



● GREEN BULLET



28th May 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](#), the regional voluntary and community sector network.

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Campaigns

Nature Positive

Nature is declining at unprecedented rates. In advance of the [UN Biodiversity Convention](#) meeting this autumn, a new paper titled [A Nature-Positive World: the Global Goal for Nature](#) makes a strong case, with scientific justification, for the necessity to ensure there is more nature by 2030, drawing on 78 published academic papers. The draft official plan for new biodiversity targets has been [criticized as inadequate](#) by conservation NGOs. A [Global Goal for Nature](#) - in parallel to the UN Climate Convention's net zero emissions goal – would commit governments to be nature-positive by 2030 by taking urgent action to halt nature loss now. The goal would have three measurable temporal objectives: Zero net loss of nature from 2020, Net positive by 2030, and Full recovery by 2050. This would be combined with development and climate goals

to create an integrated overarching direction for global agreements of an equitable, nature-positive, carbon-neutral world.

Plastics

This month, Greenpeace investigations found [British plastic recycling being dumped and burned in the open air in Turkey](#), and that the UK is the [second most polluting nation per capita](#) in the amount of plastic waste that we produce. They released [Wasteminster](#), a short film that exposes government hypocrisy on plastic pollution. It's been watched over 6 million times, with journalists and politicians sharing it. Just two days later, [Turkey announced a ban on 95% of UK plastic waste imports](#). But the UK government remains silent. Greenpeace are asking people to [message Boris Johnson on social media](#) to insist the UK Government stops dumping our waste on other countries, and introduces proper measures to reduce plastic waste and improve recycling - like a deposit return scheme and plastic reduction targets. A coalition of environmental NGOs have also put together a tool to [help you respond quickly and easily](#) to the current UK government consultation on a deposit return scheme to increase recycling of drinks containers. CPRE are asking people to sign [a 'message in a bottle'](#) to Boris, calling him not to continue delaying and watering down the scheme proposals.

Trees

The [Queen's Green Canopy](#) is a tree planting initiative to mark The Queen's Platinum Jubilee in 2022 and enhance our environment now and for generations to come. Individuals, schools, community groups, companies and councils can get involved. Across 2021 and 2022, The Woodland Trust will have over three million saplings in tree packs, available on a first-come, first-served basis. Information on how to apply for the free saplings will be available through the [Woodland Trust website](#) from June 2021.

Oceans

It's [World Oceans Day](#) on June 8th. It will be a year since Greenpeace launched the campaign to ban destructive supertrawlers and bottom trawlers [from fishing in Marine Protected Areas](#), activity that has been compared to dragging a bulldozer through the rainforest. They are asking people to join the 450,000 people who have already signed a [petition asking for Marine Protected Areas to be, well, protected](#). The Wildlife Trusts have contributed to a report recommending how ['Highly Protected Marine Areas'](#) which would exclude all damaging activities could be implemented. The [Marine Conservation Society](#) offer a variety of ways to get involved and fight for the future of our ocean by campaigning, donating or volunteering.

Community planning alliance

There has been huge concern about the lack of democracy within the planning system and the even worse inequity [being pushed through](#) as part of the Government's planning reforms. Now a new [Community Planning Alliance](#) has been launched by local people to fight back – as well as a new interactive map of hundreds of local campaigns against damaging proposals. Within just a month over 400 campaigns had been added to the [grassroots map](#) – and the number keeps growing. Campaigns are being waged against plans for housing, new roads, green belt development, airport expansion, incinerators, employment space and more.

Rural buses

As the National Bus Strategy is rolled out across the country, CPRE want to put the voice of rural residents at the heart of the debate on the future of bus services, highlighting the [problems of car-dependency in rural areas](#). So they've built a really easy and intuitive way for people to

share their views by submitting a video, explaining why a good bus service matters to them and their community. They'll share a montage of videos on social media and with MPs to seek support for a reliable bus service for every community.

