

TOGETHER FOR A SUSTAINABLE FUTURE

Bringing together community organisations and change makers from
across North Yorkshire and York to take effective climate action



North Yorkshire Climate Coalition
presents:



Stronger
communities



Lower
energy use



Better for
our planet



Brighter
future

Small actions, big impact

Be part of the change

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WELCOME

Thank you for joining us for a day of practical climate action, shared learning and new connections.

Today brings together community groups, organisations, climate specialists, local leaders and changemakers from across York and North Yorkshire.

Our aim is to create a welcoming space where people can:

- learn from inspiring speakers and practical projects
- explore ideas that can work in their own communities
- connect with organisations offering knowledge and support
- share experiences, challenges and successes
- leave feeling informed, hopeful and ready to take action.

Climate change is a global challenge, but meaningful change often begins locally. Every conversation, project and partnership can help build stronger, healthier and more resilient communities.

We hope you enjoy the day.

North Yorkshire Climate Coalition,
Village Green,
Friends of the Earth York,
York Environment Forum

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09:00



Attendee registration opens

10:00



Welcome to the conference & opening keynotes

11:00



Marketplace session

12:00



Workshop One:
Climate Story
Telling



Workshop Two:
Energy Conservation,
Generation and Retrofitting



Workshop Three:
Food and
Agriculture

13:15



Lunch & networking

14:00



Workshop Four:
Active Travel in Urban
& Rural Settings



Workshop Five:
Restoring Nature



Workshop Six:
Preparing for the Impacts
of Climate Change

15:30



Final plenary: reflections & next steps

16:15

Conference close

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Rachael Maskell MP

Rachael has been MP for York Central since 2015 and is a strong advocate for local climate action. She has a particular focus on youth representation, ensuring young people have a voice in shaping climate decisions. Rachael will bring a grounded, community-focused perspective and highlight how small local actions can create meaningful change.

Nigel Topping CMG

Nigel has played a key role in shaping climate action through his work with the UK Government, COP26 and the UNFCCC (United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change). Now Chair of the UK Government Climate Change Committee, he will bring a valuable national perspective on the UK's climate response and help show how local action fits into the wider picture.



Councillor David Hugill

David represents the Hutton Rudby and Osmotherley division at North Yorkshire Council. In September 2023, he was appointed as the council's Climate Change Champion, reflecting his commitment to environmental issues. David is an egg and cattle farmer practicing regenerative agriculture. He is a past chairman of Hambleton District Council.

Jenny Kent

Jenny is councillor for Holgate ward at City of York Council and Executive Member for Environment and Climate Emergency. She is also Environment and Climate portfolio holder for the Combined Authority. Her professional background includes practising Law, teaching at York University, and as an editor in Energy and Health. Jenny worked for six years with an international malaria charity, and is passionate about the need to work alongside nature rather than apart from it, for the benefit of all.



Kate Ravilious

Kate is councillor for Fulford & Heslington ward at City of York Council and Executive Member for Transport. She has a background in science journalism and brings an evidence-based approach to her political role, empowering all of us to work together to shape a sustainable, equitable and resilient city.

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1: Climate story telling

To highlight the importance of climate storytelling as a way of building emotional connections with the climate agenda among individuals and communities.

Workshop Coordinator David Tonge

David Tonge is the local group coordinator for Thirsk Friends of the Earth and acting chair of North Yorkshire Climate Coalition. He is particularly keen to ensure that the voice of community environmental groups is not just heard but, crucially, also acted on with a real sense of urgency by policymakers at county, regional and national level. At home in Thirsk, David is involved in an exciting local nature recovery project along Cod Beck, a tributary of the Swale.



Matthew Trevelyan Matt Trevelyan works for most of the year as a Farming in Protected Landscapes Officer in Nidderdale but spends the breeding season inhabiting his alter ego: Cathy – a ten-foot-long curlew made from calico and bamboo. Matt describes himself as “a clown who makes things, usually quite badly.”

Dan Tipney is a former airline pilot and third in a family line of pilots - left the flight deck in 2020, compelled by deep concerns over aviation's environmental impact and a path to decarbonisation he no longer believed in. As a founding member of Safe Landing, a community of environmentally aware aviation workers, he now helps other people navigate the complexity of feeling conflicted between a job they love and desire for a safe and habitable future.



Sue Jefferson is the founder of Circular Malton and Norton, which pioneers town-wide initiatives that deliver social, environmental and economic benefits. Sue's work has earned national recognition, including the VISA and British Retail Consortium Circular Champions Award. Circular Malton and Norton's current initiatives include a circular hub on the high street and the first community-led, carbon neutral, off-grid powered business park with a food waste anaerobic digester and other complementary renewable technologies. Sue believes there is the potential for every business and region to thrive with circular economy opportunities”

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2: Energy conservation, generation and retrofitting

This workshop will help you learn about different forms of renewable energy generation and how this links into the national strategy to reach net zero.

