



Monthly Digest

May 16th, 2024

News, Events, Updates



Image by Freepik

Hub & Steering Group News

Next NGH Community Event – July 20th

We're planning to do something slightly different at the next NGH Community Event – and we need your help!

We'd like to use the morning to showcase some of the fantastic projects and activities that NGH members are involved in. It'll be a chance to listen, learn and connect with others – and perhaps be inspired to do something similar.

We're inviting members to talk about their project for a maximum of 5 minutes plus 5 minutes for questions. No PowerPoint slides – but if you have photos or videos you'd like to use, that's fine.

So don't be shy – everyone is invited to take part and we hope this will be a great opportunity to share and learn from each other.

If you have a project or activity you'd like to share with the group, **please book your slot by emailing Northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com by Wednesday June 12th** with a title for your 10 minute slot.

Many thanks
The NGH Steering Group

DIARY DATES!

The next in person NGH Community events are on

- Saturday 20th July – St James Centre, Potterygate, Alnwick 9.30 – 1.00pm
- Saturday October 19th - St James Centre, Potterygate, Alnwick 9.30 – 1.00pm

Membership

The Hub now has 75 members.

Directory of Useful Contacts

The Directory of [Useful Contacts for NGH Members](#) is steadily growing. It contains details of local charities, NGOs, funding bodies, NCC Contacts, local environmental and organisations, etc. We've realised that Google Drive is not as accessible as we'd like, so we will shortly be moving the Directory to our new website to make it easier to access.



Climate Conversation Card Game & Other Resources

Discovered by Anne -Marie Soulsby of Climate Action Wansbeck, this set of FREE climate conversation cards in pdf format, is a powerful resource for a climate cafe or similar discussion meeting with adults or young people.

The Climate Conversation Game was developed by a community in the US who realised that Conversations about climate change can be scary and intimidating.

They developed a card game to facilitate conversations between people through shared empathy and experiences. [You can download the Cards and Game instructions here.](#)

Net Zero Nation – Climate Conversation Pack

Closer to home – Net Zero Nation in Scotland believe that '**Words can Change the World.**'. They have developed a comprehensive Climate Conversation Pack which you can [download for FREE from their website.](#) It includes how to start a Conversation, Other Ways to Get Involved and host of other Resources.



What Has Nature Ever Done for Us

Hilarious and quite brilliant advert for Spring Toadwatch 2024.

Click to view and pass it on! <https://youtu.be/PhIMWK7GysA?feature=shared>



Biodiversity & Wildlife SIG - UPDATE

We have recently started to collate information about projects being undertaken by community groups and individual members so that we can make it easier to share information and learn from each other. The spreadsheet containing details of projects can be updated by members and is available in the [Members Resources Area on the Google Drive.](#)

You can also send details of projects to Northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com and we can add them for you. We're hoping to build this up and perhaps use it for other types of projects, so do let us know what information it would be helpful to include.

Tell Us What You Think

NGH is here to support our members – whether you've joined as part of a community group or as an individual. We'd love to get your feedback on how NGH is developing – whether that's about the new website (www.nghononline.co.uk), the Special Interest Groups, the amount of communication from the Steering Group – or ideas for future events. Whatever it is, we'd love to hear from you on northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com.

Upcoming Dates



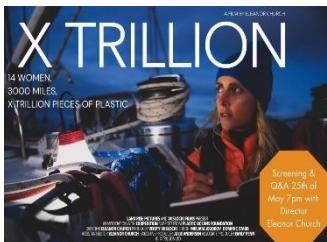
Restore Nature Now – Saturday June 22nd, 12 noon in central London

This legal, peaceful, inclusive, and family-friendly demonstration aims to be the biggest gathering of people for nature and climate that the UK has ever seen.

"The natural world is in trouble, and we need to take action. We want to see UK politicians show strong domestic and global nature and climate leadership by:

1. Giving a pay-rise for nature
2. Making polluters pay
3. Delivering more space for nature
4. Putting a right to a healthy environment in law
5. Ensuring fair and effective climate action

You can pledge to march via this link. <https://www.restorenaturenow.com/>



X Trillion – A Film about Plastic Pollution – Alnwick Playhouse Sat 25 May at 7.00pm

X Trillion follows the gruelling journey of eXXpedition's all-women crew led by Emily Penn as they sail 3,000 miles across the North Pacific Ocean through the densest accumulation of ocean plastic on the planet to make the unseen, seen.

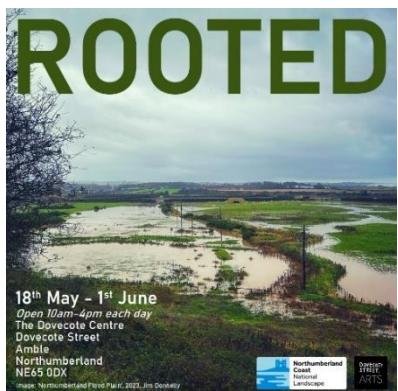
The 14-strong international crew of scientists, sailors, designers, engineers, and teachers set sail on a transformative month-long voyage. They leave families and land behind, coming together, battling high seas, storms and sea sickness, to carry out cutting edge microplastics research and investigate the crisis of plastic pollution in one of the most remote places on Earth.

