Yare Valley Society

Enhancing the Valley
for Wildlife and Informal Recreation

Newsletter 127 June 2026

Our AGM is on Wednesday 17th June, and we have a lottery bid success, but first:

Bartram Mowers Development

Respond now to the pre-planning application consultation of LNT Care Developments on their proposals for a 66 bed Care home on the former Bartram Mowers site, Bluebell Road, Eaton. This is a large structure that impacts on the Yare Valley Green Corridor. You have only until Thursday 11th June 2026 to respond.

Care Home would occupy roughly the position of existing building **Photo: Lisa Morgan**

The proposals are here, and the response form is here.

We feel the present proposals are woefully inadequate for a large structure that will be visible from many directions in the Valley Green Corridor:

Contrary to the claims made by LNT:

- The design seems very much to be from a standard pattern book, more suited to an inner urban area. There is little evidence of materials (or design) that are "in keeping with local styles" or with the local setting.
- The proposals "include new planting and landscaping throughout the site, alongside the retention of the majority of the existing trees". Unfortunately, the development boundary (inside the red line) is very tightly drawn around the structure, and is far too restrictive for adequate "softening" landscape around the structure, and excludes almost all the existing mature trees. Is it really necessary to remove any mature trees within the site?
- LNT state that "the existing mature trees along the boundary of the site sit outside of our site area and will therefore not be removed as part of our proposals." LNT may not remove them, but this is an admission that they have no control over the possible removal of the existing mature trees in the future. Such removal could have a devastating visual impact on the views from the surrounding area including the Strawberry Field. The proposals are unacceptable unless the site boundary can be drawn more widely to include the existing mature trees that would help to screen the structure.

Screening trees are outside of development site. Will they be there in the future? **Photo: Lisa Morgan**

In the propsals we can find no mention of measures to deliver a net biodiversity gain. Such measures are important for a development adjacent to the Yare Valley Green Corridor.

When completing the feedback form, if you are against the proposals in their present form, please avoid saying anything that might be construed as supporting the development e.g. avoid responding to question 2. Good luck!

National Lottery Community Bid Success!

In our May Newsletter we announced the success of our bid to the Greater Norwich Growth Board. This success together with other funding has covered the cost of constructing the new boardwalk. Completion is due in Spring 2027. See the UEA press release for details.

We also made a joint bid with UEA to the National Lottery Community Fund for funding a "UEA Boardwalk Community Engagement Project". We are delighted to announce that this bid too has been successful!

The UEA Boardwalk Community Engagement Project aims to involve the community in the Boardwalk Project at every stage and into the future. The funding will cover the cost of the launch, training of volunteer guides, signage and educational materials, and consulting the community on how the project should proceed.

You can hear about all aspects of the Boardwalk Project at our AGM.

Our AGM

We are very much looking forward to seeing you at our AGM on Wednesday 17th June at 7.30 at the Cringleford Sports Pavilion (enter from end of Oakfields Road). It is open to all who value the Yare Valley Green Space.

All of the AGM papers are below, followed by the AGM Poster.

Please take a special look at the Chair's and Treasurer's reports and the two proposals for additions and changes to the Society's Constitution. The proposals are being made to bring our Constitution up to date with modern practice and to endeavour to meet the requirements of external organisations when seeking funding for projects.

Following the AGM, which normally lasts about 30 minutes, you can hear how the Boardwalk Project might be expected to progress. In our joint bids with UEA for the Boardwalk funding we worked with a great UEA team of Justine Mann and Orla Condra. They will be joined by Tom Everett, UEA Landscape Manager, to give a presentation and answer questions on the Boardwalk Project. Tom gave a very well received presentation at our last AGM. Come along with your questions and suggestions.

We need your help

On the Committee

These are exciting times for YVS, and there is much to be done, particularly with progressing the Boardwalk Project. All of us on the committee have served for a number of years and would welcome fresh additional help and support for what needs to be done. There will be at least four vacancies available to fill.

On the Boardwalk Project

We are also looking for volunteers to help with the opening launch of the Boardwalk and to act as interpreters and guides, then and in the future. If you feel you, or a member of your family could help, please let us know. Taking part is an opportunity to gain useful experience, particularly in these difficult times for young people. The UEA Boardwalk Community Engagement Project will be funding the training of volunteer guides and their supporting materials.

Please check your YVS subscription is up to date

A joining/renewing form is at the end of this Newsletter.

The greater our membership the greater our influence.