Workshop Coordinator Ria Hughes, Village Green

Ria Hughes is a Climate Action Officer working at Community First Yorkshire on the Village Green project, a National Lottery funded climate action initiative. As part of her role in the project, she conducts sustainability audits of community buildings and provides advice on carbon reduction and community climate engagement. She specialises in events management with a particular focus on making climate action relevant, achievable and fun for a range of audiences. Outside of work, she is experienced in youth engagement and the design and creation of engaging activities for children.



Marcus Wearmouth is a founding member of Rethink Retrofit. He established Rethink Retrofit in 2024 to support community organisations with the technical guidance needed to improve buildings, reduce energy use and plan realistic retrofit works. He also runs Progress Consulting, a Chartered Building Engineering company specialising in structural surveying, subsidence, retrofit advice and building compliance. He is a director of Claimstech, a national network of surveyors and engineers.



Rose Gosling was a housing manager for a local authority and then a housing association in Kent, before moving north with her family. Since she has lived in Yorkshire, she has spent her time as chair of governors for several local schools; volunteering for her local church - managing the building, as a speaker and Gold award assessor for the environmental charity A Rocha and as a member of a community energy group in Nidderdale, west of Harrogate.



Reuben Whyatt is a Community Energy Officer at Community First Yorkshire, working on the North Yorkshire Energy Collective project. He supports community buildings across North Yorkshire in their journey towards carbon neutrality through energy-saving initiatives, collaboration, and the development of local community energy projects. He is a strong advocate for knowledge-sharing and partnership working.



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3: Food and agriculture. How do we make it work for both ends?

This workshop's theme is focussed on 'making sustainable food affordable for all' i.e. farmers, middle men and consumers. What are the problems for different parts of the food chain? What solutions are emerging? The current system is about so called 'good value' i.e. cheapness; as opposed to a broader view of 'good values'.

Workshop Coordinator Nelly Trevelyan

Mark Palmer works with farmers through Systems4food Ltd to help arable farms move away from a reliance on high-electrolyte fertilisers and inputs, and towards more biology-led approaches while maintaining yields and profitability. He has spent his working life in farming across organic and non-organic production, supporting businesses to become more resilient and sustainable. His work includes on-farm experiments, such as an ADOPT multi-species combining trial in North Yorkshire and a UK Grain Lab variety plot trial. Mark also helps on his partner's family organic dairy and cereal farm, keeping his work firmly rooted in practical farming.



Jan Thornton is vice chair of the FixOurFood Commission, vice chair of the Yorkshire Food, Farming and Rural Network, chair of Grow Yorkshire, an expert member of the YNYCA advisory panel on food, farming and rural affairs, and a Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commissioner. She has been a community activist in her West Yorkshire village for more than 30 years and was formerly a trustee of the Rural Community Council for Yorkshire, now Community First Yorkshire. Jan is passionate about rural communities and was awarded an MBE for services to rural communities in Yorkshire.



Chloe Sme is the programme lead for the U.K. wide Sustainable Food Places network (based at the Soil Association). Chloe also founded local food charity Edible York



Nelly Trevelyan is retired but has been helping to run a farm with her husband since 1975 - which has been organic since 1997 - and an organic flour mill which has been going since 2006 and supplies many artisan bakeries in the north of England and Scotland.

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4: Active travel in urban and rural settings

This workshop will explore approaches to promoting active travel and contrast how these work in the countryside and the city.

Workshop Coordinator Chris Copland

Chris Copland is a founder member and joint coordinator of York Friends of the Earth and a volunteer coordinator for Walk Wheel Cycle Trust in the north of the city. A former university teacher, Chris has taught overseas in five different countries.



Andy D'Agorne has been a Councillor for Fishergate ward for the City of York since 2023. He worked at York College for 16 years as a student counsellor and retired in October 2017 to concentrate mainly on local politics. His interests include cycling, tackling York's transport problems, world music (singing with a local choir) and photography. His name originates from his grandfather who emigrated from Mauritius in the beginning of the 20th century. As 'Green Group Leader' on the council he worked with other councillors of all parties in the interests of the city and his constituents. For the last four years of his council term he was Executive Member for Transport and Deputy Leader of the Council.

Helen Gundry has a wealth of experience in fundraising for, and the enablement of, public projects. She is a member of the North Ryedale Public Transport Group. Helen is a Director of the Moorsbus Community Interest Company.



Sayed Nasratullah Hashmi fled Afghanistan after the fall of Kabul in 2021, after his family's political views and work with peacekeeping organisations put them at risk. A civil engineering graduate, he received an Equal Access scholarship from the University of York and completed a master's degree in conflict, governance and development. He now works as an interpreter for City of York Council, supporting new refugees as they settle in. Longer term, he hopes to use his experience to support humanitarian work in Afghanistan and beyond.