In a practical and emotional response to one of the biggest global challenges of our time, this is a story of hope, filled with life, magic and a call to action that burns with optimism.

Followed by a Q and A with the Director, chaired by Alistair Anderson of What a Wonderful World

Watch the Trailer - <https://www.xtrillionfilm.com/trailer>

BOOK TICKETS - <https://alnwickplayhouse.co.uk/event/x-trillion/>



Rooted Climate Art Exhibition - Dovecote Centre, Amble 18th May-1st June

Rooted is a new exhibition of work from 18 different artists centred around their relationship to the landscape and environment. Taking the context of the climate crisis as a central thematic point, Rooted seeks to explore the ways in which these artists engage with, and use the landscape in their work.

With the support of the Northumberland Coast National Landscape the Dovecote Centre is offering several other opportunities with the exhibition. These include **free-to-attend workshops** during the Amble Puffin Festival, **workshops with local art groups, evening panel discussion involving artists from the exhibition.** The writer-in-residence for the project is local poet Ali Rowland.

PADDLE-OUT PROTEST

OUR SEAS AND RIVERS ARE UNDER THREAT,
JOIN OUR PADDLE-OUT PROTEST AND TAKE A
STAND AGAINST THE SEWAGE POLLUTION.

2024 IS THE YEAR FOR CHANGE.



PADDLE OUT OR STAY ON THE SHORE,
BRING YOUR PLACARDS AND LET
NORTHUMBERLAND WATER KNOW.

18.05.24

12PM - 2PM

**TYNEMOUTH LONGSANDS
SOUTH END RAMP**

CONTACT SALLY 07739084928

W3W - CAKES.OFFICE.PAID

GREEN FINANCE: HOW TO STOP BIG OIL

HOW WE CAN STOP BANKS, INSURANCE AND PENSIONS FUNDING
CLIMATE CHAOS – AND WHAT WE CAN DO TO HELP

SPEAKER: JOHN ADAMS, RETIRED CITY OF LONDON FINANCE WORKER

(QUALIFIED IN GREEN SUSTAINABLE FINANCE STUDIES)

TUESDAY 21 MAY 7 - 8.30PM

NEWCASTLE ARTS CENTRE, WESTGATE RD, NE1 1SG

(ENTER STUDIO BLOCK VIA RHS COURTYARD)

ALL WELCOME – ANY QUERIES, EMAIL DIVEST.TW@ASSEMBLY.ORG.UK

OR CHECK OUR FACEBOOK PAGE EVENT



THE GREAT BIG GREEN WEEK

8th – 16th June 2024

Get involved: Whether you take part with your school, your family, your community, your place of worship or your business – there are so many ways to get involved in the Great Big Green Week!

FIND Out More Here: <https://greatbiggreenweek.com/>

What a Wonderful World Festival Events 2024

What a WONDERFUL WORLD

'My Northumberland' Photography Exhibition

3 June - 4 July

FREE

Alnwick Playhouse Gallery & Bar

5 & 17 JUNE | 10.00-1.00

Creative use of Natural Materials workshops with Anna Corbett (CHARGES APPLY*)

28 JUNE | 11.00 - 12.00 | FREE

Sounds of the Earth dance workshop with Virginia Kennedy

Festival Weekend - Thursday 27 June to Sunday 30 June

THURSDAY 27 JUNE

A Flight of Poets

7.00 Rothbury Golf Club £5.00

With Jane Burn, winner of the Michael Marks Environmental Poet of the Year 23-24, Catherine Ayres, Peter Edge, Paul Mein. With music from Lindisfarne's Rod Clements.

The Air We Breathe

7.00 Alnwick Playhouse Auditorium £6.00 /£3.00

Local young people present two newly-created pieces interweaving music, dance and drama, examining the importance of clean air for future health and prosperity.

The Science Around Us

11.00 Playhouse Auditorium £6.00 /£3.00

Students from Alnwick's DCHS present a specially-created science show.

Change in the Air?

1.30 TO 4.10 Playhouse Auditorium ONE TICKET FOR THREE TALKS £6.00 /£3.00

CHAIR: TOM BURSTON

Dirty air - why should we care?

1.30 - 2.10 Dr. Laura Keast How dirty air affects our health? How does it relate to climate change?

Wind energy – and why what you know may be wrong

2.30 - 3.30 Prof. Alasdair McDonald, Edinburgh University What is the future of wind energy? He can't wait to answer your questions!

Kathryn Tickell 'My Northumberland'

7.30 Playhouse Auditorium £18.00 /£6.00

Kathryn and Amy Thatcher in a special concert that expresses her love of the Northumberland landscape, people and wildlife

FRIDAY 28 JUNE

The Air We Breathe

7.00 Alnwick Playhouse Auditorium £6.00 /£3.00

Another group of young people perform this special new piece (as Thursday).

