



KIRKBYMOORSIDE TOWN COUNCIL

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Minutes of the Manor Vale Management Committee meeting held on 15 April 2026 at 11am in The Moorside Room, 9 Church Street, Kirkbymoorside, YO62 6AZ.

Present: Councillor S Woodhams and Committee Members, Keith Dowell, Andrew Hall, Jim Pewtress, Jim Reader and Mike Simpson.

Also present: Town Clerk L Bolland and 1 member of the public.

Cllr Woodhams welcomed all present.

MV25019 Apologies for absence

- a. Apologies for absence given in advance of the meeting were received from Ian Newman Kirkbymoorside Golf Club and Sam Newton NYMNP.
- b. Reasons for absence were approved.

MV25020 There were no Declarations of Interest in items on the agenda.

MV25021 Public Session – The member of the public explained that the History Group hope to offer a tour of the woodland and identified some accessibility issues regarding the steps leading from the golf course road up to the top bridlepath and Neville Castle. Often the steps are missing step plates and the footwells are uneven where the surfacing has been washed away. This combined with the height of the steps and the steep gradient make it difficult for many people to climb, up or down.

It was also commented that whilst there are many points of interest along the top bridlepath leading to the Ancient Ash, the journey from the Ancient Ash to the golf course road and then the car parking area is lacking any attractions. Where previously it had been possible to enter the woodland from the paths this is now not possible because the increased undergrowth.

Andrew Hall, North Yorkshire Council Field Officer, explained that the maintenance of public rights of way is the responsibility of North Yorkshire Council. For the past 14 years considerable works have been carried out in Manor Vale. In 2013 considerable investment was allocated to the ground works necessary to make good the path leading from the Ancient Ash to the golf course road, transforming it from a quagmire to a stabilised footpath, which is still in good condition. Similarly, works to repair the steps and hand rails have been carried out regularly. The steep gradient and the lay of the land affording a fast run off of surface water from the neighbouring fields means that the steps are under constant assault by the elements.

Andrew explained that North Yorkshire Council would be able to provide some materials necessary to reinforce the steps and Keith Dowell offered the assistance of the Environment Group Volunteers to carry out works. The suggestion of a collaborative approach will be explored.

It should be appreciated that there have been significant changes in the landscape of Manor Vale. Initiated by the cessation of grazing and subsequently as a result of changes in management approaches the woodland promotes wildlife and is primarily a habitat

site. Walkers are not encouraged to veer from the designated paths and the maintenance plan is specifically designed to ensure that the woodland is as natural as possible.

Natural flood management works will be carried out this week to create scarps along the golf course road to 'slow the flow' of surface water. Once the ground has settled, hopefully these scarps will generate new wildflower banks which will offer a point of interest.

MV25022 Minutes and matters arising

- a. The minutes of the meeting held on 26 November 2025 were **received** and **approved**.
- b. There were no matters arising.

It was **noted** that the post to fasten the gate open at the Castlegate entrance has been reinstated and the gate itself replaced on the hinge pins.

Jim Pewtress had identified some domestic bluebells near Neville Castle which would have originated from the neighbouring gardens. Other native bluebells are evident near the golf course. Further inspection in a week will determine whether there is any evidence of hybridisation.

MV25023 The report on moth recording by Sam Newton was **received**.

MV25024 Natural Flood Management

- a. Authorisation by the Town Council of Environment Agency recommended NFM works was **noted** as detailed in the supporting document.
- b. It was **noted** that the works will be carried out by the Environment Agency in partnership with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and Kirkbymoorside Environment Group volunteers on 16th and 18th April 2026.

MV25025 Progress of maintenance activities guided by the management plan were **noted**. The triennial tree safety assessment has been carried out. The Report will be received by the Town Council at the Ordinary meeting on 20 April, at which time it will be agreed to seek quotations for all the recommended works identified in the report.

MV25026 Progress of Volunteer Activities was reviewed. Keith Dowell confirmed that most recently the volunteers have completed the hedge laying and coppicing exercises. The Manor Vale Wood Volunteer Work Group will be working in collaboration with the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Wildlife Trust to create scarps alongside the golf course road, to 'slow the flow' of surface flood water. On Thursday 16th April the Environment Agency will carry out the necessary prep work and the volunteer activity will conclude the exercise on Saturday 18th April.

The annual haymaking will be carried out in the summer, as usual.

MV25027 Questions to the Chair

Jim Pewtress asked if there were any parking restrictions applicable to the verge of the golf course road beyond the industrial units. The question had been raised by a member of the public in relation to vehicles queueing for the car wash.

The clerk confirmed that there are no enforceable restrictions.

MV25028 The date of the next meeting on Thursday 9 July 2026 was **agreed**.