



## ● GREEN BULLET

27<sup>th</sup> August 2019

North West Environment Link (NWEL) is a partnership of environmental voluntary sector organisations, representing hundreds of thousands of members in the North West. We are members of VSNW, the regional voluntary sector network for the North West, whose purpose is to support a connected and influential voluntary and community sector (VCS).

This bulletin is intended to keep NWEL members and wider networks up to date on events and issues that will be of interest to environmental voluntary and community sector organisations in the North West. Please send any items for inclusion in the next bulletin to [andyuille@gmail.com](mailto: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 the [VSNW](#) website.

### CONTENTS

- Campaigns – climate change, trees, water, air, litter
- Information update – Brexit & beyond, energy, planning, transport
- Publications – Unchecked = unregulated, land and climate change, Glover review, Facing the crisis, Northern ambitions, environmental pioneer evaluations
- Events – NHS Forest conference, LCR listening event, online environmental tools webinars, Cumbria Green Build festival, Peatland conference, Charity Bank
- Resources – Local green space, trustees, Recycle Week, neighbourhood planning
- Consultations – National Food Strategy, carbon capture & storage, domestic shipping air pollution, energy efficiency & traditional homes
- Funding – Climate action, Transform, Bright Ideas, Heritage, Connect, Crowdfunder

### Campaigns

#### Climate change

- Climate strike, 20<sup>th</sup> September. Young people in the UK who have been striking for the climate are [calling on adults to join them](#) on **Friday 20 September** as part of a massive global day of action. Spread the word, talk to people in your workplace, invite school strikers or activists to come and talk, explain to your employers why it's important. And join the next generation as they try to achieve what we have so far failed at...

- With [large swathes of the Amazon rainforest on fire](#), the G7 have offered some help but Brazilian President Bolsonaro is resisting, instead [blaming environmental groups](#) for setting the fires. The BBC answers some [FAQs](#) on the issue. The [Arctic fires](#) in Alaska, Siberia, Greenland and Canada continue, with [impacts that will be felt for generations](#).
- The House of Commons Science and Technology Committee has published a new report warning that the [UK isn't remotely close to reaching upcoming carbon budgets](#) up to 2032, outlining 10 key policy shortfalls and recommendations that need to be addressed if the UK is to deliver on its net-zero ambitions
- Over [half of all UK principal councils have declared a climate emergency](#). Yours could be next, help them along...

### **Tree Charter Day**

[The Tree Charter](#) sets out the principles for a society in which people and trees can stand stronger together. It was launched on 6 November 2017; the 800th anniversary of the 1217 Charter of the Forest, and is rooted in more than 60,000 'tree stories' gathered from people of all backgrounds across the UK. You can [become a Charter Champion or set up a Charter Branch](#) or [find a local branch](#). Tree Charter Day will be celebrated on 30 November, where tree planting will be the main focus. Put the date in your diary, sign up to the tree charter, and identify any space you have where a tree can be planted!

### **Water**

The ['Love Water'](#) campaign, launched on 31st July 2019, aims to raise awareness of the importance of water and the role everyone plays in protecting it. More than 40 environmental groups, charities, water companies and regulators – including the Environment Agency, Water UK, Ofwat, NFU and Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust (WWT) – have come together to launch the campaign, which will work with businesses and the public to tackle issues including water pollution and reducing water use and wastage by raising awareness of the issues, holding events such as river and beach cleans, and encouraging businesses to include relevant action as part of their operational and corporate responsibility targets. The major water companies have also partnered with NGOs to [plant 11 million trees by 2030](#). But bear in mind that these campaigns include the same water companies who are accused of ["treating rivers like open sewers"](#), and the EA which is failing to prevent criminal pollution due to budget cuts (see 'Unchecked' in 'publications' section and previous Bullets).