SUNDAY 30 JUNE

Sing for the Planet

10.30 TO 4.30 Playhouse Studio & Auditorium WORKSHOP AND CONCERT £10.00

An inspiring day of singing led by Janet Wheeler, renowned choir leader and composer, with the opportunity to take part in a world premier alongside award-winning choir, Voices of Hope.

SATURDAY 29 JUNE

A Flight of Poets

10.30 TO 12.00 Hauxley Wildlife Discovery Centre NE65 0JR FREE but entry by ticket

With Paul Mein, Hauxley Poet-in-Residence, Catherine Ayres, Peter Edge and Mike Pratt CEO Northumberland Wildlife Trust.

The Owl's Gaze

10.30 Playhouse Studio FREE

Storyteller Malcolm Green takes us on a quest from science to story. ADULTS AND CHILDREN OVER 7

Six Inches of Soil

2.00 Playhouse Studio £6.00 /£3.00

Film - British farmers transforming the way they produce food

Voices of Hope

5.30 TO 6.30 Playhouse Auditorium £6.00 /£3.00

Sainsbury's Choir of the Year (2016) in concert

Music Stage

1.30 TO 4.00 Alnwick Garden** FREE

Lively mix of music and song.

** Usual Garden entrance fee applies - concert free

5

Change in the Air? Alnwick Playhouse Auditorium Saturday 29 June 1.30pm to 4.10pm

The air reflects our changing climate in so many ways: in the quality of the air we breathe, in the development of wind power as a vital green technology, and in the way birdlife responds to the changes. Come to listen and discuss with three expert speakers, pick up information and leave with hopeful messages and positive steps you can take.

ONE TICKET FOR ALL THREE TALKS



DR LAURA KEAST

1.30 to 2.10pm - Dr Laura Keast who led a study to investigate **Air Quality** outside Newcastle schools. She believes the problem of dirty air is fixable with simple ideas like turning off our engines when idling, reducing carbon and other noxious gases that pour out of internal combustion engines into our streets, our homes, and our lungs.



ALASDAIR McDONALD

2.30 - 3.10pm - Wind Energy - Why What you Know May be Wrong. This is the theme of our second speaker **Professor Alasdair McDonald**, Chair in Renewable Energy Technology, Edinburgh University.



BETH CHAMBERLAIN

3.30 - 4.10pm - All the Birds of the Air. **Beth Chamberlain, RSPB Senior Policy Adviser for Climate Change Adaptation** talks about how wildlife has to respond to climate change.

TICKETS : £6.00 Adults / £3.00 for 18s and under

One ticket for all 3 talks

<https://alnwickplayhouse.co.uk/event/air-pressure-3-lectures/>

Sing for the Planet – Alnwick Playhouse Sunday 30 June Workshop :10.00am- 4.30pm Concert with Voices of Hope: 5.30pm



Raising Our Voices Together This is a one-day workshop on Sunday 30 June 10.00 - 4.30 for people over 18 who love to sing and care about the environment.

An inspiring day of singing led by Janet Wheeler renowned choir leader and composer with the opportunity to take part in a world premier alongside award winning choir Voices of Hope. An award-winning composer, Janet writes mainly for voices. Janet has written a new song to be sung by workshop participants with the award-winning choir **Voices of Hope** at a grand finale concert at 5.30pm.

BOOK TICKETS

<https://alnwickplayhouse.co.uk/event/sing-for-the-planet-workshop/>

What a
WONDERFUL
WORLD

'My Northumberland'
Photography Exhibition
3 June - 4 July Alnwick Playhouse

ENTER NOW!

What is your favourite place in Northumberland?
How do we ensure its future?
You are invited to submit your images and words
to What A Wonderful World for inclusion in the
'My Northumberland' Exhibition and 2025 Calendar.

