

Thirsk's 'Duckies': The Volunteers Protecting Ducks on Their Evening Walks

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In the quiet town of Thirsk, North Yorkshire, a group of dedicated locals has taken on an unusual yet heartwarming role, ensuring the safe passage of ducks crossing a road to their evening roost. Known as the “duckies,” these volunteers stepped in to help after several ducks were killed while crossing unsupervised.

Each evening, the “duckies” position traffic cones around the ducks’ designated crossing area and keep a watchful eye over them as they march towards their resting spot . The reasons behind the ducks’ regular migration remain uncertain, though some speculate they may be avoiding predators in the river. Despite the mystery surrounding their route, the volunteers’ efforts have significantly reduced the risk of accidents, creating a sense of unity and goodwill within the community.

Emma-Jayne Hutchings, 48, one of the volunteers, spoke to *The Metro* about the joy of escorting the ducks. “It is heartwarming and adorable to escort the ducks on their walk. “You know when they are leaving, as they all start quacking like a call to arms, then they march up in two battalions,” she said.

The initiative has sparked a wave of community involvement, with residents from all walks of life joining the cause. Volunteers have received donations, including high-visibility jackets and food for the ducks. Local businesses have also pitched in, with the Mowbray Arms pub offering cups of tea and coffee to keep the “duckies” refreshed during their duties. “It has brought a wealth of community spirit, with all parts getting involved to make sure the ducks are safe,” Hutchings added.

The idea for the “duckies” came from Jodie Wood, 41, who set up a Facebook page to coordinate the volunteers. Working alongside Emma, Jodie now helps organise the group, ensuring the ducks are escorted safely each evening. What began as a simple act of kindness has grown into a symbol of community spirit, with locals forming friendships and bonds over their shared love for the feathered residents.

This unique role has not only protected the ducks but also brought people together, reinforcing the importance of community and compassion. In a world where individualism often takes precedence, the “duckies” of Thirsk remind us of the power of collective action for a common good.