

● GREEN BULLET

2nd September 2021

The Green Bullet connects and supports networks of voluntary, community and public sector organisations across a wide range of environmental and related issues, in North West England and beyond, originally produced by North West Environment Link (NWEL).

NWEL was a partnership of environmental NGOs established to respond jointly to regional environmental challenges and opportunities. NWEL was wound down after regional governance arrangements ended, and remaining funds supported the continued production of this bulletin. More recently CPRE North West has supported its production and retained the same aim.

Please send any items for inclusion in the next bulletin to andyuille@gmail.com - and feel free to forward all or parts of these bulletins throughout your own networks to help spread the word!

The Green Bullet is also available to download from [VSNW](http://vsnw.org.uk), the regional voluntary and community sector network.

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Campaigns

Great Big Green Week

The [Great Big Green Week](http://greatbiggreenweek.org.uk) will take place 18 – 26 September 2021, and will be the largest event for climate and nature ever seen in the UK. Thousands of events will celebrate how communities are taking action to tackle climate change and protect green spaces, and encourage others to get involved too. [Get involved!](http://greatbiggreenweek.org.uk)

Cycle September

As more and more people return to the office, it's a great time to promote active travel and help people to commute by bike. Encourage your workplace to take part in Cycle September and bring your team together to work on a common goal. It doesn't matter if they're in the office, working from home, working full time or part-time. People can bike anywhere any time

throughout September to take part - it's not about how fit you are or how far you ride. Even a 10-minute ride around the park counts! Last year over 56,000 riders from 3,215 businesses took part. There are prizes to be won and leaderboards that are split by size and industry – so even if your team is small, you can still aim for the top spot. If you're in Greater Manchester, find out more and register your business [at this link](#); other North West locations can be found on the [Love to Ride website](#). A [Staff Engagement Pack](#) is free for anyone to use to spread the word and get more people riding bikes this September.

Plastics and litter

- A new Wildlife and Countryside Link [report](#) into the progress of the Government's waste reforms has raised significant concerns about the Government's plans to progress a new Deposit Return Scheme (DRS) for England, Wales and Northern Ireland. The DRS, which would place a small deposit charge on drinks containers to encourage their return, had been due to start in 2023 and was expected to adopt an 'all-in' model, covering all drinks containers. However, the scheme has now been delayed to 2024, and a consultation earlier this year strongly suggested that the Government intends to opt for a scaled down model, covering only drink containers under 750ml in size and excluding those sold in multipacks, which would lead to only 7.4 billion containers being recycled, compared to 23.7 billion under the all-in model.
- An analysis of the litter collected during more than 600 clean-up events across the UK this year by Surfers Against Sewage suggests that [over 50% of UK litter comes from just 12 companies](#).

Countryside diversity

CPRE shares lessons from the [Countryside For All](#) project, intended to improve access to nature and the countryside for people of colour and marginalised groups.

Extinction Rebellion

[Extinction Rebellion](#) are in the middle of [two weeks of protest](#) in London, with [nearly 200 arrests in the first four days](#). It says its "Impossible Rebellion" will "target the root cause of the climate and ecological crisis".

Information update

Brexit and beyond

- The Government have unveiled some last minute [amendments to the Environment Bill](#), before it is debated again in Parliament on 6th September. These strengthen some of the provisions of the Bill, including a new statutory target to "halt" species decline by 2030, which is extremely welcome. However, it is not clear that the Bill yet meets what environmental groups consider to be the [minimum standard for effective legislation](#) to protect and enhance the environment.