### **Air pollution**

- Concern over the sheer scale of ocean plastic pollution has moved onwards and upwards, with reports that [microplastics are now so ubiquitous in the air](#) that we breath that they even fall with the 'pristine' snow of the Artic.
- [Defra's reporting of air quality and emissions data has been criticised](#) by the Office for Statistics Regulation (OSR), who said they need to do more to present a more 'coherent' picture of air pollution to the public.
- City region transport authorities have called on the government to [show leadership on air quality](#) and force major bodies to reveal their moves to cut pollution.

### **Litter**

- Environmental charity Hubbub have released a [#LoveYourForest](#) Inspiration Guide to help motivate communities to tackle litter in forests and woodlands.
- A new report from Green Alliance highlights that the shift away from single-use plastics is missing the point – [it's not the plastic that is the problem, it's the single-use-ness](#): the

consumer culture that expects that things can be used once and then thrown away, at great environmental cost whatever they're made of.

- A survey by CPRE shows that [70% of the public would support a deposit return scheme](#) on all drinks containers.
- [Plastic bag sales in the UK have almost halved](#) in the last year, accelerating the downward trend.

### **Information update**

#### **Brexit and beyond**

- A coalition of almost 40 environmental organisations including Greenpeace, WWF UK and ClientEarth is calling for the Draft Environment Bill to be altered, to ensure that the public can request disclosure from the UK's post-Brexit watchdog and that information is not unnecessarily withheld from the public. The signatories of [the open letter](#) say that the Bill's overall provisions are "wholly at odds with the public's right to information" and would "[reverse decades of progress in opening up environmental information.](#)" This follows sustained criticism of the Bill from [Northern Ireland's Environment Department](#), the [UK Environmental Audit Committee](#) and the [National Audit Office](#), as well as [environmental NGOs](#) and [planning commentators](#).

#### **Energy**

- Cuadrilla [triumphantly re-started fracking in Lancashire](#) this month... but the regulator for the shale gas industry has [suspended fracking operations again](#) after this week's 2.9ML tremor, the largest tremor ever induced by fracking in the UK. There have been more than 90 increasingly strong tremors in the two weeks since fracking re-started on August 15<sup>th</sup>. Current regulations require a 'pause' in operations for any tremor over 0.5ML. The suspension followed other technical problems, with Cuadrilla [unable to seal their first well](#) on the site and [seeking to varying the conditions of their permission](#) a number of times.
- Meanwhile, campaigners have reacted with concern to news that the British Geological Survey (who amongst other things monitor seismic activity) signed a [non-disclosure agreement with Cuadrilla](#) over access to operational data, under which they could release data only with Cuadrilla's permission and must destroy confidential documents at the firm's request.
- The fossil fuel industry has been able to keep costs down with global subsidies exceeding \$370bn. In comparison, renewable energy only receives \$100bn in subsidies. According to the International Institute for Sustainable Development (IISD), switching 10-30% of fossil fuel subsidies to clean sources could "[unleash a runaway clean energy revolution](#)".
- Network Rail has launched the [world's first solar powered rail line](#) in Hampshire this month. The 100 rail-side solar panels will power the rail signals and lights on the Wessex route – but not the trains themselves.
- The [number of flights taken by BEIS officials](#) – ie the people responsible for tackling the climate emergency – has soared over the last year
- A coalition of 130 MPs, including 35 from the Conservative Party, has called on Boris Johnson to alter the UK's planning and energy policies to [better support the growth of onshore wind](#). A [coalition of energy sector companies and others](#) has written to the energy minister with a similar request.
- The Conversation reviews the [pros and cons of a Mersey tidal barrage](#).

