

Monk Fryston and Hillam Sustainability Project



Update no 20 1st September 2025

2025 Sharing our learning whilst moving forward

- **Partner Round - up**
 - The Cricket Club – Solar and Battery Installation opens the door for more savings.
 - MF School achieves 5 years of Eco School status.
 - The Community Centre - 2 years Carbon Free and Net Zero summers.
 - St Wilfrid's Church is aiming for more savings through energy efficiency.
- The 2025 Eco Schools Green Flag Inspector's feedback
- Sharing our learning and encouraging others to become sustainable.
- Energy Transition in our parish – Update and launch of Together Hillam and Monk Fryston
- Local Energy Transition – Hydrogen is coming and Natural Gas is possibly making a comeback!

Our project is almost 6 years old. Anyone who remembers summer and autumn 2019 will have a sense of déjà vu. Then like now a widespread drought caused wildfires in Europe and around the world. As we started our project, we were advised not to speak about climate change but instead to refer to abnormal weather events. This year the drought has been accompanied by many other abnormal weather events as storms and flash flooding have brought tragedy to other regions around the world. The project partners decided to try to make a difference, recognising that doing something to reduce carbon emissions was better than simply shaking our heads on the basis that 'every little helps.'



We have had some success but there is more to do. Everyone can do something and we will share our learning whenever we can to help – there is no need to make the same mistakes we did; perhaps adopt some of our learning to reduce emissions quicker a more cost-effective way.

2025 (to date) Partners Round Up

The Cricket Club – Solar and Battery Installation opens the door for more savings The Cricket Club received a substantial grant from Scottish and Southern Power (SSE), who are busy building a 320MWh Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) at Rawfield Lane, Monk Fryston. This has helped fund a 10 kWh Solar PV and 15kWh Battery. After some teething problems both are now bedded in, and the management system is still to be commissioned. When this happens both they and their neighbours, the Football Club, should be able to take advantage of purchasing low-cost off-peak electricity to charge the battery as needed during the night. **The Football Club**, in particular, should benefit as they have to recharge their portable Battery Powered Floodlights in the dark months when they are used almost every evening.



MF School achieves 5 years of Eco School status and with Distinction(again).

Well done to everyone at Monk Fryston School, particularly this year's group of Eco Warriors, on achieving the Eco School Green Flag award with Distinction. The school family should be immensely proud as they have achieved Gold Standard or better for 5 consecutive years now, starting with 2020 - 2021 when Covid disrupted everyone's life and education in particular. As reported last year, the school's approach to sustainability is now embedded into the school curriculum, so the Inspector's report is particularly interesting and inspiring. It can be read, in full, later in this update.



In March, the Headteacher, Rick Weights, and the Eco Warriors welcomed a group of visitors from Village Halls across

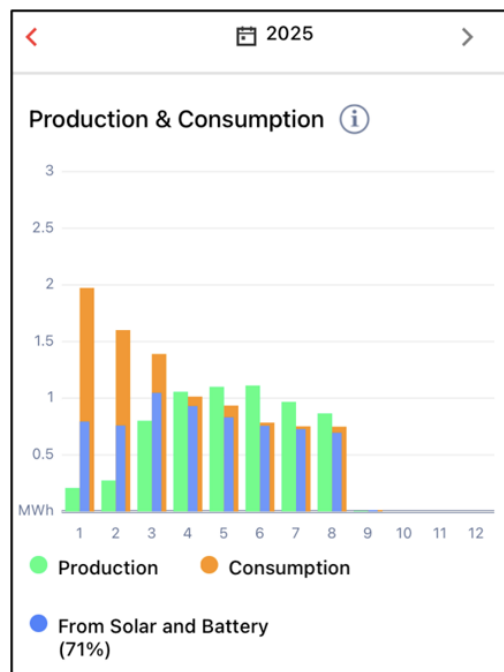
Yorkshire and to see what measures the school had introduced to reduce their carbon emissions. This included the installation of a ground source heat pump, solar panels, upgrading the double glazing and the boiler and heating control systems. Of course, most important is that this is the 5th cohort of pupils who have now been immersed and educated about sustainability which they will take home and be with them for the rest of their lives.

The Community Association and Community Centre - 2 years Carbon Free and Net Zero summers.

July was the second anniversary of the installation of our Air Source Heat Pump and another 10 kWh Battery to replace the gas-powered heating boiler.

