



# **Connecting parishes** *through nature*

**Guidance on how to  
connect and enhance  
wildlife across parishes  
and communities**



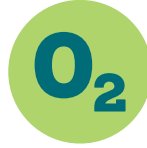
**North York Moors**  
National Park



**Food**



**Water**



**Oxygen**



**Shelter**

## What do (most) species need?

- **Food** – for all the food chain
- **Water** – ponds, rivers, wetlands etc.
- **Oxygen** – clean air and water
- **Shelter/substrate** – hedgerows, trees, long grasses etc.

*“Bigger, better and more joined up.”*

**The Lawton Report (2010)**

- **Bigger** – larger habitats support bigger and more resilient populations.
- **Better** – healthier and more diverse habitats.
- **More joined up** – connected habitats that enable species to move more freely through the landscape.





# What can parishes do to make a difference?

## Research

### **What wildlife and habitats are in your parish?**

Speak to local naturalists and other members of the community to help identify where there are already wildlife-rich spaces. Research and observe the times of year where wildlife using these spaces are most active. For example, when does an area of longer grass go into flower?

### **What pressures are impacting on wildlife?**

For example, are high levels of footfall eroding a riverbank accessible to the public?

### **What measures could be taken to protect and enhance wildlife?**

For example, are there areas of hedgerows that can be laid and restored?



## Engage

**Share** what you know with members of the community and other parishes. Remember connecting habitats is key and even small changes made to a garden can collectively make a big difference.

**Encourage** nature-friendly land management in community areas and places of public use. For example, along public rights of way and roads.

**Generate** support within the community. Seek suggestions of locations to make changes and provide volunteering opportunities.

**Document** what you see and share. Take photos of wildlife you have seen and share these with the local community to inspire action.







*Did you know?*

**HEDGEROWS ONLY  
PRODUCE FLOWERS  
AND FRUIT IN GROWTH  
THAT'S 2-3 YEARS OLD**

## Take action

### Hedgerows

Hedgerow fruit is an important winter food source for wildlife and trimming hedges on a two- or three-year rotation, targeting different sections each year, will make sure there are always flowers for pollinators in spring and berries for birds in autumn.

For hedges that require annual trimming, raising the height of each trim by 5-10cm will retain some flowers and berries and prevent 'knuckles' forming.

#### Other steps:

- Winter cuts should ideally be left until January / February.
- Allow hedgerow trees to form at intervals along the hedge.
- Consider hedgelaying to rejuvenate a well-established hedge when gaps start to appear at the base.

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#### Grant funding available

Some of this may be eligible for grant funding.

Contact: [conservation@northyorkmoors.org.uk](mailto:conservation@northyorkmoors.org.uk)





*Key point!*

**RELAXING  
MANAGEMENT IN  
KEY AREAS CAN  
BOOST WILDLIFE**

## Verges

Our verges have incredible potential and if managed appropriately, can create a network of wildflower rich grassland.

### Steps to take:

- Look at where the frequency of verge cuttings can be reduced to enable plant and flowers to grow and set seed.
- Remove cuttings after mowing - this reduces nutrients in the soil allowing less dominant wildflowers and grasses to grow.
- Introduce more diverse species where appropriate by locally sourced green hay, plug plants or seed.

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**SMALL  
CHANGES  
MAKE A BIG  
DIFFERENCE!**

## Community spaces

Numerous studies have proven that access to natural green spaces is beneficial for human health and the community spaces that we share are integral to this.

### Top tips:

- **Use native species for display planting.** This creates stepping stones of habitat for a wider variety of pollinators.
- **Plant fruit trees.** These provide a shared harvest, as well as food and structure for wildlife.
- **Planting for the future.** Plant the next generation of native trees next to mature trees.
- **Tree management.** Where required for safety or access, keep the cut wood in situ where possible. Deadwood piles could be created or the trunk of a tree left standing. This supports a huge range of invertebrates that can only live in deadwood habitat.
- **Wetter is better.** A small pond, scrape, slow bit of stream or undisturbed muddy corner can support loads of species.

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## Promote and protect dark skies

The big open skies of the North York Moors are breath-taking by day and also by night. To be able to marvel at a sky full of stars is an incredible experience, but did you know that darker skies are also beneficial to wildlife. Studies have even shown that the natural habits of invertebrates and other nocturnal fauna are affected by artificial nighttime lighting.

### Top tips:

- Consider impacts on dark skies when commenting on planning applications.
- Make street lights dark skies friendly. This means no upward light spill, less than 2700K and low wattage.
- Consider part-night lighting with street lights

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# GrubsUp! Project Area



## GrubsUp!

This document was put together as part of the new GrubsUp project led by the North York Moors National Park Authority and funded by Santander.

GrubsUp is a 2-year project seeking to inspire action across communities along the southern border of the National Park to identify and support opportunities for wildlife to flourish.

With a focus on increasing the diversity and abundance of invertebrates, particularly pollinators, the project will work with parish councils and communities to create, restore and connect a wide variety of nature-rich spaces.

Support, advice and potential funding available.  
Contact [conservation@northyorkmoors.org.uk](mailto:conservation@northyorkmoors.org.uk)

# Further information

## Policies that inform local decisions on nature

### National

- Environment Act 2021 & Biodiversity Duty
- Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981
- National Planning Policy Framework and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)

### Regional

- North Yorkshire Council – Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS)
- Local Plans (from North York Moors National Park Authority and North Yorkshire Council) and related documents
- North York Moors National Park Management Plan

If you wish to read up or learn more about these, please get in touch at [conservation@northyorkmoors.org.uk](mailto:conservation@northyorkmoors.org.uk)

## Useful links and guidance

### Hedge management

[ptes.org/hedgerow](https://ptes.org/hedgerow)

[hedgelink.org.uk/guidance/hedgerow-management-advice](https://hedgelink.org.uk/guidance/hedgerow-management-advice)

### Road verges

[plantlife.org.uk/our-work/road-verges](https://plantlife.org.uk/our-work/road-verges)

### Ponds/wetland

[freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/million-ponds/pond-creation-toolkit](https://freshwaterhabitats.org.uk/projects/million-ponds/pond-creation-toolkit)

### Dark skies

[northyorkmoors.org.uk/darkskieslighting](https://northyorkmoors.org.uk/darkskieslighting)

# Grubslip!

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*through nature*

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National Park