost for local biodiversity.

Kirkbymoorside

In November, the Town Council reported that 40 different wildflowers were identified in the three trial areas on the A170. Some of these had been planted by volunteers, while most just grew because the grass wasn't cut!

The trial areas were cut in the autumn, with cuttings left a few days to allow any seeds to drop. Next, the cuttings were raked up to reduce the fertility of the soil (making it less favourable to the grass) and left to rot down near the hedges. Cllr Dowie borrowed rakes and high visibility jackets from REG, and volunteers came along to assist (see photo of their hard work!)



Slingsby

Slingsby Parish Environment Group (SPEG) is entering the 2nd year of a meadow creation project in a corner of the sportsfield, and we're extremely grateful for advice from staff at Howardian Hills National Landscape and donation of wildflower plug plants from the Forgotten Flora propagation project.



Paths For Everyone: Recent Progress

In our August 2024 newsletter, we included a special feature on the Paths for Everyone (P4E) project.

This initiative will provide safe, independent active travel across Ryedale:

- It will be accessible for wheelchair users, walkers, pushchairs, cyclists of all ages, cycles adapted for disability, mobility scooters, horse-riders and runners.
- It will link the market towns of Malton, Helmsley, Kirkbymoorside and Pickering, creating a circular route of approximately 50 miles of safe, active travel and independent connectivity for individuals and families.
- It will also provide the opportunity to link communities inside and outside the route, significantly increasing active travel to around a 200 miles radius.



- The objective is to complete the Paths by 2030, and so far the Pickering to Malton section is nearly complete.
- Read on for further updates!

Broughton Bank

- Installation of the Broughton Bank Safer Path started in November 2024.
- This will not only be beneficial for walkers, cyclists and horse-riders but will also act as a nature corridor.
- The photos below were taken in December 2024, from Broughton Green Lane (Damson Lane) and Spital Hill Plantation.
- The next section will be the top of Spital Hill Plantation and the top field, adjacent to the B1257.



Helmsley Railbed

- In Helmsley, Friends of Helmsley Railbed (under the REG umbrella of member groups) have organised work along this section of the Market Town Circular Route.
- The culvert pipe installation started this winter, after several years of Friends of Helmsley Railbed resolutely inching towards it!
- They are replacing the bridge (which is rotting anyway) with a wider and less steep path, which means the 1km railbed path will become accessible for wheelchairs, horse-riders and cyclists of all ages.

Find out more about P4E

If you would like to keep in contact and receive communications updates, please get in touch: Helen Gundry on 07827315131 or Frank Colenso on 07541854765, or email: p4eryedale@outlook.com.

New 'Beyond Plastic' Group

In 2021, the world produced almost 400 million metric tons of plastic, and 1.7 billion pieces of plastic are thrown away every week in the UK alone, according to the Big Plastic Count. Versatile, durable, lightweight and relatively inexpensive to produce, plastic is widely used in a huge range of applications, from packaging for medical and electrical items, to construction and textiles.

Unfortunately, it is also made from fossil fuels, along with additives like colorants, stabilisers and plasticisers—all of which may contain toxic substances such as cadmium and lead, leading to a whole host of negative impacts on human health and the environment.

The recently formed Beyond Plastic Group is part of REG and aims to use local event displays, information leaflets, and an extensive page of resources on the REG website to increase awareness of the problems caused by so much plastic in our environment, as well as the steps individuals and families can take to reduce the amount of plastic they use.

Making Waves for Change: Scarborough Beach Clean

One of the most devastating effects of the excessive levels of plastic we use is the increasing, persistent and global threat of marine litter.

The beach is a popular place to relax and have fun. Yet, as the crowds of visitors increase, so does the trash that many leave behind. Rubbish left on the beach is not just unattractive, but can get washed back into the water and create safety hazards for visitors and aquatic life.

On 13 August last year, a small group of dedicated Malton & Norton Environment Group volunteers and their children met Ana Cowie from the Yorkshire Wildlife Trust to embark upon a Beach Clean at Scarborough South Bay.



After gathering at the RNLI lifeboat station on this hot summer's day, Ana explained some of the facts about UK beach pollution and how it affects Yorkshire's coastline. Stretching along 152km and extending 22km out to sea, this rich marine environment is home to incredible wildlife and habitats: from minke whales and harbour porpoises to lobsters, crabs and colourful kelp forests, our sea and rocky shores are full of life. Thousands of seabirds also visit the Yorkshire coast every year to breed and raise their chicks, with the famous Bempton Cliffs a fine example of this marine bird population.



Sadly, our marine and coastal wildlife is under threat from the devastating impact of human activity. From tiny micro-plastics and tangled rubbish polluting our beaches and choking our wildlife, to agricultural run-off, pesticides and untreated sewage polluting our seas with toxic chemicals, coastal and marine ecosystems face a barrage of dangers.

In terms of littering, Ana shared that at a previous Scarborough beach clean they found 2000 discarded cigarette butts, these being one of the items most commonly found on beaches. On a southern shoreline, a seal was recently found choking and gasping for life after a frisbee ring (left behind on a family beach trip) had become stuck around its neck.

Armed themselves with litter-picking sticks, gloves and recycled carrier bags, the MNEG volunteers had an enlightening (and sobering) experience walking along the jam-packed beachfront. They witnessed the realities of beach litter 'up close', including a terrified seagull with its foot ensnared in plastic, and a parent attempting to bury their litter in the sand. By the time they left the beach, the three adults and their children had collected 7 bags full of rubbish, ranging from plastic bottles and food wrappers to children's beach toys and discarded packaging, fishing nets and microplastics. One of the children summed up the day perfectly: "It's amazing how much we can achieve together. Knowing that we've made a difference for Scarborough's wildlife makes it all worthwhile; I'll certainly always take my rubbish home!" A reminder that every action has the power to create a ripple effect...

Want to learn more about our activities?

Please visit www.ryedaleenvirogroup.co.uk or email ryedaleeg@hotmail.com