Information update

Brexit and beyond

- The [Environment Bill has returned to Parliament](#) after its third delay. The Bill was first introduced in 2019 and sets out the UK's plans for delivering against the long-term targets of the 25-Year Environment Bill after Brexit. The UK will not be able to formally launch its independent watchdog, the [Office for Environmental Protection](#) (OEP), until the Bill receives Royal Assent, although it is expected to be running in an interim, non-statutory form from this July. While it does include some unambiguously positive elements, such as a [new target on species abundance](#) by 2030 and a crackdown on discharging raw sewage into rivers, Ministers have been [accused of hypocrisy in bringing forward a "toothless" bill](#) that will fail to protect against developers concreting over valuable green space, lack provisions for improving air quality, and contain what campaigners said were inadequate protections for wildlife. It also included new [powers for the secretary of state to amend existing \(EU\) regulations](#), with two new clauses that [weaken protection for protected sites and species](#). [Greener UK covered the debate in Parliament](#) on Twitter, welcoming the Bill but concluding that there are "no shortage of areas where improvement would be welcome." The next reading is scheduled for June 7th.
- The [background briefing notes to the Queens Speech](#) also confirmed that the government would "use post-Brexit freedoms to simplify and enhance the framework for environmental assessments for developments". Which does not sound at all sinister.
- Key points from the [Queen's Speech](#) are summarized by the BBC [here](#). Green group responses were that [it was, overall, disappointing](#).
- The UK's [post-Brexit emissions trading scheme](#) (ETS) opened for the first time on 19 May, with the price of carbon hitting £50 per tonne – almost £5 higher than currently trading in the EU ETS.

Covid recovery

- The Confederation for British Industry (CBI) has launched a major new campaign uniting business in the push for a green recovery from Covid-19, claiming that this could bring £700bn of economic benefits for the UK this decade. Called 'Seize the Moment', the campaign has been kick-started with [online resources](#) outlining the CBI's policy and business vision, updated in line with the UK's commitments to levelling up and to net-zero by 2050. Meanwhile, a new report by Green Alliance analyses the [jobs impact of investment in nature restoration across Britain](#). It finds that towns and smaller cities that were struggling most with unemployment before the pandemic will have the highest labour market risk as the economy opens up again. However, these areas have the highest potential for environmental improvements and, therefore, the greatest opportunity for green jobs growth.
- The Queen's Speech also stated that as part of the preparations for the Levelling Up Bill, the Government will publish a [Levelling Up White Paper](#) later in 2021, to cover Local regeneration and town centre improvement; enterprise and jobs; levelling up public services; skills and education; and major infrastructure and connectivity.

Climate change & energy

- Although nations are adopting stronger climate targets in the build-up to COP26, new research has revealed that [current policies would still lead to global warming twice what it should be](#) if the world is to meet the aims of the Paris Agreement.
- A judgement by a Dutch court in The Hague sets a significant precedent that companies, not just countries, have a duty to align with the Paris Agreement. By [ordering Shell to cut its emissions 45% by 2030](#) in line with global climate goals, the judge handed campaigners the tools to unleash a series of lawsuits against the fossil fuel industry. This is the first time a company has been held legally liable for its contribution to climate change
- The International Energy Agency has declared that exploitation and development of new oil and gas fields must stop this year and no new coal-fired power stations can be built. These are just two of over 400 milestones mapped out by the world's leading energy agency on their [pathway to meet the goal of net zero emissions by 2050](#) and keep the world within safe limits of global heating.
- The leaders of the G7 nations have agreed a joint commitment to [ensure their power sectors reach net-zero in the 2030s](#), setting up for the economy-wide transition by 2050, and designed to deliver on the 1.5C ambition of the Paris Agreement, beyond their long-term climate targets. The previous G7 agreement was 2C aligned.
- One-third of the UK population is now represented by [councils aiming to reach net-zero emissions](#) at least five years ahead of the national government's 2050 commitment.
- Environmental campaigners Paid to Pollute have [launched a legal challenge against the UK Government](#), arguing that its continued support for expanding oil and gas production in the North Sea is incompatible with its climate laws and commitment to 'levelling up', and is both unlawful and irrational.
- Professor Rebecca Willis gets behind the myths and misdirection to lay out the issues behind the [proposed West Cumbria coal mine](#), which its promoters and defenders and actually trying to spin as carbon positive – dig coal to save the climate!
- Green Alliance have hosted blogs by [five key Select Committee Chairs on net zero progress](#).
- A survey by RenewableUK suggests that the public wants renewable energy to top the government's agenda for green growth, with [support for onshore wind schemes](#) 'sky-high'.
- A new report by WWF and Greenpeace shows that UK banks and asset managers collectively financed projects emitting 805 million tonnes of greenhouse gases in 2019 - around [twice the UK's annual national carbon footprint](#).
- Greater Manchester has established a [retrofitting taskforce](#) to tackle the challenge of retrofitting an estimated 60,000 homes a year, needed to meet the city region's 2038 net zero target. Andy Burnham says that "this is about setting out a positive vision for how we can tackle the climate crisis, the housing crisis, and the jobs crisis"
- The Government has admitted that it did not consult stakeholders before launching the now-defunct Green Homes Grant scheme, in a document that MPs have said is evidence that it is [shirking responsibility on domestic energy efficiency](#).

