

RIVER YEALM AND DISTRICT ASSOCIATION
Registered Charity Number 262929
Chairman's Report AGM 08th April 2025

Chairmanship

This is my first year of being Co-Chairman of the RYDA alongside Alan Lomax and we have received total support from the Committee, and we would like to thank them all for their hard work. With the Members blessing I will stand alongside Alan as Co-Chairman for another year. This year we have continued the great work that the RYDA is known for.

The Committee

- The Committee would like to ask the membership to approve the election of previous prospective members, Graham Edwards and Gary Fairclough, to become full committee members and to approve Chris Bradley, who is standing down after two decades of loyal service both as Chairman and a Committee member, to become a co-opted member.
- The membership to approve the re-election of the following:

Chairmen	Drew Stevens & Alan Lomax
Honorary Secretary	Peggy Robinson
Honorary Treasurer & Membership Secretary	Alan Lomax
Members	Lesley Dempsey (Website and Newsletters) Robin Forrester (Planning and Parking) Peter Hall
Co-opted Members	Peter Faulkner (Village Directory)
Honorary Member	Suzanne Sparrow

Membership

Membership remains steady, we have had several new members join throughout the year but with bereavements and people leaving the village our membership remains at about 310, one third of all households in the Parish. Eighty five percent of our members kindly pay their annual subscriptions by standing order, making life easier for our Treasurer, but rather than chase the subscription arrears every year he leaves it for several years before hand delivering the arrears notes. If you do get one would you please consider raising a standing order with your bank to save his weary legs in future!!

Finances

Our financial position has continued to benefit from the generous sponsorship of the Village Directory by Luscombe Maye. The sale of the Directories to non-members enables us to continue to fulfil one of the primary objectives of improving the amenities and services of the community, by for instance, renovating The Greenwood Seat with its wonderful views over The Pool and contributing to the renovation of Holy Cross memorial steps. We have also facilitated the installation of handrails at the steps down to Newton Voss along with kind contributions from Newton and Noss Parish Council, The Revelstoke Community Trust and Probus. To enable us to further improve the amenities and services, we have been using the legacy from the late John Allen, an enthusiastic supporter of the RYDA. This will enable us to renovate and install various sections of Revelstoke railings throughout the villages and pay for the annual maintenance of Allen's Quay.

Brookings Down Wood, Eastern Hill Wood Report

Storm Darragh in December 2024 not only added further to the pile of storm damaged trees in BDW but was also responsible for the collapse of the 2 gates and rails that form the entrance to the wood at Middlecombe Lane. Fixing this required the engagement of a professional contractor (Dan Swinburne) who completed the work with labour offered by a few willing volunteers. The Brookings Down Wood Committee are very thankful to Newton & Noss Parish Council for their generous financial support which covered this essential work. In addition, they are very grateful to Tim and Jack Tew whose skill with a mini digger re-set a blocked rain water gully.

The fortnightly work groups have met on 6 of 7 planned sessions between 4th January - 1st March 2025, (130 volunteer hours) the cancelled session was due to very bad weather. They consistently achieve 10 volunteers per session often of different people per session but all keen to help in whatever task is required to keep paths accessible for walking, enhancing the growth of new saplings, Bluebells, Foxgloves and other Flora and care of nest boxes. As previously

mentioned after the tree damage straddling the stream at Middlecombe, it is good to report that through the efforts of the volunteers and neighboring landowner, the area has now been significantly cleared.

At the 9th December committee meeting the Brookings Down Wood committee said a fond farewell to Jeremy Spooner who has been a leading light both on the committee and in the woods since the purchase of BDW in 1999. His leadership, enthusiasm and dedication has inspired a whole host of local people to come along and join in the preservation and rejuvenation of both BDW and EHW.

The Chief Executive of the Woodland Trust has written a letter to Jeremy thanking him for his work over the last 25 years and the Woodland Trust have awarded Jeremy a Watkins Medal, a medal for long serving volunteers, as a token of their appreciation.