These actions coupled with the earlier installation of solar panels and our 1st 10 kWh Battery have meant we are now enjoying our 2nd Summer (April to mid-September) of being almost entirely energy self-sufficient. Overall, every week since April we have generated more electricity than we have used but occasionally there is a daily balance deficit. However, we do require to draw about 3% of our power most days from the grid to facilitate motor start-ups.

All this means we have not emitted any CO₂ since July 2023; when we purchase from the grid, we only buy green electricity. Furthermore, during the winter we were able to change our supplier contract and we moved to a supplier who offered a contract allowing us to buy low-cost off-peak power. In winter this generally enables us to power all our requirements until after the grid's morning peak power demand period.



We were fortunate in that we had a small amount of capital left from the Lottery Community Fund grant. With their permission we were allowed to put it towards a 2nd set of new higher specification Fire Doors in the Newton Room. This is a big improvement and will improve our energy efficiency. However, after 6 years of focused data gathering, we know this will be very hard to identify. We have to rest in the knowledge that insulation is one of the best, no regrets, investments anyone can make to improve energy efficiency and reduce costs.

Finally, the really good news is that after 2 years we have found the Air Source Heat Pump to be reliable to the extent that no one is talking about it. No longer do any of the User Groups question if the rooms will be warm enough, nor do any of our neighbours speak about noise – in fact it's virtually silent and can't be heard until you are within a few feet of it. However, we still have 2 standby 3kW electric fan heaters – just in case something happens.

St Wilfrid's – more energy savings?

St Wilfrid's Parochial Church Council is continuing to pursue its policy of pragmatism by applying for a further grant to replace conventional lighting with LED lights. This is exactly the right approach to find ways within their operational constraints to continue their pathway to Net Zero – after all the UN target is 2050 – perhaps others could take a leaf out of their book. We wish them well with their grant application.

The 2025 Eco Schools Green Flag Inspector's feedback

Feedback

Green Flag Award, 2025

Monk Fryston Church of England Voluntary Controlled Primary School

Award Level: Distinction

Your greatest overall success: We appreciated that you created a Climate Action Plan and that the climate conference you attended inspired many of the initiatives. Raising awareness motivates people to act and gain understanding, and so has a direct link to change. Reusable plastic containers score significantly lower on greenhouse gas emissions, energy and water use than single-use plastic cartons so we applaud your initiative to persuade your school community to swap over.

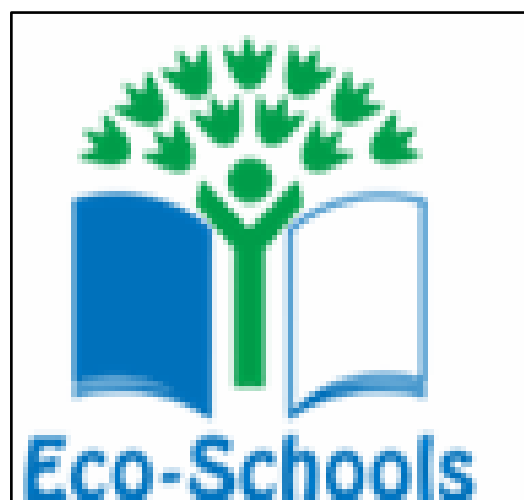
We also loved...

- **Deforestation** accounts for 11 percent of human-caused greenhouse gas emissions, so it is vitally important that your young people spread awareness about what is happening to the Amazon rainforest and what we can do to ensure there is a rainforest for future generations to enjoy. We enjoyed reading that your young people made 'Top Trump' cards to spread the message of deforestation.

- **We loved reading that your young people looked at 'Fair Trade'**, and they designed their own chocolate bar to showcase the meaning of Fair Trade. We are pleased that they have been made aware that Fairtrade Standards are designed to improve soil and water quality, avoid harmful chemicals, eliminate deforestation, manage waste, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and protect biodiversity.

- **Healthy lifestyle is a good topic to learn about Life Cycle Assessment** from growth of a seed to food waste, including the impact of food waste created at lunchtime. We were pleased to see the impact in this initiative.

- **A critical threat to our marine ecosystems is overfishing**, disrupting the balance of the entire aquatic ecosystem as fish are captured at a pace that prevents them from reproducing at sustainable levels. We loved reading that your young people researched the comprehensive strategies to mitigate the impacts of overfishing on our oceans and shared this by writing a poem, to raise awareness in their school community.