Planning

- Commentators are suggesting that the government may have to row back on its proposals to grant planning permission through local plans. The [Queen's Speech](#) and accompanying [163-page background briefing document](#) gave no new details on how the controversial zoning proposals (or anything else!) will be taken forward in the anticipated Planning Bill, and there are reports of a significant number of [Tory backbenchers who oppose some of the](#)

[Bill's provisions](#) – enough to overturn the government's majority if opposition parties are united. However, the government is [trying to bring them back on side](#). The Speech confirmed that they would go ahead with changes to the system through which developers contribute to the cost of mitigating the impacts of their schemes; speed up various aspects of plan-making and decision-taking; “digitize” the planning system and make it more visual to enhance public engagement; “simplify and enhance” environmental assessments; and introduce biodiversity net gain requirements. The government's response to the Planning White Paper consultation, providing a bit more clarity about the changes ahead, is expected in June.

- Analysis from the local government association suggests that there are [1.1 million homes with planning permission that have not yet been built](#) out. They are calling on the government to legislate in the forthcoming planning bill for councils to be given powers to incentivise developers to build housing more quickly, arguing that this shows that the planning system is not a barrier to housebuilding, but rather it is the system of housing delivery.
- Flood Re and the TCPA have called on the government to use the Planning Bill to [ensure that new homes are not built in flood risk areas](#), and that communities have a legal right to feed in (often ignored) local knowledge on flood risk to planning decisions.
- Analysis by CPRE shows that over [400,000 houses will be built on greenfield sites](#) in the south of England over the next 5 years, while brownfield sites in the north may be 'left to rot'. [MHCLG](#) have claimed this is 'misleading', and that the nationally-imposed targets that the Planning White Paper insisted would be binding, would, ahem, not be binding.
- The housing minister has announced that councils and applicants [will have to apply policy on First Homes](#), a new form of affordable housing for first-time buyers, from the end of June.
- 14 councils have been chosen to [pilot the new National Model Design Code](#), including Sefton and Hyndburn in the North West. First Homes will have to make up 25% of affordable homes provided through S106 for each housing scheme, which commentators fear will squeeze out other forms of affordable housing and over time reduce the stock of affordable housing.

Transport

- The government has announced [£317 million to be invested in Transpennine rail upgrades](#) 27 billion road programme, to improve punctuality and reliability of trains between Manchester, Leeds, and York. That's good, but is just over 1% of the [planned £27 billion road-building programme](#)
- ...Although there are welcome [rumours that the road-building programme may be scaled back](#) due to changing travel patterns. [Transport Action Network](#) are still awaiting a court date so that they can present their [challenge to the legality of the programme](#) on climate grounds.
- North West regional leaders have welcomed the government's decision to part-nationalise the railway network, but are [calling for greater devolution of control to Northern leaders](#), such as through Transport for the North.
- Transport for the North has set out the ['essential' role transport has in levelling up](#) the north of England and building a green recovery from Covid-19 in its 2021/22 Business Plan. They claim to have put together a plan for strategic investment in transport that seeks to support sustainable and inclusive growth to aid recovery from the pandemic. It sets out the importance of decarbonising transport and making sure it is accessible; supporting the freight and logistics sector; and delivering an adaptable and resilient network.