Full details at: <https://whataww.org>

Photography Exhibition - Alnwick Playhouse Gallery

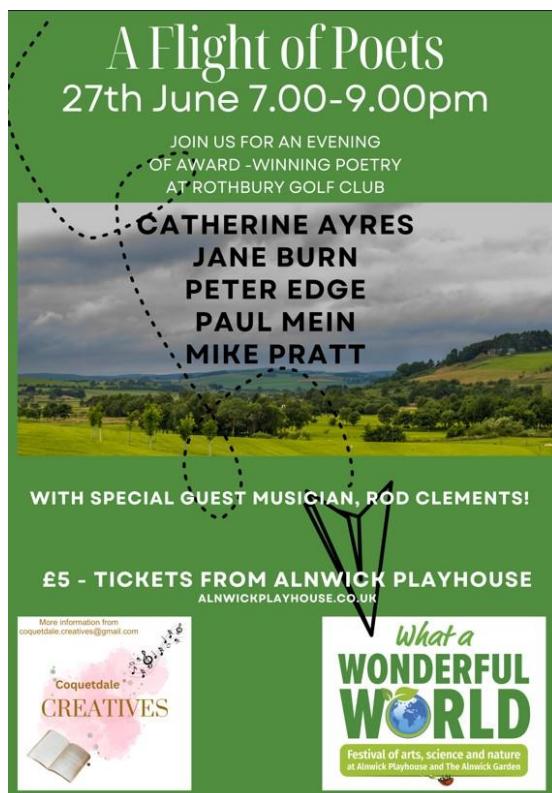
3rd June – 4th July 2024

Festival organisers are delighted that over 100 entries have poured in for the Photography. Exhibition on the theme 'My Northumberland'. The FREE exhibition takes place throughout June at the Alnwick Playhouse Gallery.

Prizes will be awarded for the best photos by young people under 18.

Information about the Festival is available at www.whataww.org.

Tickets for all events from www.alnwickplayhouse.co.uk



The Missing Lynx Project – Consultation Dates at The Sill

The organisers of the Missing Lynx Project have a number of events coming up in the west. They are trying to engage especially with people from West Northumberland who, if the project went ahead, would be impacted the most.

The Project Organisers are hosting roadshows and consultation events at The Sill in the Northumberland National Park throughout May.

If you would like to go along and learn more, all the events are advertised on Eventbrite and can be booked through this link. <https://www.eventbrite.com/o/the-missing-lynx-project-79417960293>

Environmental Dates for Your Diary

No Mow May – 1st May – 31st May 2024

Plant life's annual campaign, No Mow May is a simple one to take part in. Just don't cut your grass for the month of May. The aim is to provide a space for nature to do their thing. According to their website 'We've lost nearly 97% of flower rich meadows since the 1970's and with them gone are vital food needed by pollinators, like bees and butterflies '

World Bee Day – 20th May 2024

Bees are the hardest working creatures on our planet, as they play a critical role in pollinating our food.

World Environment Day – June 5th 2024

This world day is held on the same day every year, which is dedicated to our environment. This United Nations Environment Programme has the main aim of focussing on the only home we all share and how we need to look after it for the next generations to come.

The Great Big Green Week – 8th June 2024 – 16th June 2024

This is one of the UK's largest celebrations of actions taking by local communities to tackle climate change and to protect nature. This can involve anything from litter picking to writing to your MP. See their [website](#) to find out how you can plan an event in your area and get your community involved.

World Oceans Day – 8th June 2024

For a healthy planet, a healthy ocean is vital for all life on this planet. As a global event, this year's theme is '**Catalysing Action for Our Ocean & Climate**' aimed at campaigning and encouraging our leaders to make the decisions needed to preserve our oceans and make climate action and global warming an urgent priority.

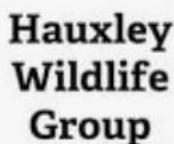
National Clean Air Day – 15th June 2024

According to their website 'Every year, air pollution causes up to 36,000 deaths in the UK.' We all have the right to access clean air as pollution causes so many health problems, especially in children. Their [website](#) has a wealth of resources where you can get involved in this important day.

World Refill Day – 16th June 2024

Held annually on the same day, World Refill Day encourages us to ditch our single-use plastic bottles and use refillable bottles where we're out and about. There is an [app](#) to find out where your local refilling station is.

Wildlife Talks



The Hauxley Wildlife Group (run by Northumberland Wildlife Trust) has a series of talks that are open to both members and non-members. They include:

Poet in Residence – May 15th

Water voles in Northumberland – June 19th

Ospreys at Kielder – July 17th

Wildlife in our Seas – August 21st

All talks are at 7pm at the Hauxley Visitor Centre. They are FREE to Members, suggested Donation for non-members £3 (including tea / coffee).

It's well worth looking at the [NWT site for details of other groups and local events.](#)

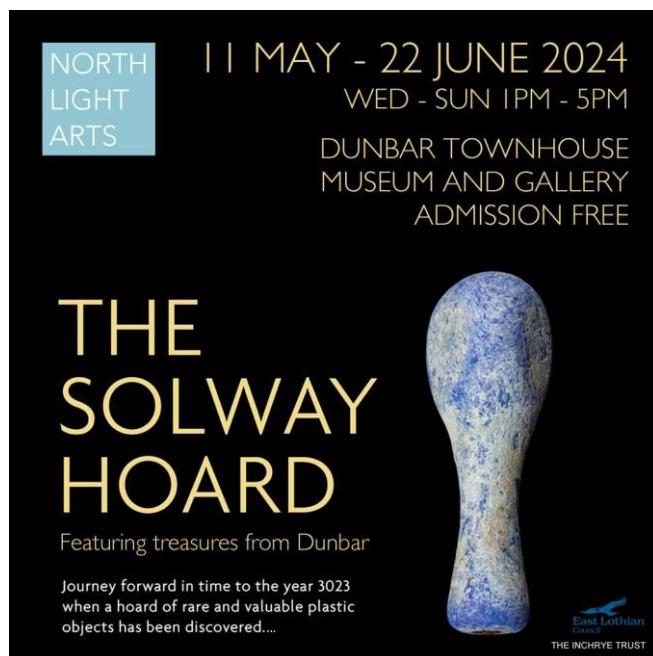


Join the Fight for Healthy Freshwater in the UK

Our rivers and freshwater habitats are at crisis point and we need urgent action. This year [Earthwatch](#) have launched the [Great UK WaterBlitz](#) to help build a national picture of water quality across the UK. With this data we can fight for real change.