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5: Restoring nature

To showcase examples of the work of local groups to protect and restore nature across the region and set this in the context of the Local Nature Recovery Strategy.

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Jonathan Dent is the Green Corridors Manager at St Nicks, a sustainability charity and home of a thriving 24-acre urban Local Nature Reserve, formerly a landfill site. Jonathan's role involves developing and delivering nature recovery projects across York with an emphasis on the Lawton principles of 'more, bigger, better, joined up'.

Peter Winter is a founder member and current Secretary of the Ryedale Environment Group. He is also in the group's "Restoring Ryedale" team, encouraging and helping local councils to meet their biodiversity duties.



Matt Millington has been managing the North Yorkshire and York Local Nature Partnership for the last ten years. During this time, he has explored ways to promote the benefits that investing in nature can bring, including for health, the economy and climate change. Since 2023, Matt has been part of the team developing the North Yorkshire and York Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS), which was published in February 2026, and is now working with a wide range of partners to coordinate its delivery over the coming years.

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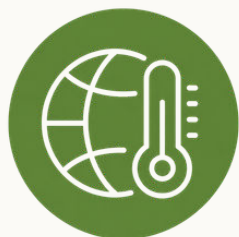


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6: Preparing for the impacts of climate change

This workshop will explore the main impacts from climate change on the communities and livelihoods of people living in York and North Yorkshire. This will cover risks from more intense storms flooding, hotter summers and droughts, and increased coastal erosion. The workshop will share plans and actions to adapt and reduce the impacts of these risks.

Workshop Coordinator David Howlett

David Howlett is a Kirkby Malham Parish Councillor and member of the Malhamdale Environment Group. He is Director of Malham Climate Resilience Services Ltd. He was a Senior Adviser on Resilience to the Climate Change High Level Champions and helped set up the global Race to Resilience Campaign. Before this he was Head of Policy at the Global Resilience Partnership on secondment from the FCDO. He has worked at Leeds and Bradford Universities. He has 38 years' experience in development in Africa, Asia and the Pacific with an academic background in chemistry, soil sciences, and agriculture.



Muriel Bonjean Stanton is a Research Fellow at the University of Leeds and leads the Accelerating Adaptive Action Programme for the Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commission. Over the past 15 years, Muriel has developed extensive experience in organisational climate adaptation, working with national and local governments, critical infrastructure providers and communities to respond, prepare for and explore the opportunities of a changing climate. Muriel is also interested in exploring collaborative decision-making processes across multiple actors to accelerate climate actions.



Jos Holmes is the Climate Change Strategy Manager at North Yorkshire Council. In this role, she collaborates with local authority partners across York and North Yorkshire to support the creation and implementation of Climate Action Plans. Prior to joining North Yorkshire Council, Jos held the position of Economy and Community Manager at Ryedale District Council. Her responsibilities included managing Community Services, Transport, Community Safety, and overseeing the Community Investment Fund to support local groups.



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Tables 1-3 Main Room



Fossil Free North Yorkshire - **You know it makes sense!**

Fossil Free North Yorkshire is a local climate campaign working to move public money away from fossil fuels and into greener alternatives. The group campaigns for divestment from oil, gas and coal within local pension funds, including the North Yorkshire Pension Fund, and supports action to prevent new fossil fuel extraction, including fracking and related drilling proposals.

Margaret Jackson and Richard Tassell



YOCO - **Sustainable co-housing**

YOCO is a York-based community interest company working to make the local economy fairer, greener and more resilient. It supports people and organisations to take practical action on climate, community wealth and social change, helping local ideas grow into projects that benefit people and planet.

Sarah Hart



Malhamdale Environment Group - **Curlews in Malhamdale**

Malhamdale Environment Group is a volunteer-led sub-group of Kirkby Malham Parish Council, set up to promote environmentally friendly activity across Malhamdale. The group works on practical local projects including tree planting, curlew conservation, peatland recovery, invasive species removal, recycling and green energy, helping to protect the area's landscape while responding to the climate and nature crises.

Jonathan Heath

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Tables 4-6 Penn & Fox Rooms



Ryedale Environment Group - [Moorsbus](#)

Ryedale Environment Group is a grassroots organisation supporting local communities to reduce Ryedale's carbon footprint and take practical environmental action. The group promotes positive projects that reduce environmental impact, supports local environmental and wildlife groups, and helps people across Ryedale work together for a greener future.

Helen Gundry



Zero Carbon Harrogate

Effective local climate advocacy - how best to engage with key local players: politicians, Councils, businesses and statutory bodies

Zero Carbon Harrogate is a registered charity working to make Harrogate District a net zero carbon community by 2030. The organisation supports local climate action through projects, campaigns, education and advocacy, with working groups focused on areas such as transport, buildings and retrofit, energy, planning, engagement and natural climate solutions.