- Zero-emission zones, in which polluting vehicles are banned or charged, can [help cities cut road transport emissions by more than half](#), a new World Economic Forum (WEF) publication claims. It outlines a three-step framework through which cities can implement ZES – ‘laying the foundation’, ‘defining a winning concept’ and ‘quantifying the model’.
- Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham, has appointed former Cycling and Walking Commissioner, Chris Boardman, in an expanded role as [Greater Manchester’s first Transport Commissioner](#). Boardman has been tasked with helping to accelerate the delivery of the Bee Network – a fully integrated transport system, including the roll-out of the UK’s largest cycling and walking network. The appointment reflects the importance of establishing an [integrated, affordable and accessible transport system](#) for the city-region
- The Queen’s Speech included a Bill to allow the [HS2 link from Crewe to Manchester](#) to be built – but made no mention of the Eastern leg to Leeds.

Nature & biodiversity

- The Environment Secretary has set out the government’s [commitment to halt species decline and nature loss by 2030](#) through a new target in the Environment Bill, and has pledged to treble tree planting this parliament. This is a major step forwards and a victory for the [State of Nature](#) campaign. Much more work is needed to ensure that the target meets the needs of nature and is effectively implemented. And there are a raft of other areas in the Environment Bill where [ambition needs to be lifted and bolder action taken](#). But this is definitely something to celebrate!
- In the same speech, he announced that the Government had published its vision for the ‘treescape’ it wants to see in England by 2050 – with at least 12% woodland cover - in a new national [Trees Action Plan](#). At the same time, he announced the publication of a national [Peat Action Plan](#) to set out their long-term vision for the management, protection and restoration of England’s peatlands. Both are headed up with new targets: to restore 35,000 hectares of peatland by 2035, and to treble tree planting rates in England to 7,000ha each year by 2024. In context, 35,000 hectares constitutes 5% of peatland in England, and 7,000ha per year of tree planting translates to England delivering 23% of UK tree planting targets, despite representing 53% of UK land mass. Still, both figures would mark a considerable improvement on the current situation and are very much to be welcomed. There are also tangible measures in both Action Plans that will help ensure that these targets will be met, and wider habitat recovery achieved.
- The government is giving conservation watchdog [Natural England a 47 per cent funding increase](#) after a “decade of deep cuts” left the agency at “crisis point”, and also making it a statutory consultee on its “Project Speed” to accelerate infrastructure projects.
- The [Animal Welfare \(Sentience\) Bill](#) was introduced to the House of Lords on 13 May, seeking to place recognition that animals have feelings in UK law, to replace the animal sentience recognition that applied when the UK was a member of the EU. This is the third attempt to legislate for sentience post 2016, with previous attempts having foundered in the face of fierce disputes about how far the Government should go in creating new legal duties on animal welfare.

Publications

Nature-based solutions

The British Ecological Society has produced a landmark report on [nature-based solutions for climate change](#). It provides examples of opportunities for nature-based solutions across a range of habitats, as well as discussion of some of the complexities involved in planning for nature-

based solutions. The report also outlines a detailed analysis of the tools, financial mechanisms and policies required for effective delivery in a UK context. Meanwhile a new report from Natural England reviews the scientific evidence base relating to [carbon storage and sequestration by semi-natural habitats](#), in relation to their condition and/or management; it covers terrestrial, coastal and marine habitats, and the freshwater systems that connect them, in order to quantify their relative benefits for carbon management.

Power Shift

UK100's new report, [Power Shift](#), is the most comprehensive examination of the powers local authorities have and need to deliver on climate ever undertaken. It draws on previous expert reports, including those produced for government, combined with a series of interviews with local authorities and other stakeholder organisations. It sets out the barriers and opportunities facing local authorities, and recommendations for national to enable local government to lead a green revolution.