AGM Agenda Papers

AGM AGENDA 2026

1. Welcome
2. Apologies for absence: Judith Lubbock, Rosalind Wright
3. Minutes of the AGM held on Wednesday 18th June 2025 (see below)
4. Matters arising
5. Chair's Report (See below)
6. Treasurer's report (See below)
7. Election of Officers for 2026/2027:
   Chair
   Vice Chair
   Honorary Secretary
   Honorary Treasurer
   Committee members (maximum of five)
8. Motion One: To make additions to the Constitution of the Society (see below)
9. Motion Two: To make changes to the Constitution of the Society (see below)
10. Any other business

After the business of the AGM, the UEA Boardwalk Team Justine Mann and Orla Condra, joined by Tom Everett, UEA Landscape Manager, will give a presentation and answer questions on how the Boardwalk project might be expected to progress.

Agenda Item 3: MINUTES OF 2025 AGM (Thanks to Carole Williams for taking the minutes)

The AGM of the Yare Valley Society was held at 7.30 pm on Wednesday 18th June 2025 at the Cringleford Recreation Ground Pavillion.

1. **Welcome**
   John Elbro, Chair, thanked those present for attending the meeting on a very hot summer evening. He also outlined the value of the Society and its work along the valley.
2. **Apologies**
   Apologies had been received from Judith Lubbock (Lib Dem Councillor).
3. **Minutes of the AGM held on Wednesday 19th June 2024**.
   Accepted nem. con. Proposer: Paul Hann, Seconder: Peter Cutting
4. **Matters arising.**
   None.
5. **Chair's report, circulated with the Agenda**
   John spoke eloquently about the wonderful meadows between the McCarthy Stone development and the river, now in full bloom with a variety of wild flowers, but emphasised the need for ongoing and proper maintenance of these to ensure

their longevity. The ownership of the land, under Bartram's, is something the Society needs to monitor. Really there is need for more publicly accessible space along the valley.
John pointed out the possible threats posed in the upcoming Planning and Infrastructure Bill, as there is a lack of local input into plans, and also a lack of careful consideration over its likely effects on the valley and the associated land. He reported that Judith Lubbock had contacted him to say that she very much shared the Society's concerns over the Bill and was proposing to the Leader of the Council that he write to the Secretary of State to press him to enable local oversight of any future environmental plans. John reported that this sentiment had been echoed by the Chief Executive of the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, as currently the Bill was a licence to destroy the environment. John also urged Society members to look at the YVS website for updates and for information and to contact the Norfolk Wildlife Trust with their concerns over the Bill.
Proposer: John Thurman, Seconder: Matthew Tomlinson
Report carried nem. con.

6. **Treasurer's report**, circulated.
Hilary Hann reported that there was a small surplus. Proposer: Graham Martin, Seconder: Rachel Taylor. Report carried nem. con.

7. **Election of Officers**

At this point John vacated the chair and handed over to Rachel Taylor, Vice Chair, after John had reported that, except for the position of Secretary, no nominations had been offered to him for the positions listed in the AGM papers.

Rachel said how wide-ranging the work of the Society was, and how valuable. This spans wildflower meadow management and monitoring the work done by McCarthy Stone. She felt that the Society really does achieve things.

She also commented that John is a terrific Chair, who has all the local important and relevant contacts to hand. He involves the Committee in all discussions and decisions, creates the Newsletter and ensures the website is up to date. She said that both she and he would welcome someone new to join the Committee.

Chair: John Elbro was proposed by Graham Martin and seconded by Hazel Martin.

Vice Chair: Rachel Taylor was proposed by John Thurman and seconded by Janet Johnson

Hon. Secretary: Lisa Morgan was proposed by Hilary Hann and seconded by Rachel Taylor

Hon. Treasurer: Hilary Hann was proposed by John Thurman and seconded by Graham Martin

Other committee members: Graham Martin, Peter Cutting, Carole Williams were elected nem. con.

8. **Any other business**
None.
John declared the AGM closed at 8.10 pm.

Agenda Item 5: CHAIR'S REPORT 2025/2026

Your actions make the difference

The Boardwalk: Providing evidence of community support

Our activity this year with most immediate impact on the Yare Valley has been our partnership with the UEA in successfully securing funding of £260,899 from the Greater Norwich Growth Board towards replacing the UEA Boardwalk. The bid would not have been viable without **strong community support**, clearly signalled by your donations towards the cost. Together with funds from other sources the estimated cost of replacement of £439,708 has been reached. Work on the new boardwalk will begin in Autumn 2026 to a timetable to minimise disturbance to wildlife. Completion is due in Spring 2027.