Tim Larner and Jemima Parker



Rethink Retrofit

Building Performance Diagnostics: Understanding How Buildings Lose Heat, Hold Moisture and Use Energy

Rethink Retrofit is a Yorkshire-based community interest company helping homeowners, landlords and businesses improve the energy efficiency of their buildings. Through a network of trusted retrofit professionals, it supports practical upgrades that can reduce energy bills, cut carbon emissions and make homes warmer, healthier and more comfortable.

Marcus Wearmouth

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Closing session speakers



Jan Thornton is vice chair of the FixOurFood Commission, vice chair of the Yorkshire Food, Farming and Rural Network, chair of Grow Yorkshire, an expert member of the YNYCA advisory panel on food, farming and rural affairs, and a Yorkshire and Humber Climate Commissioner. She has been a community activist in her West Yorkshire village for more than 30 years and was formerly a trustee of the Rural Community Council for Yorkshire, now Community First Yorkshire. Jan is passionate about rural communities and was awarded an MBE for services to rural communities in Yorkshire.

Councillor David Hugill

David represents the Hutton Rudby and Osmotherley division at North Yorkshire Council. In September 2023, he was appointed as the council's Climate Change Champion, reflecting his commitment to environmental issues. David is an egg and cattle farmer practicing regenerative agriculture. He was past chairman of Hambleton District Council.



Rosa Foster

Rosa is Climate Commissions Director for the Yorkshire & Humber Climate Commission and Leeds Climate Commission. She works on ambitious, inclusive climate and nature action across the region, bringing together partners to support practical responses to climate change, environmental resilience and a fairer transition.

Lucy Allis

Lucy leads the Low Carbon and Environment team at York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority, covering areas including natural capital, climate adaptation, energy and retrofit. She previously led the development of York and North Yorkshire's draft Retrofit Strategy and supports collaborative work to increase the pace and scale of local climate action.



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Elle Hartley Smith is a current PhD student and part-time poet who loves scrutinising the world around her. As her work orientates around life experiences, she loves travelling and trying new things to feed these creative processes. She is the Chief Editor and Founder of Forge Press and has recently loved the challenges brought to her by Forge Press' adventures into events and throughout their recent rebranding process. She is a low key adrenaline junkie and lover of the seaside and all things fire and water related.

Laura Autumn is a writer, climate activist and protest poet who writes about social justice, animal rights and the environment. She is a facilitator of Extinction Rebellion York and hosts York Writers, a monthly writing group in a haunted pub. Her work has been published in the York Literary Review, Coin Operated Press, An Anthology Against Hate, Wild Mag, Night Terrors and How We Made It Through.



Kate Evans is a Scarborough-based writer of fiction, non-fiction and poetry. Her work includes academic writing, crime novels and Futures Remapped: The Chronicles.



Jenny Challenger is a wildlife illustrator and woodcarver based in the Yorkshire Dales. Her work celebrates the beauty and magic of nature.



Wendi May New is an artist who works outdoors in wild and urban green spaces facing development.



Anna Cross, also known as Anna & the Willow, is a willow artist based near Ripon, North Yorkshire.

Val Hunt is a creative recycling artist with more than 30 years' experience as a professional maker. She transforms discarded materials, especially drinks can metal, into intricate artworks inspired by the natural world. Her work often focuses on animals, insects, marine life, birds and endangered or extinct species, using humour and imagination to raise awareness of conservation and the creative potential of recycled materials. Val's work has been exhibited internationally and is held in many permanent collections.

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**Friargate Quaker Meeting House, York, YO1 9RL****Travel:****By bike**

Friargate Quaker Meeting House has a secure site to lock up bikes.

By Train

Friargate is a 14 minute walk from York station, a 10 minute bus ride or 5 minute taxi ride.

By Bus

Many buses are available and stop on Clifford Street.

By Car

Parking and park and ride

There is a large pay and display car park at Castle Car Park, near Clifford's Tower. From there, it is a short walk to Friargate Quaker Meeting House. Please check current parking charges before travelling, as city centre parking can be expensive for a full day.

A cheaper and more sustainable option may be to use York's Park & Ride service. The Askham Bar Park & Ride and Designer Outlet Park & Ride routes both list Clifford's Tower as a useful city centre destination, with adult return fares currently shown as £3.90.

For the most accurate journey information, please check live Park & Ride timetables before setting off.

**Good to know**

Photos and video may be taken during the conference.

- Please speak to a member of the team if you do not wish to be photographed or filmed.
- Please avoid photographing anyone who has asked not to be included.
- Share your experience using #CommunityClimateConference26

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