Green taxes

The share of UK tax revenue directly raised from supporting businesses and individuals to reduce their environmental footprint was just 6% in 2020, new analysis has revealed, as the [Treasury faces mounting pressure to align with net-zero](#). Produced by multinational professional services and law firm Pinsent Masons, the analysis reveals that £41bn was collected in so-called 'green taxes' during the last financial year. Taxes covered include those designed to penalise high-carbon behaviours, like Air Passenger Duty, and those designed to deter damage to nature, such as the Landfill Tax. Aside from the overall quantitative data, the Pinsent Masons analysis points to several recent tax choices that have attracted criticism across the green economy.

Events

Natural capital for people and place

Join this [free webinar](#) to explore how Natural England's new [Natural Capital Evidence Handbook](#) can support you in place-based planning and decision-making. Tricia Rice and Alice Lord from Natural England will introduce you to the Handbook. They will explain how you can use it to apply natural capital evidence throughout strategic decision-making to help recover nature for people and wildlife in your place. June 24th, 1pm.

Ecological Connectivity Conservation

This IUCN National Committee UK webinar brings together international, national and local expertise in [ecological connectivity conservation](#), and makes links with business interests in this field. This webinar on June 1st, 4pm, introduces the IUCN Guidelines for conserving connectivity through ecological networks and corridors and examines how these guidelines might help in stimulating and delivering outcomes from the Lawton Report, England's 25-year plan and nature networks. It also hopes to better understand the practical application of such principles in practice and how they can be applied in the corporate sector.

Greater Manchester Natural Capital Group Conference 2021

The Greater Manchester Natural Capital Group, the Natural Course and IGNITION projects, and the University of Salford are bringing together leading natural environment practitioners to discuss the challenge of [increasing nature-based solutions in Greater Manchester](#). Various sessions including keynote speakers (including Andy Burnham and Marian Spain, CEO of

Natural England), panel discussions and workshops will be held over 17th & 18th June: pick and choose the sessions you want to attend.

Collaboration for urban greening

Collaboration between different organisations and community engagement are essential to create and maintain urban green spaces and urban trees for the benefit of citizens and natural environment. [This seminar](#) will feature examples from local authority, charity, and academic stakeholders working in Sheffield and Newcastle.

Cumbria CVS: social enterprises

Friday 4 June 2021, 10.30 to 12.00. Is your organisation or community group [a social enterprise or thinking of becoming one](#)? Cumbria CVS provide an opportunity to learn more from three specialists. There are some amazing social enterprises in Cumbria providing diverse and vital services and some newly emerging community groups considering different social enterprise structures to find the best fit for their work and future fundraising. Each expert will provide a presentation about the support and services available with lots of time for Q&As.

Resources

Environmental Net Gain

This briefing paper by the Chartered Institute of Ecology & Environmental Management provides a practical definition of [Environmental Net Gain](#), outlines the legislative, policy and strategic context within which it can be delivered, and explains how it might be applied. It sets out how Environmental Net Gain can be achieved within built development schemes, in wider land management and when formulating strategies for land and landscape. It proposes that by taking a holistic approach, significant gains in environmental benefits can be achieved.

Place-Based Carbon Calculator

The Centre for Research into Energy Demand Solutions (CREDS) will [launch a new place-based carbon calculator \(PBCC\) tool on 29th June](#), 11.00-12.00. The launch event is for local authorities, communities, and all those interested in place-based decarbonisation. The PBCC is a free tool that shows the carbon footprint of every neighbourhood in England. The map allows you to zoom into any street and see a detailed breakdown of the carbon footprint, uptake of low carbon technologies, and much more. The purpose of the tool is to provide a resource for local government and community organisations to help them address their carbon reduction goals.

Engineering With Nature: An Atlas, Volume 2

This downloadable resource showcases [‘Engineering With Nature’ principles and practices](#) in action through illustrations and descriptions of 62 projects from around the world, including many from the UK.