## Planning

- Commentators continue to digest the [changes to the online planning practice guidance](#) announced in last month's Bullet, especially on [Green Belt](#), [Biodiversity net gain](#), [housing supply and delivery](#), [making effective use of land](#), [housing for specific groups](#). [Andy Boddington summarises the changes](#) from a CPRE perspective...
- ...The Planner provides an overview of the new planning practice guidance on [Green Belt development](#)...
- ...Historic England provides an overview on the [changes to guidance on the historic environment](#)...
- ...And The Planner explains why the [new, more stringent definition of 'deliverable'](#) in the new NPPF makes it harder for councils to demonstrate a five year supply – and so easier for speculative development to get permission on unallocated sites.
- Meanwhile, the Woodland Trust says that new planning rules introduced in 2018 are [not being effectively used to protect trees and woodlands](#).
- An appeal decision to extend the lifetime of a wind farm in the Lake District provides insight into [how 'repowering' windfarms is being interpreted](#) (which requires a lower bar to be passed than justifying a new proposal)
- The Planning Inspectorate has [published new guidance](#) for submitting Statements of Case and Statements of Common Ground in Section 78 appeals.
- The Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government (MHCLG) has appointed consultants to develop a [visual design guide](#) which should be available by 'late summer'. It will form part of the revised Design Planning Practice Guidance, which is being produced to support the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It will, allegedly, be an "easy-to-use" tool that local authorities, developers, and built environment professionals can use to ensure quality is embedded in policies, guidance and projects. It is being developed as part of the institutional response to widespread poor quality development, that also includes the [Building Better, Building Beautiful Commission](#).

## Transport

- The Terms of reference and timetable for an [independent review of HS2](#) into whether and how to proceed have been released, with [suggestions that it could be cancelled](#) this year. The [Northern Powerhouse Partnership](#) has set up its own review. Despite ministerial and corporate assurances otherwise, [the government and HS2 Ltd knew that the project was over budget](#) and behind schedule three years ago. A leaked document suggests that it may cost £30 billion more than was budgeted. The Woodland Trust has [argued that all work should be suspended until the review is complete](#) and has encouraged environmental groups to lobby the review.
- New research from IPPR shows that, unless Northern Powerhouse Rail goes ahead, [London is set to receive 300% more spending on transport per person](#) than the North of England. Andy Burnham responded that "“In the five years since they first promised us a Northern Powerhouse, the [transport spending gap between North and South has widened](#) and is set to get even wider over the next decade.”"
- Leaders from across the North have [called on the Government to commit to a dedicated Northern Budget](#), to support better transport infrastructure and deliver on commitments previously promised as part of the Northern Powerhouse agenda.
- Transport for the North has bid for [£700 million in new roads funding](#)

- Bus users UK has set out a ten-point plan for [reversing the decline in rural bus services](#), including local authorities taking a more consumer-led approach to transport and trials of new models of rural bus provision built on community interest or cooperative principles.
- The first project in [Greater Manchester's £137m Bee Network](#), the largest-ever investment in the city region's walking and cycling network, [has been completed in Wigan](#).

### **Publications**

#### **Unchecked**

A [new report](#) prepared by the Institute of Environmental Management and Assessment for The Ecology Trust launches a new [campaign into ensuring that laws are effectively enforced](#) in areas such as food safety and environmental protection. It finds that the steep funding cuts to public environmental bodies such as Natural England, the Environment Agency and National Parks has left the UK at risk of [failing to meet key green policy objectives](#). EA and NE have both had their budgets cut by about two-thirds since 2010, leaving them unable to effectively fulfil their statutory duties. Nearly half of the UK's Sites of Special Interest have not had an environmental inspection in the past six years, while just one in 100 water pollution incidents between 2013 and 2017 resulted in prosecution. [Only 14% of English rivers are in a 'good' condition](#). During this time, there was an average of one serious pollution incident per week. This provides a stark fore-warning of the likely fate of the post-Brexit 'Office for Environmental Protection'.

#### **Land use and climate change**

The [IPCC's special report on climate change and land](#) indicates that 23% of human greenhouse gas emissions stem from deforestation, fires and agriculture, but land can act as a powerful carbon sink to help mitigate the worst of climate change, and explains why [global land use trends and patterns will have to change radically](#). The [Committee on Climate Change responded](#) saying that it chimed with their existing advice to the UK government: "the UK needs to reduce food waste, promote healthy diets, use land sustainably, and improve the condition of habitats; including planting more trees and restoring degraded soils. All of these steps will help to improve people's lives, improve resilience to climate change and reduce the harmful emissions which cause climate change."