Over the weekend of 7-10 June, we're asking people across the UK to go out and measure the water quality of their local rivers. With this data we can build a snapshot of the health of our rivers throughout the country. **We need good data so that we can take action to restore our rivers and freshwater systems.**

To take part, simply sign up using our online form and we'll send you everything you need to easily measure your local water quality. [Click Here to Sign Up](#)





British Food Fortnight is coming to Warkworth.

Please save the date: **20 September - 6 October 2024**. British Food Fortnight is a national celebration of the diverse and delicious food that Britain produces. Always popular with communities and organisations across the country, making plans to take part. It will be a fortnight of events celebrating local food growers and producers.

More details to follow nearer the time.

Repair Cafes

1. **Greener Berwick Zero Waste Group Repair Café – Saturday 25th May 2024 in the Salvation Army Hall, Church Street, Berwick. 10.00-1.00pm.** Darning, sewing repairs, toys, phone software, computer software, blade sharpening, general repairs. The repair café runs on the last Saturday of every month, same venue, and same time. Repairs are free but donations very welcome. Tea, coffee and cake provided by Northern Soul Kitchen (Zero Waste)

If you've got a skill and want to experience the thrill of community repairing, please get in touch. The more, the merrier. We're always looking for volunteers. And you don't have to be a professional. All skills welcome. We're especially looking for clock and watch repairers.

Brought to you by Greener Berwick and kindly supported by Berwick-upon-Tweed Town Council and NCC Climate Fund. For information contact info@greenerberwick.org.uk and put FAO Repair Cafe Team in the Subject heading.

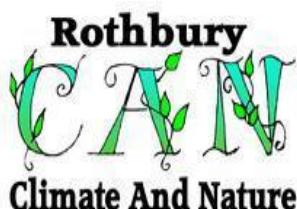
2. **Coquetdale Repair Café – Sat June 8th, 2024, in the Jubilee Hall Rothbury 10.00-2.00pm**

Combine fun & learning with reducing waste. Have your broken items repaired or learn to repair them yourself with the help of friendly volunteers. Tea and cakes available!

<https://www.coquettrepair.co.uk/>

3. **Felton Repair Café – June 15th, 2024, at Gallery Forty5, Felton 11am – 3.00pm** Bring along your sewing, clothes, bicycles, knives, and tools for sharpening – and if you need help with that tricky bit of IT – bring that along too. Join the Repair Revolution! [Find us on Facebook](#).

News from Around the County



FREE or LOW-COST Events

We now have a [Calendar of Events](#) on our website. Many of these activities are free, and you are very welcome to take part. Here are a few examples of upcoming events:

May 16th, Pollinators! A Nature Talk and Walk with Mark Welfare - Booking essential



May 19th - Pastel Drawing of Flowers. Art Session suitable for all abilities, led by Pam Stevenson. Pam will provide all the materials and expertise for you to make a beautiful pastel picture of flowers.

To BOOK your place by email rothburycan@gmail.com.

You will need to book for these events, by emailing rothburycan@gmail.com.
Katie Scott: Co-ordinator, Rothbury CAN



Druridge Bay Rewilding Sites on BBC One Countryfile

Northumberland Wildlife Trust is delighted that two of its Druridge Bay sites are set to feature on **BBC One's Countryfile** programme on **Sunday 19th May**.

Earlier this month, presenter Joe Crowley interviewed Lee Rankin, the Trust's West Chevington project officer at West Chevington - a former opencast mining site. During the interview, Lee talked about his work to develop the site as an area for rewilding, in partnership with local farmers and landowners.

The Druridge Bay site has the largest reedbeds in [Northumberland](#) with specialist species, such as moths, bearded tit and marsh harrier breeding there, and the return of marsh harriers to the site in 2008 after an absence as a breeding bird in Northumberland since the 1850's.

[Find out more about the plans to rewild West Chevington here](#)



Farmers in the NE Capture Carbon Using Volcanic Fertiliser

A by-product from quarries is being given to farmers in the northeast in the hope of improving yields - at the same time as capturing carbon.

Volcanic basalt rock is being ground up and given to farmers free of charge to encourage take up of the product. Many parts of the UK are rich in volcanic rock which when in powdered form takes up carbon from the air by a process known as enhanced weathering.