The Brooking Down Wood & Eastern Hill Wood committee would like to further extend their thanks for all Jeremy has done as do the RYDA committee.

Court Woodland Report

We have had one very useful work party since the spring on Saturday, November 30 when several path edges were repaired, the chicken wire on the Stembridge step was replaced, Holly and Sycamore saplings were cut back and leaves were cleared from the steps on the main path. We shall hold a further work party in the early spring to check on the newly planted trees, to thin the Sycamore trees and clear the invasive plant yellow archangel for which we are taking advice.

We would like to thank Peter Brown for his service on the committee following his resignation. We welcome John Stacey our contact with the Woodland Trust to our committee in his place.

Our thanks are due to the Woodland Trust, who manage the neighbouring Newton Wood, for replacing the steep steps in Newton Wood with a more gentle contoured path.

We would like to thank our regular work party attendees and encourage others come forward in future by notifying Dick Page 872344.

Peter Hall Chairman Court Woodland Trust

Planning

The RYDA have reviewed over 60 planning applications during the past year. Our comments have been considered through membership of the Parish Council Planning sub-committee, and through occasional direct communication with the Local Planning Authority (South Hams District Council).

We list any significant planning applications in our monthly newsletter providing relevant additional comment. We encourage and appreciate any views members may have as they help to ensure that we are aware of any particular implications.

The review of the Newton and Noss Neighbourhood Plan (N3P) continues and we are happy to contribute through the Parish Council for this. The plan has been very useful in helping to ensure that development is suitable for the parish, particularly the integrity of the Settlement Boundary. Community consultations are continuing, and we urge you to review the proposals for the revised plan during the consultation events to be held early this summer.

Revelstoke Railings

Throughout Newton and Noss these attractive wrought iron railings can be seen alongside footpaths and roads. Chris Bradley, working with local Engineer Richard Robinson, have devised a list of where these railings need repairing and are gradually working through the said list fabricating new joints and calling on a store of spare railings very kindly left to the RYDA by the late John Allen.

Newsletter and Website

Another year and 12 excellent Newsletters. They again have been very informative and interesting with a wide range of articles along with notifications regarding local upcoming events. This is all down to the hard work of one of the committee, Lesley Dempsey. We thank Lesley for her continued work on the Newsletter and excellent mastery of the website. We all look forward to the next edition. I would encourage all members to access the website as it contains a large amount of community information.

Harbour Clean Up

This year's harbour clean-up will take place on Saturday 29th March 2025 before the AGM. Let us hope that the weather will be kind to us and that we don't find too much rubbish this year. It is being, once again, kindly run by Andrew Beveridge who is very keen to attract more volunteers. We would like to thank the RYHA and NNPC for their continued financial support over the years.

International Paints – Akzo Nobel- River Yealm Remediation

The Parish Council, supported by several scientific experts, Harbour Authority and local Associations is still acting as our point of contact on this matter and our thanks goes out to them for their hard work. The situation is that AkzoNobel has submitted a Marine Licence Application (MLA) to the Marine Management Organisation (MMO) in October 2023. The MMO have since provided them with a draft licence, there is a delay because AK have not yet provided MMO with their comments. They anticipate that the earliest remediation activity will take place after the summer season, in late 2025.

The AK Remediation team has promised a public meeting expected in late September. When the Parish Council have contacted the MMO directly, the MMO's response to any further questioning is that they are waiting for AK to respond on the draft licence.

Group Support

The RYDA supports all local groups which look to preserve the natural beauties of the Tidal Waters of the River Yealm and the surrounding countryside and villages and to protect structures of architectural or historic interest and the character of areas of such interest. We feel that these groups are best placed to carry out the specialist activities with the RYDA providing further publicity for them by means of our Newsletter and social media outlet.

Thanks

The Chairmen would like to thank the Committee for all their support throughout the year.

Alan Lomax and Drew Stevens
Co- Chairmen