#### **Glover Review – Interim report**

The [Glover Review into the UK system of landscape protection](#) issued its interim report in July, with the full report to follow in the autumn. They found that, amongst other things: our system of landscape protection today is fragmented, sometimes marginalised and often misunderstood; the current system of governance for National Parks should be reformed; AONBs should be strengthened, with increased funding, new purposes and a greater voice on development; there should be a wider range of non-designated systems of landscape protection; designated landscapes need to respond better to the 2010 Lawton Review and the most recent 2016 State of Nature Report, which are explicit about the crisis of nature and what needs to be done to bring about a recovery; and that our system of landscape protection has been hampered by having little influence over the things which have done most harm to nature, including a system of farming subsidies which, although it has improved, rewarded intensification regardless of the consequences.

### **Facing the Crisis**

[Britain needs an overarching new sustainability law](#) to bolster natural life-support systems and prevent economic and social collapse, according to proposals from the IPPR. The discussion document, the first in a series of six, says that policymakers have made a “catastrophic mistake” by underestimating the risks posed by environmental breakdown and the potential benefits of switching to a different economic approach that focuses on building abundance rather than running down resources.

### **Ambitions for the North**

A new report from the RTPI considers [strategic planning in the North of England](#). It aims to break with unsustainable patterns of land use, road-based housing development and city-oriented investment and help to rebalance the North. To do so, it argues that individual plans need to be knitted together into a coherent whole that would direct development and regeneration strategically. It is part of a suite of documents looking at transport, economy, placemaking and the natural environment that it is intended will combine into a [Great North Plan](#).

### **25 Year Environment Plan ‘Pioneers’ evaluation**

An [evaluation of the four ongoing 25 Year Environment Plan ‘Pioneers’](#) in England has been released, including ‘urban pioneer’ Greater Manchester and ‘catchment pioneer’ Cumbria. These projects are intended to show the ‘natural capital approach’ in practice. They join a large array of pre-existing initiatives connecting environment, wellbeing and prosperity. The review, commissioned by Defra in 2018 and undertaken by consulting firm ICP, highlights the unique contribution of each Pioneer as well as the need for sharing of lessons from them.

### **Events**

#### **NHS Forest conference**

The [NHS Forest 2019 conference](#) will be held at Alder Hey Children's Hospital on the 11th October. The conference will focus on celebrating 10 years of the NHS Forest and looking at the role of green space in key NHS institutions. Key note speech from EKN member, Pam Warhurst CBE, community activist and chair of Incredible Edible.

#### **Liverpool City Region – Listening Event**

As part of the Liverpool City Region Year of the Environment, Nature Connected is hosting a [listening event “to help communities connect with nature”](#). It is an opportunity for you/your organisation to share your passion for our parks and green spaces, including our green belts, and to tell Steve Rotherham what you think about what is happening and should happen to them! It will provide input for developing the Mayor’s programme ‘Towards a Green Future’. Saturday 28th September 2019, 9:30am – 3:00pm at Crosby Lakeside Adventure Centre. To register please email: [info.yoe2019lcr@gmail.com](mailto:info.yoe2019lcr@gmail.com) – please include “RSVP GS Listening Event” in the email subject! You can also have your say on the [LCR Listens](#) website.

#### **Natural Value Evaluation Online webinar**

The [Natural Environment Valuation Online \(NEVO\) Tool](#) is a freely-available web application to help explore, quantify and make predictions about the benefits that are derived from existing and altered land use across England and Wales. It has undergone significant development and testing since the introductory webinar one year ago. In this webinar, Nathan Owen and Brett

Day will provide insight into how NEVO works and how it can be used. 1pm, Thursday 10<sup>th</sup> October.

