



[For Environment and Community](#)

Core Team Meeting 8th July 2026

Present: Kate Moss (Chair), Molly Barltrop (Secretary), Mike Henchy (Treasurer), Lisenka Klompenhouwer, Peter de Voil, Mark Ayres, George Smid, Kieran Haycroft, Isabelle Garnett, Allan Wall, Anna Stockley

Apologies: Charles Tomalin

NOTE: Minutes produced 18/8/26, so include some updates since 8/7/26.

Mini-Allotments

- **Lisenka** will notify us when a work party is needed to take some of the sheds down. Shed contents have been cleared. Keeping 2.
- Needs to be reiterated that **only** allotment holders can use the TKC allotment space... anyone else must seek permission from **Lisenka**. It should be common sense but please **NO FIRES** during this extremely dry period.

Transport Group

Bikefix sessions have been very successful thus far this year - next session on the 5th September

Energy Group

Nothing to report at this time – thermal camera activity will resume during the winter (**Mark**)

Wildplaces

Workparties since last report - May 2026

In May we created and expanded scalloping along the north margin of The Common, to improve habitat for adders and insects etc. We were rewarded with a pyramidal orchid appearing in one of the cleared areas in June.

We suspended workparties for June and July as specific activities were underway - see below.

Water testing

We met the representative from Augean on site at Maltings Green, but despite his offer to assist in testing the water, this has not occurred. However, Daisy Burrows has confirmed that she will be carrying out water quality and biodiversity checks on five sites over the next 6-9 months as part of her third-year dissertation at York University. She will include Maltings Green, The Horsewater, Willowbrook, NE pond on the Village Field and the pond in Millennium Wood.

59 Steps project

After completion of the steps themselves, we have moved on to the Horsewater Bench. Ian Burrows and Jody Grace have created the platform and installed the bench. However, the legs need to be replaced with longer ones as the platform had to be lower than expected due to roots. The hardcore and sand base also need completing.

A lot of the reeds and overhanging branches both on the Horsewater and the mill race have been cleared, although more can be done.

The boardwalk project has been postponed until the autumn/winter programme.

Millennium Wood

We have cleared a lot of rubbish and plastics from a den building site in the wood. This included evidence of fire making and even firelighters. A Facebook post was put out and signage on the site has been improved further with CCTV warnings.

One of the posts supporting the main gate on to Willow Lane has rotted through, and the woodland trust are aware, and should fix it this year.

Haymaking

As usual, as we approach August, we are preparing for haymaking on the Village Field. Our public weekend will be 8th/9th August, with preparation work underway in the previous week. We hope to have some new volunteers this year to learn scything and help with some of the clearance.

Our power scythe suffered a breakdown in July, but this has now been fixed.

Lee O'Connor has offered to help with the collection of the cut hay, using the KCA tractor, so we are proposing to scythe the entire field west of the cricket pitch.

The Common

The grant for clearing and fencing The Common has been approved. We are in the process of getting additional quotes as per the grantee requirements, but hope to get work underway before September.

KCA

We have established a good relationship with Lee O'Connor in his role as KCA manager. We will be planning a joint work party in the autumn/winter to cut back a lot of the overgrowth along the northern margin of the site, while protecting the adders there.

Training

The Woodland Trust now require that we have at least 2 volunteers trained to EFAW+F (emergency first aid at work, with forestry additions). Grant application to cover the cost of this was not successful. TKC need to look at whether we're happy to fund this.

We have also taken the opportunity to add into the grant application for Ian Burrows to get his chainsaw certificate, as he is increasingly our main chainsaw operator.

Wildlife

We had a sighting of a clouded yellow butterfly in June - the first I'm aware of for ten years. Our butterfly species count is currently 28, out of a UK total of around 56.

Mike Bunting has reported a very high probability of a nightingale on the railway line - he heard a partial song. Along with sightings of curlew near Jack's Green this is really encouraging on the bird front.

We have also had reports of water voles in the Willowbrook, around the mill and Hall Farm area.

Footpaths

Kate to try one last time to chase Rob Meadows re status permissive (withdrawn) footpath from the Beech tree up the side of Howard's field. Application was made for the footpath to be adopted by the OS several years ago. At the time we were told that it would take at least 5 years to be processed, and it's now been longer than that. From a walking perspective it's considered very important as it links Willow Lane with the official forest footpaths.

The Pytchell

We are getting into the swing of work parties on the first Saturday afternoon of every month, maintaining both the Orchard and the rest of the Pytchell.

Highlights: Building a 3-bay composter; Using the water supply from the sump much more effectively, manually lugging buckets to water the fruit trees etc; Clearing ragwort and a lots more besides.

Next work party 5th September. We will need to have a planning session.

Finance

Ideas for projects: The Pytchell and water sourcing on the allotments could be candidates for some spend.

Starting balance: £4201.70

Outgoing:

Email Hosting: £16.80

Green Gardening Event Expenses: £98.00

Incoming: Green Gardening Event: £538.12

Ending balance: £4625.02 (as of 18/8/26, at time of producing minutes)

Communications

- Website. **Charles** to review Wildplaces content. **Kate** to review the rest.
- We agreed on an 'A' frame for bike fix and drop-down banner for TKC. **Mark** to progress once enough content is available.
- Mark has created a generic secretary@ email address that our secretary can use. This may be Peter, as Molly has resigned.

Events

The Green Gardening event on Sunday 19th July was very well received. There was lots of positive feedback on all fronts (talks, refreshments, vibe). So many thanks to all the volunteers, both on the day and in the run up. As ever the bakers did a delicious job.

Net amount raised was £440.12, not bad considering attendance was down.

That was the only negative. More people than expected turned up on the day, but we could have easily accommodated another 10 or so. Many guests were from outside of the village.

A few questions need asking. Why aren't we getting support from within the village? Should the timing be different (for a gardening theme perhaps late April/May would be better as that's when people are focusing on the year's activities)? Will we run another event in 2027?

Ideas for future talks:

- Adders by Ian Froggatt, NNC Restoring Nature strategy.
- Home Energy success stories. Anna? Bob Gamble? David Lewis (Ketton Climate Action).

AOB

National Emergency Briefing film – 50 minutes long, accounts from scientists and naturalists (with a few famous people thrown in) about where we're at currently re Climate & Nature. Kate & Mark went to see the showing in Oundle on 22nd July, and were suitably impressed, although not unsurprisingly there was definitely a sense of preaching to the converted. We think everyone should see this film. There is a showing on Wednesday 30th September at 7pm, St Mary's Church, Ketton. We need to discuss whether we should arrange a viewing in Kings Cliffe – have a think about whether you think we could get non-converts to come along - **ALL**

Molly has resigned from the secretarial role due to lack of time. **Peter** can potentially take on the role. **Kate** to meet with him and discuss what's involved.

Next meeting

Monday 12th October, 7.30pm @ the Club. This is our AGM, so please can people from each group send **Kate** a summary of the year's activities for the Chair's report, many thanks.