



North York Moors  
National Park

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**What can Parishes do to make a difference?**

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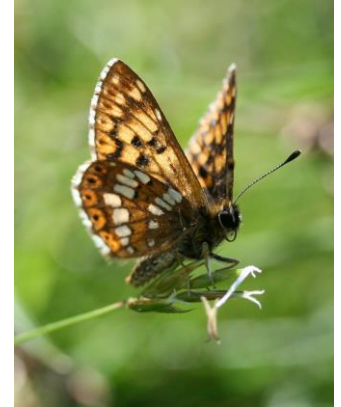
Local actions to benefit local people

- Work with local community to understand specific local biodiversity features and pressures
- Management of areas under Parish Council control
- Liaison with community to influence and support management of land outside of Parish Council control
- A healthy environment supports healthy people

# What can Parishes do to make a difference?

Understand local biodiversity features and pressures

- You may have local naturalists or other experts in your area – use their knowledge and expertise! Interested community members can collect a lot of information.
- What natural habitats already exist in the parish? What uses them? Are particular times of year important?
- What are the current pressures on local biodiversity?  
Examples include;
  - Foot fall / visitor pressure
  - Community wish for ‘tidiness’
  - Maintenance of sight lines for safety and/or access



# What can Parishes do to make a difference?

## Management of areas under Parish Council control

- Hedge trimming
  - Where possible don't cut every year – alternate which hedges cut
  - Winter cuts ideally should be left until Jan/Feb
  - Raise the cut height on each trim – just 5-10cm can be hugely beneficial for promoting flowers/fruit and prevent 'knuckles' forming
  - Where will not impinge on road safety allow hedges to get bigger and more diverse!
  - Allow hedgerow trees to form at intervals along the hedge
  - Consider introducing hedge laying to well established hedges of the right age – great community activity!



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# What can Parishes do to make a difference?

## Management of areas under Parish Council control

- Verges management
  - Reduce cutting! Cutting only twice a year in around March/early April and September/October will enable plants to flower and set seed.
  - Remove cuttings after mowing – this reduces nutrients and helps to prevent grass dominating all other species.
  - Where more frequent mowing required (eg for safety) try to minimize the area for this and allow the back of the verge to grow longer.
  - Introduce a more diverse range of species where appropriate by locally sourced green hay, plug plants or seed.



# What can Parishes do to make a difference?

## Management of areas under Parish Council control

- Can village greens and other community spaces help nature as well as people?
  - Use native species instead of non-natives for display planting where possible
  - Tree planting – even single trees can make a big difference, eg fruit trees that can provide a harvest as well as food and structure for wildlife
  - Wetness – great for wildlife! A small pond, scrape, slow bit of stream or undisturbed muddy corner can support loads of species.
  - Tree management – where required, retain some cut wood for log/brush piles. Can the trunk of a diseased tree be retained for nature?



# What can Parishes do to make a difference?

Management of areas under Parish Council control

- Support measures to promote and protect dark skies
  - Dark skies beneficial for protecting biodiversity – particularly the natural habits of invertebrates and other nocturnal fauna.
  - Also benefits for saving money, improving health and well-being and conserving dark landscapes
  - Consider impacts on dark skies when commenting on planning applications
  - If have adopted street lights – ensure dark skies compliant (no upward light spill, <2700K, low wattage) and consider part night lighting.



## What can Parishes do to make a difference?

### Influence management of other land

- Share good practice and advice within the parish (and with other parishes!)
- If changing management of parish council land, let everyone know why! Good communication critical to generating support. Take pictures of the work and record the wildlife seen.
- Encourage land managers of assets that affect the community to adopt practices that benefit biodiversity eg land near streams and alongside footpaths and other rights of way.
- Gardens are a great resource for benefitting biodiversity! Small changes done collectively can make a big difference – inspire actions in your community.
- Encourage residents to consider protecting dark skies when lighting their properties and inform about appropriate lighting methods.





# What can Parishes do to make a difference?

A healthy environment supports healthy people

- Numerous studies have proven that access to natural green spaces is beneficial for human health and wellbeing.
- 2022 report commissioned by NHSE found time spent in nature was linked to:
  - Reduced blood pressure and stress levels
  - Lower levels of cardiovascular and respiratory problems
  - Reduced risk of diabetes and obesity
  - Increased well being
  - Reduced social isolation
  - Increased happiness and resilience



# What can Parishes do to make a difference?

New GrubsUp! Project will provide advice and support

- 2 year project
- Aim to boost biodiversity through focus on raising plant and invertebrate diversity.
- Will monitor and improve road verges and species rich grassland amongst other actions.
- Inspiring community actions crucial – keen to engage with all PCs within the project area.



## Resources

- Some works may be eligible for grant funding
  - Hedgerow creation/management – SFI (Defra), Traditional Boundary Fund (NYMNPA)
  - Diversifying grasslands and verges – SFI (Defra), GrubsUp! (NYMNPA - A170 corridor to S NP)
  - Ponds - Birds on the Edge (NYMT), GCN DLL grant (NE)
  - Dark sky friendly lighting (NYMNPA)
- Useful links and guidance
  - Hedge management: [www.ptes.org/hedgerow](http://www.ptes.org/hedgerow) and [www.hedgeline.org.uk/guidance/hedgerow-management-advice](http://www.hedgeline.org.uk/guidance/hedgerow-management-advice)
  - Road verges: [www.plantlife.org.uk/our-work/road-verges](http://www.plantlife.org.uk/our-work/road-verges)
  - Ponds/wetland: [www.freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/million-ponds/pond-creation-toolkit](http://www.freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/million-ponds/pond-creation-toolkit)
  - Dark skies: [Help protect our dark skies | NYMNP \(northyorkmoors.org.uk\)](http://Help%20protect%20our%20dark%20skies%20|%20NYMNP%20(northyorkmoors.org.uk))