While it's still operating as a trial, the company involved ([UNDO](#)) is hopeful that it can be scaled up across the UK.

[Visit the BBC Tyne & Wear website for more information](#)



Northumberland Farmer Network

Following a successful bid to the National Lottery, a [Northumberland Farmer Network](#) has been created to support Northumberland farmers and their businesses, with Helen Bullock, who has a farming background, as Northumberland Farm Network project manager.

Helen is aware of the difficulties farmers face, and she joins Northumberland Farm Co-ordinator Rachael Graham. Helen said: "*We will be seeking to emulate what has been successful in Cumbria and Yorkshire Dales but also to ensure that Northumberland Farmers specific needs are met. At this moment in time, we are asking farmers to join our contact list, so that we can keep them up to date and send our weekly Northumberland Farmers E News every Friday.*"

The Network is looking for county farmers to join a Northumberland Farmer Management Council, which will be set up to ensure that network members are properly represented and will work with the team to develop a range of services and support measures prior to the official Network launch later this year.

To keep up to date with the [Northumberland Farmer Network](#), contact Head Office directly on **01768 868615**, or email admin@thefarmernetwork.co.uk

Helen can be contacted on **07715 171741**. Rachael can be contacted on **07818 072594**.



Tiny Forests in the North East

Two "tiny forests" have been planted to provide woodland for communities and wildlife to enjoy. The forests are in Bensham and Birtley in Gateshead, Tyne and Wear, and are each about the size of a tennis court. They have been created by planting trees closely together to encourage rapid growth.

John McElroy, from Gateshead Council, said the scheme would bring "environmental and social benefits" to the communities.

The tiny forests are based on [the Miyawaki method](#), a way of planting which uses species of trees that would occur naturally in an area to create a diverse, multi-layered forest.

The scheme has been delivered by [Earthwatch Europe](#) on behalf of the [North East Community Forest](#), in partnership with Gateshead Council. It is supported [by Living Woods](#).

Gateshead Council has now partnered with the [Royal Forestry Society](#) to provide support for schools that would like to plant trees on their grounds. The council said it could support schools planting trees for shade, planting a hedge to reduce noise and air pollution, or creating their own forest area.

[Visit the BBC Tyne & Wear for more on this project](#)

Women's Workshop, Amble



Women's Workshop

Women's Workshop Job Opportunities

We are excited to have **three** job vacancies at the Women's Workshop:

- **Practical & Emotional Support Manager** – 24 hrs pro rata of £30,507 pa
- **Outreach Worker** – 12 hrs pro rata of £24,000 pa
- **Administrator** – 16 hrs pro rata of £24,000 pa

Full details and how to apply are [here on our website](#). Please pass it on. The Deadline for Applications is Mon 20th May.

Mondays @Women's Workshops

10.30am - 12.30pm Women's Workshop @Amble

A weekly group for women living in or near Amble, taking place at the Women's Workshop on Coquet Enterprise Park. 'Wonderful Women' sessions with Sally Roach, 'weaving self-care with earth-care as we move through and honour the seasons.' Mindful and gentle movement activities. You're welcome to just turn up and see what it has to offer.

1.00pm- 3.00pm Drop-in to the Women's Workshop on Monday Afternoons

Pop along for a hot drink and friendly chat or find out more about the Women's Workshop activities.

Wednesdays at the Women's Workshops

1.00pm - 3.00pm Wednesday Gardening Activities & Weekly Gardening Group

Come along to the Women's Workshop and join in our weekly gardening group. A cup of tea/coffee/hot chocolate, biscuit and friendly chat is always available.

Contact angela@womensworkshop.net for more information, or just pop along on the day.



Climate Action Wansbeck (CAW) is based in the Morpeth, Ashington area. We came together as a group nearly two years ago and since then have organised an Eco Fair for Big Green Week, created a website, stalls in Ashington markets, field visits to nature reserves, and brought in expert speakers for our meetings.

Our current events are; establishing an orchard in Ashington with the support of Ashington Town Council, Northumberland CC and

Wansbeck Road Allotment Association deciding where the orchard will be based: planning an Arts based event in Morpeth for this year's Big Green Week in June which will include film, music and art-based activities.

Please check out our website climateactionwansbeck.org.uk where you can sign up for membership and our newsletters.

Campaigns & Surveys

**UK HOUSEHOLDS
ARE THROWING
AWAY AN
ESTIMATED*
1.7 BILLION
PIECES OF PLASTIC
A WEEK – THAT'S
90 BILLION
PIECES PER YEAR**



The Big Plastic Count – The Results Are In

Greenpeace have crunched the numbers from this year's Big Plastic Count and revealed the truly shocking results from over 220,000 supporters who took part. The Big Plastic Count shows the true scale of the plastic problem and that, despite overwhelming support for reduction, little progress has been made by supermarkets and big brands to curb production.

The message is clear: the UK is still producing too much plastic. Watch the video of the results here https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a_gzSDySh5s.