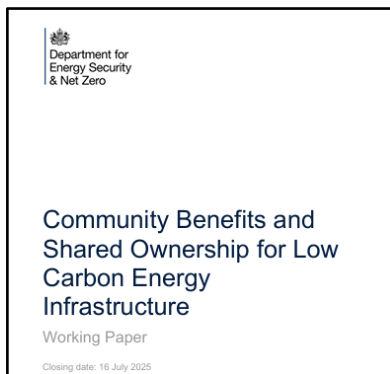


Sharing our Learning and Encouraging others to become sustainable.

Community First Yorkshire. In March the Community Association together with the school hosted the Community First Yorkshire organisation and 30 visitors attended the workshop from across Yorkshire – Hull to Settle. Whilst they were universally impressed with what they saw and heard about the Energy Sustainability Work undertaken, they were most impressed by the presentation made by this year's school Eco Warriors. One visitor from Wetherby commented that it was really heartening to hear such passion about sustainability from such young people and it should give everyone hope for the future.



Northeast and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub Community Energy Steering Group. We are invited members of this group because of the experience gained via our Community Sustainability work and our commitment to share our learning. On this occasion, reflecting the high number of Energy Transition Projects in our parishes and within the Selby Parliamentary constituency, we were asked to present our research into the Community Benefits arising from these types of Projects. Our research had earlier been reported to MP Keir Mather who in turn passed it to the Minister for Energy Michael Shanks. The report highlighted the wide variations offered by project



developers to communities as Financial Community Benefits. In addition, we made several recommendations about how to rectify the variations and to ensure the benefits offered had longevity. We received a note of thanks from the Minister, and later in May, a government working paper was issued covering this topic with a view to formulating legislation which will be brought by the government during this parliament.

The NE&Y NZ Hub CE Steering Group members were amazed at the number of Energy Transition projects in our wider area and were thankful for the insight we provided.

Energy Transition in our Parish

• Renewable Energy Projects Update

1. **SSE** – Construction of their 320 MW Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) Farm at Rawfield Lane is underway. It should be completed by 2027-8.
2. **Pelagic Energy's** 57 MW BESS Farm is also underway alongside SSE's development. We have no details about its completion and commissioning.
3. **The above schemes are adjacent to Yorkshire Green's (National Grid) new substation (see later).**
4. **Noventum Energy's** 50 MW Hillam Solar Farm proposed development was refused by North Yorkshire Council earlier this year, but we understand that they are appealing to the Planning Inspectorate to overturn this decision.
5. **Harmony Energy** 200 MW BESS facility is progressing and is subject to the new Energy Systems Operator's project prioritisation process.
6. **Light Valley Solar's 2500-acre project** linking and incorporating several solar farms totalling 500 MW across several parishes including Monk Fryston, Hillam, Birkin, South Milford, Hambleton and Escrick and a 500 MW BESS Farm in Monk Fryston is progressing. It recently went through its Phase 2 public consultation. If all goes to their plan and permission is granted construction would start no sooner than 2028.

- **Update of the Yorkshire Green Rawfield Lane Project**

This is to build a new substation and upgrade the transmission network as part of the Yorkshire Green project which is the first element of the Great National Grid Upgrade. It is very active. Groundworks have and are being undertaken. This project is schedule to be completed in 2027-28.



On Sunday 18th August a major milestone was achieved with the arrival of the first 200 tonne Supergrid



Transformer. This is the first of four scheduled to be delivered in late summer and autumn period. A police escort from Goole Docks to Rawfield Lane was required along with removal of street furniture and traffic roadblocks along the route.

A Supergrid Transformer is a major component whose primary function is to convert electricity to a higher or lower voltage. It is part of the Great Grid Upgrade which aims to improve electricity supply security and capacity by network enhancements to ensure the efficient transportation of more power.

- **Update and launch of Together Hillam and Monk Fryston**

As reported in the last project update (no19) **Making Sustainability Happen** the Community Association and Sustainability Project Partners decided to establish themselves as the link organisation to actual and prospective energy transition project organisations. Including the new substation, we have 7 such projects at the moment. Our position is that we are neither for, nor against, any of these projects but recognise the need to establish a good neighbour relationship independent of our Parish Councils who are largely forced by vociferous residents opposed to the projects to formally object.



We have created a new organisation Together Hillingham and Monk Fryston as the body to coordinate how our community might wish to benefit from community funds arising from any approved projects.

We have recently launched a consultation document as the first stage in trying to establish an agreed and prioritised community facilities development plan. A consultation booklet was delivered to every home and residents are encouraged to have their say and provide feedback. If you follow the QR code – it will take you to the document. Any Monk Fryston and Hillingham resident is welcome to take a few minutes and express their views.



