



On the pull!

Last year, the latest of our annual campaigns to reduce the presence of Himalayan Balsam along the Foss, saw 40 members out and about pulling up this invasive weed. Without doubt we had an impact, but we'll have to wait until late May or early June to see just how much. It's unlikely we'll eliminate it from the Foss altogether, if only because access further upstream is difficult, but you never know. We can at least keep it in check and give our native plants a better chance.

Over the next few weeks we'll be planning some more sessions for 2019 – the exact timing will depend upon what the weather has in store for us, but put a note in your diary and look out for emails in mid-May giving details and asking for volunteers. We've already had a few enthusiastic souls saying they'd like to have another go – it's really a rather satisfying pastime: the roots are shallow and the plants come up easily with a sort of squishing sound.

Please let me know sooner rather than later if you are interested, especially if you don't use email, and



*Waders
not always
necessary*



I can make sure you are the first to hear about this year's efforts. We'll be working from the York end of Huntington Road up to Walbutt's Sewage works above Strensall, so there'll be a session near you.

Our intention is to run a series of pulls both in the evening and during the day, at weekends as well as during the week. There's no need to stay for the full session, come along for as long or short a time as you like. It's not only environmentally useful, it's also fun and a chance to meet like-minded members.

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Bob Jowett takes us through this season's first two walks ...

A New walking year

Our first walk of the season – a circular route – had 14 walkers and one dog who met at the Blacksmith's Arms Farlington on March 4th. In excellent weather we headed on the Foss Walk path past Black Collar Hall Farm towards Upper Towthorpe. We turned left up to the Stillington/Sheriff Hutton road where we continued east. We headed north passing close to Whenby Lodge Bull Breeding Centre. After joining the Whenby road, we walked west along the road, then up to Whenby Church.

We enjoyed our refreshments looking at the beautiful view. Leaving the church we headed west through Whenby. The path then goes roughly south til it returns to Farlington.

Most of us enjoyed liquid refreshments at the Blacksmith's Arms.



Ready to go from Farlington

April 2nd saw another circular Foss Walk, this time from Easingwold. Our group of four – plus a dog – left the market place and went along Millfield Lane. We were pleasantly surprised to see the gated footpath now clear to walk, for this had been completely overgrown with brambles the last time we tried to use it.



A lovely picnic at Oulston

We headed across a field then along Thornton Lane past Thornton Lodge Farm which has holiday lodges and a fishing lake. It is situated in an area of outstanding natural beauty. We were pleased to see that the stile, having been

cleared, could now be seen. We walked north into Oulston and enjoyed a picnic sat around a tree.

After struggling to get the dog over some stiles we arrived back in Easingwold where we enjoyed a snack at a coffee shop