Climate change & energy

- The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has published its first [update on the physical science of climate change](#) since 2013. It outlines the projected impacts of five emissions scenarios. The second and third reports, due to land in early 2022, will look at how to adapt to these impacts and how to prevent the worst case scenarios. The UN Secretary General described it as ["Code Red for humanity"](#). Climate Change News summarises [five key messages](#); the main headline is that we will pass 1.5c of warming by 2040 whatever we do, although strong and rapid action could bring that back down by the

end of the century. While almost half of the world's nations have [not yet submitted updated climate plans](#) ahead of COP26

- A group of world-renowned climate scientists is arguing that ambitions for reaching net-zero emissions by 2050 will no longer be enough to avoid the worst impacts of global heating, in light of the fact that change is happening more rapidly than predicted. The warning has been issued in [a new report](#) from the Climate Crisis Advisory Group, which comprises 15 leading climate scientists from across the world, including the UK's former chief scientific advisor Sir David King, and argues that a net-negative emissions approach is necessary to avoid warming of over 1.5c.
- The monthly Ipsos Mori Issues survey shows that for August, [climate change and the environment were the second-biggest issue for the UK public](#) surveyed, beaten only by Covid as the most significant concern
- More than 100 local authorities are supporting the [climate and ecological emergency \(CEE\) bill](#), which demands that the UK steps up its contribution to fighting the environmental crisis. The bill, which is set to be debated in Parliament next month, would see the UK aim beyond its 2050 net-zero target by accounting for its entire domestic and overseas greenhouse gas footprint. However, research by the BBC shows that of 121 'top-tier' councils that have made a climate emergency declaration, over a third are [still supporting high-carbon infrastructure projects](#). The Local Government Association, backed by the national Audit Office, puts this down to "serious weaknesses" in the [UK Government's relations with local government](#) on climate change
- A study by the National Housing Federation says [homes in England produce more CO2 than cars](#) - a total of 58.5 million tonnes of CO2 every year, emitting the equivalent of the average annual use of 28 million cars. It points out there are 27 million cars in England, which emit 56 million tonnes of CO2 annually, making homes a more urgent climate priority than cars. They are calling on the government to honour their manifesto commitment of [investing £3.8 billion in retrofitting social housing](#) in the forthcoming Spending Review – of which only £160 million has just been made available. In an open letter sent to Boris Johnson, the Aldersgate Group, the Federation of Master Builders, Citizens Advice and Which? are urging the Government to work more closely with consumers and the private sector to [develop upcoming policy packages for decarbonising homes](#) in line with the national net-zero target for 2050, in order to avoid past mistakes on low-carbon homes. A new group representing [UK households](#) has written an open letter to COP26 President Alok Sharma, urging him to push the Government to develop a national strategy for decarbonising existing buildings.
- As COP26 approaches, Boris Johnson has defined his agenda as "[Coal, cars, cash and trees](#)". Each comes with a quantified goal, which makes implementation practical. But there is no such clarity when it comes to coping with the impacts of climate change, which are already upon us and hitting the poor hardest. The Paris Agreement established a global goal on adaptation, but six years later we are little closer to understanding what it means in practice. Developing nations are [calling for measurable targets for adaptation](#) to be adopted this year. Edie have set up a new [COP26 Action Tracker](#) to provide a regular round-up of the policy and business preparations being made here in the UK and across the world. The key elements of the Tracker will be updated every two weeks with all of the need-to-know updates ahead of the November talks.
- [New analysis from WWF](#) has warned that committed spending from the UK Government is well below the required rates in order to meet its legally binding net-zero emissions target set for 2050, and that the existing policy gap could add billions of pounds to the total cost of decarbonisation.

Planning

- Continued pressure from backbench Tory MPs has led to a softening of language from the Government about the [impending announcement on planning reforms](#), with suggestions that they will have to “take the edges off” in order to get legislation through Parliament. But with planning minds focused on the upcoming reforms, it’s been a very quiet month otherwise, planning-wise!
- The RTPI has appointed consultants LDA Design to produce research on [how design codes can help achieve net-zero targets](#) and tackle the ongoing ecological emergency. The project, in partnership with the RSPB, will look at how design codes can secure “transformative change” in the built environment’s contribution to hitting net-zero targets and promoting nature recovery.
- Planning authorities should be given [targets for providing plots ready for self-build housing projects](#), unless they can demonstrate that they are already delivering such sites, a government-commissioned report has said.