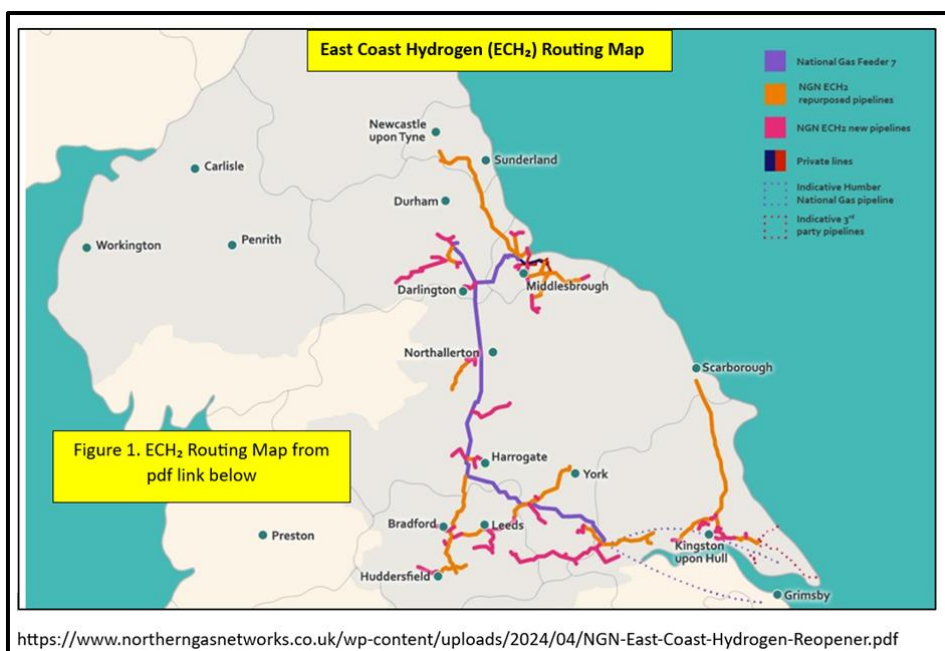
Local Energy Transition – Hydrogen is coming and Natural Gas is possibly making a comeback!

Creating a reliable, flexible base load supply of electricity is going to be an essential part of the country's transition to a zero-carbon power supply. Locally we can see that development in real time and nearby.

SSE's Ferrybridge coal fired Power Station was once a major element in the base load supply of electricity, although it wasn't very flexible. Part of the former PS site is already the home to the country's largest energy from waste facility (Incinerators) and in July, SSE's new 150MW BESS Farm became operational.

Early this year, SSE announced they would be applying for planning permission to build a 50MW Green Hydrogen production plant. It is intended that the Hydrogen produced will be transported by road to the local glass factories to help decarbonise their production processes. Later in June they announced that in addition, they would apply for permission to build a new Gas powered, Hydrogen ready, rapid switch on/turn off, power station. It is hoped that this facility, intended to will be operational around 2030. It will be powered by Natural Gas delivered via a new 10km gas pipeline from Gateforth, south west of Selby. The pipeline route would travel through the southern part of Hillingham and nearby Burton Salmon. It is anticipated the new power station would be powered by natural gas for 10-15 years. It is intended it will support the national carbon free sustainable energy generation capacity and BESS facilities currently being developed by providing a standby base load of quickly available electricity generation capacity to cover peak demand.

The final piece of the base load energy provision jigsaw came in late June, when the government announced a grant award to Northern Gas Networks to undertake a Feed Study (Front-End Engineering Design) to transport Hydrogen from potentially 2 Hydrogen production plants on Teeside and Humberside to major Natural Gas users like Ferrybridge in the future. Ferrybridge might be one of several similar new generation gas power stations to be built in the UK.



The Ferrybridge site has space to extend its proposed 50 MW Hydrogen production plant to 400 MW should the need arise.

Thank you for your support - the Steering Group and the Project Partners

Monk Fryston and Hillam Community Association. St Wilfrid's Church and Church Hall
Hillam Cricket and Football Clubs. Monk Fryston Primary School

For Your information

The new Community Association website is currently under development. Over time it will become home to the all our Community Sustainability Project's reports and other information.

[Monk Fryston & Hillam Community Association | Home](#)

If you have any feedback or comments to share or require further information, please contact Ray Newton on 01977 682084 or 07706 795334