- The UK produces more plastic waste per person than almost any other nation – second only to the US.
- The most counted category was snack packaging (699,932 pieces), closely followed by fruit and vegetable packaging (697,085 pieces).
- Over half (58%) of the pieces are being incinerated – that's up from 46% from the count in 2022.
- Recycling will never be able to catch up with the volume of plastics being produced. Of the plastic surveyed, only 17% would get recycled domestically, 14% would be exported and 11% would end up in landfill.

It's time for governments and big brands to take action. The government must follow through with plastic reducing policies such as the Deposit Return and Extended Producer Responsibility schemes. Governments are working out a [Global Plastics Treaty](#) that could make that happen – but only if they do it right.

Ask Your MP to Pledge to Support the Plastics Treaty

Has your MP pledged to support a strong treaty that cuts plastic production? [Email them and make sure they do.](#)

Volunteers Wanted



Want to do something special?

Could you spare some time to help create and deliver our amazing yearly Festival in and around Alnwick?

What a Wonderful World is always looking for volunteers, and we can use all sorts of skills!

You like numbers – could you assist our Treasurer? Our finances are simple!

You enjoy liaising with creative people – could you get involved in co-ordinating publicity?

You like planning and organising things – we have lots of opportunities for you!

Just want to do an hour or two? Could you help distributing leaflets around the area or handing out audience questionnaires?

Got another skill you'd like to offer or develop? Just talk to us!

Please either give us your details today, email info@whatawww.com or call Chris on 07739 180599. We'd love to hear from you!

Facebook: What a Wonderful World [Instagram: alnwick_waww](#)

Website: whatawww.org

Funding Opportunities



Northumberland County 4 Community Funding Portal is an online portal which allows you to browse and search for sources of funding depending on your organisation or project. Click the link below to visit the Home page. You will need to Register as a User the first time you use the portal: provide the name of your organisation, a contact name, email address, password, and your postcode. Once you have created a User profile you can login at any time.

<https://funding.idoxopen4community.co.uk/northumberland>

There are 388 sources of funding for community associations or groups, 440 for charitable trusts and 101 for Parish Councils, plus many more. You can select filters to help you narrow down the source of funding you seek.

The website includes specific guidance on the following topics.

- [About government funding](#)
- [About Lottery funding](#)
- [About trust funding](#)

- [What are social enterprises?](#)
- [Applying for funding](#)
- [Community jargon made easy](#)

User Guide to Get the Most out of the Funding Portal

Go to the User Guide first. Only seven pages long it explains how to get the most out of the portal. There are also 3 helpful videos - How to Run a Search, How to Save Items and How to Download Items. [Click here to read it.](#)



The Steering Group are drawing together a list of relevant funding bodies and crowdfunding sources to help all NGH member communities. If you know of any that have worked well for your group, please send details to: northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com

NCC Climate Change Team – May Update

Thank you to the NCC Climate Change team for their latest newsletter. We've captured the highlights here.



Northumberland's young eco entrepreneurs set to compete in London

Thirty-four Year 7 students from three Northumberland schools showcased their climate action ideas at a regional Dragon's Den style pitching event with a chance to win a place at the Young Green Briton Challenge (YGBC) in London. Ideas spanned from addressing fast fashion and biodiversity loss to renewable energy generation and energy wastage reduction.

[To find out more](#)

First Phase of Work on Recycling Plant Complete

Construction is underway for the UK's most advanced wastepaper recycling plant in Prudhoe, with a recent preview showcasing its progress. Operated by Unifibres, the plant on Princess Way supplies recycled paper pulp to Essity tissue mill and other sites in the North West, where it's used in leading brands like Cushelle and Plenty.



[Read more about the work.](#)



Little Chicks Need Your Help

Efforts are underway to support beach-nesting birds on the Northumberland coast. The [Space for Shorebirds](#) team, along with volunteers and landowners, are working to protect these birds during nesting season.

Species like ringed plovers and terns are preparing to nest on sandy beaches, with special rules in place to safeguard nesting areas. Local volunteers, including the Northumberland Coast Conservation Team, play a crucial role in monitoring and protecting nesting areas.



Gas Safety Grants

Grants of up to £500 are available for the replacement, repair, and servicing of gas appliances to provide vital gas safety interventions for vulnerable people in their homes. There can only be one intervention per household per year which may include more than one measures such as gas safety checks, gas servicing, gas boiler repairs, gas boiler replacements etc.

Applicants must live in privately owned accommodation and be one of the following:

- 60 years old or over and have low household income and/or a disability.
- Under 60 and have a low household income and/or a disability or
- Considered exceptionally vulnerable by the HIA (This is reviewed on a case-by-case basis)

To apply, email Warmer Homes Team [warmerhomes@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:warmershomes@northumberland.gov.uk).



Funding for home energy upgrades

Eligible residents could access a range of energy-saving improvements, including insulation for walls, lofts and floors, air source heat pumps and solar panels. You could be eligible if you live in a private home in Northumberland which is not heated by mains gas, have an income of up to £44,000 per year (depending on your circumstances), receive a means-tested benefit or you live in a specific postcode area.