### **Habitat opportunity mapping webinar**

Organisations with an interest in land and water not only need to have a baseline understanding of natural capital and the benefits that flow from it, but also the potential to further enhance both biodiversity and ecosystem services. [GIS-based habitat opportunity mapping](#) can be used to identify locations where habitats can be created or restored to enhance biodiversity and a range of ecosystem services. Using a number of case studies across England, Alison Holt from Natural Capital Solutions will demonstrate this approach and how it is being used in both urban and rural decision-making. 1pm, Thursday 31<sup>st</sup> October.

### **Increasing habitat connectivity – decision support tool webinar**

Throughout the UK and beyond, conservation science and public policy highlight the need to enhance the connectivity of habitat networks. Condati is a free, open-source, [decision support tool to identify the best locations for habitat creation and restoration](#) to enhance existing habitat networks and increase ecological connectivity across landscapes. Join this webinar to learn about the tool from developers at the University of Liverpool.

### **Cumbria Green Build Festival**

[Book online](#) for a wide range of courses, workshops, seminars, visits, tours and activities covering all things green building!

### **IUCN UK Peatland Programme conference**

The 2019 annual conference of the [IUCN UK Peatland Programme](#) will be mix of presentations and field visits, all under the theme of 'investing in the future'. Over 200 delegates are expected to participate, discussing progress in managing this vital habitat that offers a wide range of benefits for all of society.

### **Free Charity Bank events**

Charity Bank is inviting trustees, directors, CEOs and managers of charities, social enterprises and community organisations to attend a series of free regional events in September and October. Taking place in London, Tunbridge Wells, Leeds, Reading, Derby, Edinburgh and Manchester, these events will provide the [latest insight on the state of the sector at a time of change and challenge](#). NCVO will present an update and sector specialists will engage with the audience in unpicking some of the challenges and opportunities.

## **Resources**

### **Local Green Space**

This [new guide from Locality](#) explains what is meant by a Local Green Space and how they can be designated through Neighbourhood Plans. Green space can be a key asset for many communities and a specific kind of land designation called a 'local green space' can protect these assets from development.

### **Trustee recruitment**

[Getting On Board](#) provide a range of online resources with templates, text and helpful step-by-step suggestions of how to go about the process of analysing skills gaps in your trustee boards

and committees, filling a key role, targeted local recruitment, shortlisting, interviewing and induction.

### **Recycle Week resources**

The countdown is on! Recycle Week 2019 is happening 23-29 September and your free Recycle Week assets are now ready for you to personalise. [Download them now](#) and get ready to use them during Recycle Week! Social media posts, posters and pull-up banners are all available. WRAP have developed a simple step by step [toolkit](#) for you to help you and your design teams personalise these assets.

### **All things neighbourhood planning**

This new (unofficial) site provides an [overview of neighbourhood plans and summarises some of their content](#), and as you'd expect they are very diverse including: cycle and pedestrian ways, tackling flooding, solar gain and geothermal heating, dark skies policies, biodiversity maps, healthy air policies, housing for older people, a nursery, vacant shops, second homes in coastal communities, and even cataloguing and preserving the genetic diversity of fruit trees in parish orchards! It also includes information on the processes involved and the tools available to help. Official help and support is available from [Locality](#).

### **Consultations**

#### **National Food Strategy**

The Department for Food, the Environment and Rural Affairs (Defra) has opened the first [public consultation on its upcoming National Food Strategy](#), which aims to address issues of environmental sustainability and nutrition across the food value chain. The UK's national food policy frameworks have not undergone a major update for 75+ years. Under the consultation, consumers, farmers, food producers, NGOs, scientists and academics are being asked to detail how the UK's food system should be adapted in the face of challenges such as climate change and population growth. Deadline: 25<sup>th</sup> October.