The UEA and YVS are also seeking funding from the National Lottery Community Fund for a "UEA Boardwalk Community Engagement Project". This should cover the cost of the launch, training of volunteer guides, signage and educational materials, and consulting the community on how the project should proceed.

YVS committee worked with a great UEA team of Justine Mann and Orla Condra. Regular meetings and correspondence took place, and the YVS committee expresses its gratitude to the UEA team for their exceptional effort in preparing and assembling the extensive documentation.

Justine and Orla will be at our AGM to outline how things might be expected to progress from here on. Your ideas and comments will be welcome to guide the project.

Consultations: Making an input.

We respond to all consultations on matters likely to impact on the Valley.

A big thank you to all who care for the Valley and responded as individuals to the several consultations this year. More notice will be taken if the well-being of the Valley is seen as important by the community.

A number of public meetings were organised by UEA to enable the community to make known what it expected of the **Boardwalk** in terms of design, furniture elements, access, and what else was thought to be important.

The government's consultation on the draft of the **Planning and Infrastructure Bill**. The Bill was seen as weakening some of the existing safeguards for nature. We made some suggestions on how to respond. The government did accept some amendments to strengthen environmental safeguards, but other elements remain that weaken protections for wildlife. The Bill was passed in November 2025.

South Norfolk District Council's (SNDC's) consultation on a draft of a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) dealing with **Landscape Susceptibility in relation to Energy Generation, Storage and Transmission** was complex and not easy to respond to. We were concerned the consultation did not give weight to the special circumstances of Yare Valley Green Infrastructure Corridor, with the Corridor being in both South Norfolk and Norwich. We made the case that the South Norfolk side is only part of the picture, and so any assessment of susceptibility of the South Norfolk side alone could not be considered as valid for the Valley as a whole. We pressed for the Corridor to have a special status and be included in the report under its own separate section. SNDC did not make this change, and the SPD went through largely unchanged.

The most recent consultation was a pre-planning consultation for a care home on phase 3 of the Bartram Mowers site on Bluebell Road. We attended the consultation on 4th June and came away with concerns for the impact of the development on the Valley. We will give a detailed response to any Planning Application that is submitted.

Nature News: Raising awareness of what to see in the Valley.

We thank you for your contributions of photos and news about the wildlife of the Valley. These may be on Instagram, Facebook, or for publication on the website.

Particular thanks to Tim Hill who regularly enlightens us on the birds to be seen on Marston Marsh. In 2025 work was done on the adjacent Keswick marsh to improve the river's ability to store water in times of flood, and to improve marshland wildlife habitat. The marsh was reconnected to the river, and several large scrapes created. It is pleasing that Tim was able to report an increase in bird activity as a result.

Getting the job done: Lending a helping hand

As always, the well-being of the Valley depends on volunteers of organisations prepared to tackle the many practical tasks necessary to enhance the valley for wildlife and to balance this with the need for accessibility. Most recently this has involved tree planting and seeding on the meadow by the University Broad.

We thank the Yare Valley Meadow Makers, UEA Biodiversity Heroes, the Norwich Fringe Project, the UEA Landscape Team, the Norfolk Wildlife Trust, the Norfolk Rivers Trust and the Conservation Volunteers. Approach these organisations for opportunities to lend a helping hand.
Congratulation to the Yare Valley Meadow Makers who received the runners up award at the Norfolk 2025 Community Biodiversity Awards.

Supporting the YVS Committee: Filling committee vacancies

Please seriously consider helping to secure the future of our Society either by joining the committee or by giving ancillary help such as managing website pages, arranging talks, writing articles or other projects. Please email yvs@yarevalleysociety.org.uk.

My personal thanks to the committee, Vice-Chair Rachel Taylor, Secretary Lisa Morgan, Treasurer Hilary Hann, and Graham Martin for their wholehearted support. They respond in words and actions to the endless matters that affect the Valley. I thank Tim Edwards for his support over many years in distributing the digital Newsletter.

We thank all our members who have contributed reports, photos and articles to our website, Instagram and Facebook pages, and for their emails about incidents in the Valley needing attention.