Transport

- The Department for Transport (DfT) is under huge pressure from the Treasury to [abandon the eastern leg of HS2](#) and to consider other rail improvements as part of a drive for efficiency savings, while [councils and businesses continue to lobby](#) for it to be built. A parliamentary debate has been scheduled for 13th September, triggered by a petition criticising HS2’s environmental impact, and the [Wildlife Trusts are encouraging people to ask their MPs](#) to attend.
- [Gatwick Airport](#) has confirmed that it is pushing ahead with a development consent order (DCO) application to extend its existing second (emergency) runway and bring it into regular use, increasing capacity to approximately 75.6 million passengers per annum by 2038.
- The Government has announced that it will [review the controversial National Policy Statement \(NPS\) for major roads and rail](#) in the light of environmental initiatives and the impact of Covid-19. The review is likely to start later this year, to complete by spring 2023.

Nature and biodiversity

- Natural England is set to recommend that the government [consults further on its controversial new biodiversity metric 3.0](#), which is intended to measure whether development schemes have delivered the ten per cent gain in biodiversity that would be required of new developments under the Environment Bill. Natural England published biodiversity metric 3.0 in July as an update on the previous 2018 version. Ecologists and academics [criticised the new metric as unfit for purpose](#), with one expert saying it was potentially “the single most dangerous thing to be done by a statutory agency” during his career. However, despite this and any potential future changes, it is available for use now. The RSPB has set out [ten principles to ‘fix’ net gain](#), which the current version of the metric only partially meets.
- Five new landmark projects to [restore England’s peatlands](#) to a natural and healthy state will benefit from millions of pounds through the Government’s Nature for Climate Peatland Grant Scheme, including in Lancashire, Cumbria and Greater Manchester.
- The UK Government is being urged once more to [strengthen its plans for eliminating deforestation](#) in international supply chains, with WWF claiming current proposals could leave 2.1 million hectares of Brazilian rainforest at risk to the soy sector alone.
- In-person meetings for the [Convention on Biological Diversity COP15](#) set for October and designed to create a new global agreement on improving biodiversity have been delayed until 2022, due to the coronavirus pandemic. The House of Lords Environment and Climate Change Committee have written to Environment Secretary George Eustice setting out what

they believe the [Government should do to make COP15 a success](#) and to combat the loss of biodiversity.

- The UK is seeing a [surging interest in regenerative farming](#), experts say. More farmers are experimenting and membership of groups promoting a more ecologically friendly way of producing food are swelling. The National Farmers' Union is targeting climate neutrality by 2040 and the National Food Strategy recommends further support for farmers to help sequester carbon and protect biodiversity.
- The government has committed £40 million through its [Green Recovery Challenge Fund](#) to support 90 projects across England. The fund is intended to support 2,500 jobs, plant nearly one million trees and boost the recovery of nature.

Publications

Hydrogen Strategy

The Government has [published its Hydrogen Strategy](#) to set out how developing hydrogen sources and technologies will contribute to its net zero target. Carbon Brief provides a [summary of key points](#). However, the publication caused the chair of the hydrogen industry lobby group to resign because it places [too much reliance on 'blue hydrogen'](#) (produced from fossil fuels) at the expense of 'green hydrogen' (produced through electrolysis with renewable energy). While the Committee on Climate Change approves [blue hydrogen as a short-term bridge](#) to a green hydrogen future, others fear that, like fracking (also proposed as a bridge to a low-carbon future), that would [lock us in to fossil-fuel reliant infrastructure](#) for decades to come. [Brexit](#) is likely to complicate the strategy's implementation.

State of the urban environment

This [report from the Environment Agency](#) is designed to keep current and future plans for cities focused on people, nature and climate resilience. One of the key findings states that urban environments are complex systems, and a system-based approach will better enable people to manage this complexity and identify where nature-based solutions will be most effective.

Local Nature Recovery Strategy Pilots: lessons learned

The LNRS pilots ran from August 2020 until May 2021. [This report](#) is a summary of the main lessons learned, organised around 5 themes. The pilots have provided a wealth of more detailed insights that will help inform future LNRS policy, including the development of regulations and statutory guidance, on which Defra hope to consult on soon.

Events

Cumbria Green Investment Plan roundtables

Cumbria is in the process of developing a green investment plan. A series of [four online roundtables](#) are being held throughout September to engage stakeholders in the process, covering natural assets, sustainable transport, energy efficiency and retrofit, and renewable energy.

Environmental benefits from Nature

This webinar will provide a walk-through the [Environmental Benefits from Nature tool](#) (formerly known as the ecometric), which has been developed for deployment in England. It will illustrate the different aspects of its functionality and application and an update on case-study evaluation work that will be taking place. 23 September, 1-2pm.

Nature recovery and community prosperity

The Bunloit Project in the Scottish Highlands is creating a nature reserve that sequesters carbon, grows biodiversity, creates green jobs, and generates profit-for-purpose in the process. Their first operational site is the 1,200 acre Bunloit estate in Inverness-shire, where a wide range of actions are underway. [Join this webinar](#) to hear first hand from members of the Bunloit Rewilding team about their endeavour. Discover how this approach to stewardship of land could be applied elsewhere in the UK and beyond. 30 September, 1-2pm.

Peatlands in Partnership

This a [virtual event](#) in partnership with Pennine PeatLIFE, led by the North Pennines Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) Partnership in collaboration with Yorkshire Wildlife Trust and Forest of Bowland AONB Partnership, and Moors for the Future Partnership's MoorLIFE2020 project. This annual conference series presents opportunities for professionals from different disciplines to share their knowledge and experience of the stewardship of peatland. 13 – 16 September.

Resources

Biodiversity net gain

[The NATURE Tool](#) (Nature Assessment Tool for Urban and Rural Environments) supports assessments of the extent that new built development is achieving net gains. This open-access adaptable tool is designed for use throughout the UK and beyond. The spreadsheet based tool permits local planning authorities, developers and other stakeholders to pre-define what is expected from new development in terms of net gain, helping to enhance planning security for developers, while also setting a new benchmark for minimum net-gain requirements.

Social prescribing

Applications are now open for the FREE [North West Thriving Communities Learning Together Programme](#), Autumn–Winter 2021/22. The closing date for applications is Tuesday, 14th September, 2021. This regional programme is open to voluntary, community, faith and social enterprise (VCFSE) organisations across the North West interested or involved in social (including green / environmental) prescribing.

Natural capital approach

Defra has just released the latest update to its [Enabling a Natural Capital Approach](#) (ENCA) guidance. ENCA contains a wide range links to data, guidance and tools to aid understanding of the value of the environment and how to take it into account. It aims to provide a platform to update tools and guidance as knowledge develops, and identify new evidence and areas for development.

Lighting and dark skies

The UK Dark Skies Partnership has produced [this guidance document](#) covering both external and internal lighting for non-professional, professionals, domestic and non-domestic users. It aims to encourage good lighting decision making before the installation of any lighting and to help in the design and planning process.

Consultations

Local Nature Recovery Strategies

Local Nature Recovery Strategies are a new, England-wide system of spatial strategies that will establish priorities and map proposals for specific actions to drive nature's recovery and provide wider environmental benefits. [The consultation](#) includes an overview of what LNRSs are and

how Government intends for them to be used. The area covered by each LNRS will be set by the Defra Secretary of State, who will also appoint a “responsible authority” for each to lead its preparation. The Secretary of State will also produce regulations on the process for preparing, publishing, reviewing and republication of a Local Nature Recovery Strategy and guidance on what each Strategy should contain. The questions in the consultation focus first on the process (regulations) and then the content (guidance) of Local Nature Recovery Strategies. Deadline: 2 November.

Places for Everyone – Greater Manchester

The [latest public consultation](#) on Places for Everyone, the spatial framework for Greater Manchester (minus Stockport) has opened, and will run for eight weeks until 3 October. Residents, businesses and local groups are encouraged to take part in the consultation on the plan, which has now been approved by councils in Bolton, Bury, Manchester, Oldham, Rochdale, Salford, Tameside, Trafford and Wigan.

Nuclear waste storage

Consultation is beginning, again, on a deep geological storage site for high-level nuclear waste, including in [Copeland](#) and [Allerdale](#) in Cumbria. Cumbria county council, which resisted the last efforts to site a GDF locally in 2013, has declined to take part in either of the two existing working groups, saying its involvement would give the process [“a credibility it doesn’t deserve”](#).

Major roads network

Highways England has launched the next stage of their [consultation on the future of the road network](#). They want to hear views on the issues and opportunities for motorways and major A-roads in England, including in relation to the environment.

Re-introducing beavers to England

Defra is seeking views on their proposed approach to further reintroductions of beavers in England and the management of the species in the wild. The consultation sets out their proposed approach, including in relation to future releases into the wild, current and future releases into enclosures and existing wild-living beavers. They also want to know what management and support you think should be available to those managing beavers. Deadline: 17 November.

Nature-positive places

The Broadway Initiative has launched a new survey to inform recommendations about how local government, business, planning and environmental professionals and the public can all work together to meet HM Government’s environmental goals. You can complete the short survey [here](#). This will be followed up with a [webinar](#) on 7 September with MHCLG Minister Christopher Pincher and Defra Minister Rebecca Pow to share examples of good practice from across the country and a [workshop](#) on 9 September for a more structured dialogue around the solutions.

Research calls for participation

MHCLG: user research and planning reform

Over the coming months, MHCLG will be carrying out user research to support the planning reform programme. User research is user-centred which means they want to speak to those involved in the planning system, from all sectors, to hear about your experiences of planning and build that into future reform work. They’re calling for anyone involved in planning to [sign up to be part of their user research panel](#). This means when they’re conducting research, you’ll be offered the opportunity to take part. Each opportunity is on a voluntary basis, so you’re not obligated to get involved, but you’ll hear about it first.

Climate and communities

Think tank New Local is conducting research to explore the [potential of community-based climate action](#). They will explore the role that councils, communities and other local actors can play in unleashing the potential of people and places, offering real, practical ways they can address the consequences of climate change together. This should help make the case for a more democratic and localised approach to climate change policy. If you're involved in local climate action in any way, please contact lead researcher Luca Tiratelli ltiratelli@newlocal.org.uk before 15th September to contribute your experience.

Funding

Together for Our Planet

On 1 September, The National Lottery Community Fund opens a new funding programme called [Together for Our Planet](#). Later this year, the UK will host the [26th UN Climate Change Conference of the Parties \(COP26\)](#). Building on interest and excitement for this international conference, this funding programme will help nurture and develop local ideas through this funding and support a legacy of ongoing climate action projects in hundreds of communities across the UK. It offers up to £10,000 per project to support community-led climate action.

The Prince's Countryside Fund

Grants are available for farming and rural communities for projects which are [working to create resilient rural communities](#). Grants of up to £25,000 to support rural communities and grants up to £10,000 for project "village survival" are available. Deadline 17 September.

The National Allotments Gardens Trust

The National Allotments Gardens Trust (NAGTS) award [funding for various Allotment & Garden projects](#). The NAGTS objective is to advance and improve the Allotments/Gardens movement by Education, Training, Workshops & Support. Grant size: minimum £250, maximum £2,000. Next application deadline: 1st October.

Vacancy

Friends of the Lake District Policy Officer

Friends of the Lake District are [seeking an enthusiastic person](#) committed to high quality landscapes in Cumbria and to the ethos of Friends of the Lake District to lead their work protecting and enhancing designated landscapes, on woodlands and forestry, and access and recreation. You will have good written and communication skills and the ability to influence others. Knowledge of the landscape and issues in the Lake District and Cumbria, and a professional background and relevant qualifications in protected landscapes and preferably also woodlands and access is required.

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