#### **Carbon capture, usage and storage**

The Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy is seeking views on policy for the [reuse of oil and gas assets for carbon capture, usage and storage projects](#). An action plan published in November 2018 committed to completing a process to identify existing oil and gas infrastructure that has the potential for re-use for carbon capture, usage and storage and to develop a policy on this. Views are now being sought on the existing infrastructure and associated policy proposals which include introducing a discretionary power for the Secretary of State to remove the decommissioning liability from previous oil and gas asset owners if assets are transferred to CCUS projects. They are also seeking views on their emerging findings on [potential business models for carbon capture](#), usage and storage. Both deadlines: 16<sup>th</sup> September

#### **Domestic Shipping Air Pollution**

The Department for Transport has issued a call for evidence on [emissions from domestic shipping activity](#) in the UK's coastal waters and English inland waterways They wish to better understand emissions from the maritime sector and establish if government can do more to address emission issues. Deadline: 11 January 2020.

### **Energy efficiency and traditional homes**

Consultation is taking place on the new [Historic England Advice Note: Energy Efficiency and Traditional Homes](#). This publication considers energy efficiency improvements in traditional homes from the standpoint of the planning system, outlining a 'whole building' approach that can help in meeting the combined objectives of increasing energy efficiency and sustaining heritage significance, while avoiding unintended consequences. Closing date 13 September.

### **Funding**

#### **Climate Action Fund**

Applications will open in Autumn 2019 for a new National Lottery Community Fund programme that offers [support for community-led partnerships that will drive climate action](#) in their area. These communities will stand as beacons of what is possible when people take the lead on climate change. Start preparing now!

#### **Transform grants**

[Transpennine Express' Transform Grants](#) are back for 2019, with up to £50,000 up for grabs to support community projects that seek to tackle youth unemployment, promote social inclusion and/or improve the environment. Applicants can apply for funding of up to £5,000 to help deliver their projects, with bonus points for proximity to Transpennine's train services. Applications close on the 27th September 2019, so you need to be quick to take advantage of this opportunity to make a difference in your area.

#### **Bright Ideas**

The [Community Business Bright Ideas Fund](#) re-opened on Tuesday 6 August. The programme supports new community business ideas with tailored business support and grants of up to £15,000. The website includes fund guidance notes, stories from successful groups in previous rounds, and recording of a recent webinar. If you're planning to apply, don't forget to fill in the eligibility checker by 29 September by 5pm and submit your application by 30 September 2019 by 11.59pm.

#### **Transforming place through heritage**

This programme supports projects that will [contribute to the transformation of high streets and town centres](#) in England. Up to £350,000 grants available. Next deadlines: amounts under £15,000: **30 August 2019** for a mid-October 2019 decision, amounts over £15,000: **21 October 2019** for a mid-December 2019 decision.

#### **Space to Connect**

Community organisations across England looking to [improve spaces where people can connect and co-operate](#) can now apply for grants of up to £50,000 from the Co-operative Foundation.

#### **Community Business Crowdmatch**

Get up to £6,000 of extra funding to [help start or grow community businesses](#) such as community owned parks, shops, pubs, sports facilities and local landmarks.

To subscribe or contribute

To subscribe to NWEL's Bulletin please email [andyyuille@gmail.com](mailto:andyyuille@gmail.com) with the subject line: "Subscribe to NWEL Bulletin". Please send items for inclusion in the next Bullet to me by **23<sup>rd</sup> September 2019**.

North West Environment Link (NWEL) is a partnership of environmental voluntary sector organisations, representing hundreds of thousands of members in the North West.

VSNW is the regional voluntary sector network for the North West, whose purpose is to support a connected and influential voluntary and community sector (VCS).

To contribute to the NWEL Bulletin, please contact:  
Andy Yuille  
[andyyuille@gmail.com](mailto:andyyuille@gmail.com)  
01524 389 915

To contribute to the policy work of VSNW, please contact:  
Warren Escadale  
[warren.escadale@vsnw.org.uk](mailto:warren.escadale@vsnw.org.uk)  
0161 276 9307