John Elbro, Chair. 05/26

Agenda item 6: TREASURER'S REPORT 2025

Accounts for period 1 January 2025 to 31 December 2025

Current Account

Income		Expenditure	
	2025		2025
	£		£
Subscriptions	142.50	Hire of Cringleford Pavilion for AGM	45.00
Donations	9.50	Public Liability Insurance	78.99
YVS Guide	2.00	Website maintenance	136.68
Total	154.00	Total	260.67
Deficit	106.67		
Total	**260.67**	**Total**	**260.67**

Bank Reconciliation:	Balance at 1 January 2025	£ 705.95
	Deficit	£ 106.67
	Balance at 31 December 2025	**£ 599.28**

Deposit Account

Balance at 1 January 2025	£ 3278.68
Add Interest	£ 66.78
Balance at 31 December 2025	**£ 3345.46**

Hilary Hann Treasurer 27 .05.2026

Agenda Item 8: MOTION ONE

Motion: That the following additions to the Constitution of the Society be made:

Changes to the Constitution of the Society
The Constitution of the Society can be changed by a resolution passed by more than seventy five percent of the members present at a properly convened General Meeting.
Dissolution of the Society
The Society can be dissolved by a resolution passed by more than seventy five percent of the members present at a properly convened General Meeting. The committee can decide by a simple majority to call an EGM for the purpose of dissolving the Society.
If the Society is dissolved, its bank account will be closed, and its net assets will be transferred to a charitable organisation with similar aims and objectives
Equality and Diversity
The Society aims to treat members, users of the Society's services, members of other organisations, and the public equally, regardless of age, disability, gender reassignment, marriage or civil partnership, pregnancy or maternity, race, religion or belief, sex, or sexual orientation; to promote services and activities that are available and accessible to all; and to promote equality of opportunity and diversity in all its activities. The Society has an agreed Equality and Diversity Policy.
Data Protection
The Society has an agreed Privacy Policy to meet data protection requirements.

Agenda Item: 9 MOTION TWO

That the following changes to the Constitution of the Society be made:

Item 2 of the Constitution:
The objects of the society are to protect the natural landscape and wildlife habitats of the Yare Valley south and west of Norwich, principally between Harford and Bowthorpe. We oppose
any development that would detract from its natural qualities and support projects which would preserve the valley for the benefit of all.
Change to:
The aim of the Society is to promote the natural landscape and wildlife habitats of the Yare Valley in the south and west of Norwich, and to promote enjoyment of the valley for informal recreation. The Society will support changes that aim to enhance the Yare Valley in its role as a Key Green Infrastructure Corridor, and will oppose changes that would reduce its ability to fulfil this role.

Item 11 of the Constitution
The Honorary Secretary shall keep Minutes of the proceedings at each meeting which shall be read and confirmed at the next meeting.
Change to:
Minutes will be taken of the proceedings at each meeting which shall be read and confirmed at the next meeting.

Please give some thought to joining the committee,

or participating in the Boardwalk Project.

Ask any of the committee members at the AGM or email: yvs@yarevalleysociety.org.uk if you would like to know more.

Please check your membership subscription is up to date. To renew, or join, use the membership form on next page.

The Yare Valley Society

Annual General Meeting and Talk

Wednesday 17th June 2026 at 7.30pm

Cringleford Sports Pavilion

(Entrance via Recreation Ground at end of Oakfields Road Cringleford)

'Replacing the UEA Boardwalk'

Orla Condra, Justine Mann & Tom Everett from UEA

The University of East Anglia boardwalk has been out of action for over two years.
Come along and hear about the exciting plans for re-opening this vital walkway.

All who value the green space of the Yare Valley are welcome.

yarevalleysociety.org.uk

Enhancing the valley for wildlife and informal recreation

Yare Valley Society

Membership Form

Name (Please Print)	Mr/Mrs/Miss/ ...
Address	Post Code:
Telephone No.	
Email Address	
Other Family Members	

Are you interested in giving active support to the Society e.g. with administration, IT, Planning, Ecology, or other? If yes, please indicate your area of interest:

Membership Subscriptions (Please delete as appropriate)
Individual: £5 per year or £20 for 5 years
Family: £7.50 per year or £30 for 5 years
Payment may be made by:
Cheque payable to "Yare Valley Society"
Bank transfer or Direct Debit to Yare Valley Society, Sort Code: 20-62-53, Account Number: 30994286

Permission to store and process your personal data
To enrol you as a member of the Yare Valley Society, keep you informed of the activities of the Yare Valley Society and enable you to actively participate in supporting the Society, we need to record some of your personal details.
To comply with the GDPR we must ask for your permission to store and process your personal data for this purpose. Please see our privacy policy **"Looking after your personal data"** on the "join us" page of the Society Website.

I give my consent to the Yare Valley Society recording personal information about me

Signature: **Date:**

Please forward your completed form to:
Hilary Hann, Treasurer, 18 Bluebell Road, Norwich, NR4 7LF

Office Use:
Date returned: Subscription renewal date: