



Minutes of meeting held 25th November 2021 via Zoom

Present: Peter Cummings (PC), Judy Rogers (JR), David Howlett (DH), Mick Parker (MJP), Laura Parker (LP), Sue McWhinney (SM), Paul McWhinney (PM), Michael Southworth (NS), Leigh Weston (LW)

Apologies: Rita Layton, Carol Douglas, Alice Cummings

Minutes of previous meeting and matters arising

The minutes of the meeting held on 28th October 2021 were agreed as a true record. There were no matters arising.

Action points from previous meeting

All action points had been dealt with satisfactorily except for one: PC to ask Council to approach Highways for repairs. This will be followed up before the next meeting.

Update on Tree planting and maintenance

JR explained that tree planting dates had been set up for January 7th, 14th, 22nd, 28th, and February 12th. More details will be sent out nearer each date. The events will be between 10:00am to 3:00pm but volunteers are welcome to join in for any number of hours between these times that suit them.

YWT has another tree maintenance day on 14th December and is planning on having tree maintenance days on one Tuesday every month in 2022.

The promise of trees by the National Trust has been followed up but it appears that NT will not get its supplies of trees until January 2022 when the matter can be progressed.

Mention was made of the failure of many trees planted on NH's land both one and two years ago and the desire to replant with locally grown trees, if and when possible, was expressed.

Update on plans to improve Malham Beck Plantation

A final plan is being prepared with input by YDNPA and advice from NT Tree Officer who have addressed problems raised by Parish councillors when the plans were first presented at their meeting in October.

It is hoped the updated plans can be put to the Council for their December 2021 meeting.

Action point: DH asked to be fully briefed on these updates so that the misgivings expressed by councillors, and some attendees at the MEG meeting, about drainage and exactitude of costs can be allayed.

Update on promotion of value of sheep's fleeces for multiple uses

The Chair recalled the essential details of the Clapham Sustainability Group's efforts in summer 2021 when they experimented with selling for other purposes sheep's fleeces that are unsuitable for the textile market.



LW has spoken extensively with the person who led this experiment to assess whether the model could be adopted for Malhamdale. She explained that “non-marketable” fleeces can in fact be used for carpets, underlays, insulation, and for compost provided they are firstly subject to processes that make them suitable for these products. Only the Clapham project has tried to sell fleeces as a compost product for gardeners which is a possible new avenue for the use of fleeces that cannot be processed into other products.

However, the amount of organisation involved in pre-purchasing fleeces, promoting sales and securing customers, as well as storing fleeces effectively until required, would be a heavy administrative burden that, if not run entirely by dedicated volunteers, would prove more costly than the likely revenues from such arrangements. However a way forward for Malhamdale to try its own experiment was worked out, giving rise to **action points** as follows: LW to approach local farmers who might be interested in trying to sell “non-marketable” fleeces for gardening purposes; PC to arrange for local publications and social media groups to be supplied with information about the scheme and ask for feedback in order to assess its potential viability, PC to include on the MEG meeting agenda for January 2022 an item on progress to date and final decisions which could range from abandoning the idea to facilitating direct sales between farmers and customers without the involvement of middlemen.

Views on the promotion of Hubbub

Hubbub is a charity that has been hired by Craven District Council to help with the promotion of the environmentally responsible use of energy within the District. Various environmental groups within Craven were contacted by Hubbub prior to Hubbub preparing a Craven energy saving campaign.

The Campaign Plan has now been issued to these environmental groups for comment and requests them to plan in some dates to share the energy communications that will be made available, try to run a “Get Set for Winter” event, and send into Hubbub any effective case studies and best practice tips.

The Chair went through the essentials of the planned campaign recognising that Hubbub came with a high recommendation from other users. However, after discussion it was concluded that, (1) MEG could issue locally any energy communications from Hubbub through its social media outlets and relevant publications but (2) has no resources to run an event, and that (3) members do not have any evidence of helpful case studies nor best practice tips.

A clear concern arose that the campaign is pitched at too light a level for the needs of Malhamdale as it does not appear to deal with the kind of issues that arise from improving the sustainability of its ancient housing stock. Fundamental issues such as insulation causing damp and severe planning restrictions imposed by the National Park, indicated that a different approach would be required in this Dale.



MEG felt it should give some thought to a day (say in April 2022) when it could bring together a meeting of local people interested in the issues of what would essentially be retrofit, its cost, grants available, and planning¹ stumbling blocks.

There was also a suggestion that Hubbub may be able to persuade another environmental group that is in a position to run a "Get ready for winter" event to enable Malhamdale residents to join in if they wish.

Action points therefore arising were: PC to write to Hubbub about the above concerns; JR to follow up on the practicalities of holding a local meeting in Spring 2022 focussing on the kinds of deep-seated sustainability problems that seem to be characteristic of much of the local housing stock. Guest speakers might be an expert on insulation, an expert on renewable energy and someone from YDNPA Planning.

Supporting YDMT and The Bee Together project

This item was not discussed so will be forwarded to the January 2022 agenda².

Article for the Parish Magazine

Action points: DH to write a short article about COP26 in the February issue; PC to write up about use of fleeces by gardeners based on the Clapham experience in February issue but to issue a similar version adapted to social media in early January with the purpose of seeking out potential interest.

Date of next meeting

The dates for MEG meetings in 2022 were confirmed as follows: Thursday 27th January; Thursday 3rd March; Thursday 31st March; Thursday 28th April; Thursday 26th May; Thursday 30th June; Thursday 21st July; Thursday 29th September; Thursday 20th October; Thursday 24th November.

The meetings will begin at 7:30pm. Decisions will be made at the last meeting in March as to whether to continue MEG meetings over Zoom.

¹ Two members of the group have had severe difficulties with Planning and are willing to share their experience with others if this would be helpful.

² This item was to have been a discussion about how MEG could contribute to the Bee Together Project as described at <https://www.ydmt.org/news/network-pollinators-craven>.