Biodiversity in new housing developments: creating wildlife-friendly communities

[New guidance](#) published by the National House Building Council Foundation in partnership with the RSPB and Barratt Developments, sets out how the housebuilding industry can incorporate green infrastructure into new-build homes as well as enhance biodiversity within developments to deliver public health benefits. Biodiversity should be considered at the earliest stages of planning for residential development in order to encourage wildlife to live there and help to reverse habitat decline.

Heritage counts

Historic England's annual [Heritage Counts Report](#) has been published and provides useful evidence on how carbon emissions can be reduced in pre-1919 homes, highlighting the difference repair and maintenance can make, the power of small behaviour changes, and the need for careful planning when thinking about retrofits and renovations.

Electric vehicles

Decarbon8 recently launched [a series of videos](#) about electric vehicles and the role they can (and cannot) play in decarbonising transport. How can electric vehicles help us decarbonise transport? What are their limitations? Where can EVs help and where are they part of the problem? Who wins and loses when our decarbonisation plans leave car dependency in place? Can EVs alone deliver the scale and pace of decarbonisation required?

Northern Development database

Transport for the North have launched a database and visual dashboard that shows [future housing developments and non-residential sites planned for construction in the North](#). This information is now available for use on various housing and transport infrastructure projects by TfN and other public sector organisations, such as Highways England, Department for Transport, and Homes England. Full access to the platform is currently only open to "Local Partners". The plan is to make it accessible to the public once the appropriate sharing permissions are agreed with Partners and the information is sufficiently standardised.

Collect Donations for free through your website

Just Giving has [launched a free service](#) to help charities collect donations from their own websites, as well as via social media and email. Giving Checkout offers charities the chance to add a donation service to their own sites and fundraising through adding a web link or 'Donate' button. Charities accessing the service can also download a QR code to add to direct mail, fundraising packs as well as collection buckets for contactless donations. The online fundraising platform says the service is free for charities to use with no fees.

Mersey Green Map

The [Mersey Green Map](#) attempts to document and map green enterprises in the Liverpool City Region. It is free to use and access. It is an online resource which aims to highlight and link those organisations which promote sustainability and social justice (fair wages, shared decision making). If you live in the Liverpool City Region and want to be involved contact: merseygreenmap@gmail.com.

Consultations

Environmental Principles

There are still a few days left to submit a response to the draft '[policy statement on environmental principles](#)': the [consultation runs until 2 June](#). The statement expands on the five principles in the Environment Bill: integration, prevention, rectification at source, polluter pays, and precautionary, and sets out how these principles should be interpreted and applied. It will apply when any government policy is being decided. Getting this right will be crucial, but [environmental groups are critical of the proposals](#), not least the fact that some ministries, notably the Treasury and the Ministry of Defence, are exempt from the commitments.

Deposit return scheme & Extended Producer Responsibility

There are also a few days (until 4 June) left to respond to Defra's consultations on [a deposit return scheme](#) to increase the recycling of single-use drinks containers, including bottles and cans, and a coalition of environmental NGOs have put together a tool to [help you respond quickly and easily](#) to this consultation. The consultation on plans for manufacturers to pay the full costs of handling their packaging, through the [Extended Producer Responsibility system](#) has the same deadline. With approximately 11.7 million tonnes of packaging placed onto the UK market in 2019, the Government is also proposing higher levies for materials deemed harder to recycle or reuse.

Funding

People's Postcode Lottery

From June 1st, the [People's Postcode Lottery](#) will be introducing a new funding model. They will be opening a new round of applications every month, and will be focusing on supporting charities and good causes in the north of England.

Vacancy

Chair, CPRE North West Regional Group

Volunteering with CPRE is a great way to champion rural communities and landscapes, campaigning for sustainable development and on other environmental issues such as the climate emergency, renewable energy and biodiversity. The [role of a Regional Chair](#) is to convene regular regional group meetings of representatives from local CPREs and to support and/or lead regional activities. As Regional Chair you'll play a vital role in promoting the sharing of local and regional information, ideas, experiences and best practice to support local CPREs, and co-ordinating or supporting joint campaigning and advocacy.

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