[Please see Council website for full eligibility information.](#)



Northern Powergrid Net Zero Community Energy Fund

Your group could be eligible for a grant of up to £10,000. The 2024 Northern Powergrid Net Zero Community Energy Fund has £50,000 available for new and existing community energy organisations and climate action groups in the North East, Yorkshire and Humber, and northern Lincolnshire. The fund aims to help community energy organisations start-up, build capacity, or explore the feasibility of new energy projects. **Deadline: 15 July 2024.** [Find out more and apply.](#)



Energy Audit for Your Community Building

The North East & Yorkshire Net Zero Hub is offering support to community energy groups by funding energy audits for community buildings. These audits analyse current energy consumption and building structure to suggest ways to increase efficiency, reduce emissions, and save money.

The Hub will cover 80% of the audit cost, with applicants responsible for the remaining 20%. Community energy groups and local authorities can apply for funding to conduct audits through a short-term fund.

Deadline: June 2. [Find out more and apply.](#)

Just DO One Thing

Eat More Mussels for the Planet

Like many of us, I often wake up wondering how I could do more to combat climate change and defend the declining ecosystems. It is rarely the case that by consuming more you can help the planet – but by eating mussels you can. In addition, mussels are delicious, nutritious, quick and easy, and energy efficient to cook. Mussels are low in calories and a good source of protein, omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins and trace elements.

Farming mussels requires no fertilisers, no human-supplied feed, no pesticides and, if anything, they clean their surroundings. The mussels grow to marketable size in 1-2 years. and the farm protects the seabed it floats over, providing a form of marine reserve. The seabed beneath is safe from being ploughed up by trawlers and the ropes of mussels are home to the young of many species such as crabs, lobsters, and scallops.

Mussels incorporate carbon dioxide to make their calcium carbonate shells. Mussel shell has the potential to lock-up this carbon dioxide for millions of years. Each kilogramme of mussels you eat can sequester about 148g of carbon dioxide. If each person in the UK, on average, ate half a kilo of mussels a month (1 or 2 portions), 60,000 tonnes of carbon dioxide could be sequestered.

It has been estimated that one quarter of UK seas used as mussel farms could capture an eighth of UK carbon emissions. BUT we all would have to eat more mussels than we do now! Just as well they taste good.

RECIPE for Steamed Mussels

Mussels are usually sold live by the kilogram in net bags at £5 to £6 a kilo from a fishmonger or fish van. A kilo is sufficient for two large portions (£2.50 a portion) or four modest portions (£1.25 a portion). For a meal, I find a quarter-kilo portion is plenty with vegetables. The mussels should be kept in an open container or plastic bag in the fridge (they need to breathe) and cooked within a day or soon after. If not eaten on the day they are cooked, any remaining mussels can be put in a sealed container with their liquid and kept in a freezer.

Preparation

Check the mussels and discard any that are open unless they close when rapped on their shell. The ones that remain open are dead and should not be eaten. Pull off the beards (the threads the mussels produce to anchor themselves to rocks and ropes). Wash in fresh water, scrub shells clean if necessary.

Mussels can be simply cooked in their own juices in a heavy pan over a fire or stove and eaten when they open. (Do not eat any mussels that are not open after cooking).

Steamed Mussels

Ingredients

- 1 kg mussels (prepared as above)
- 1 sliced white onion
- 2 or more cloves garlic (crushed whole or chopped into 3 pieces)
- A little oil (olive, rapeseed, vegetable) and/or butter
- 1 carrot – thinly sliced
- Small sliced leek or alternative green vegetable
- Herbs (dry or fresh chopped parsley and/thyme) and/or a few thin parings of unwaxed lemon rind
- 50ml of water and 100 to 150 ml white wine or dry cider (vary the liquid mixture to your taste but the total liquid should be at least 150ml)
- Ground pepper to taste

Method

Use a big saucepan with lid or a pressure cooker. (The pan should be large enough to be only half full when all the ingredients are added as the mussels take up a lot of space when the shells open in cooking.) Put about a desert spoonful of the oil and/or knob of butter in the pan. Fry the sliced onion and garlic until very slightly browned (not caramelised). Add the sliced vegetables. Turn off the heat. Add some of the water to cool the pan. Add the herbs and pepper. Then add the wine or cider. Add the prepared mussels. Put the lid on the pan and heat. If using a big saucepan, simmer, lifting the lid to check every few minutes until the mussel shells have opened. If using a pressure cooker, bring to up to pressure, cook for 2 minutes, fast release the pressure and all the mussels should be cooked and open. Discard any mussels with shells that do not open after cooking.

Serve in bowls in the liquid and some good bread or rolls. Enjoy.

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Other News Local & Global

England's Rivers to Remain in Poor State Says Watchdog

Source: The Guardian - Thu 9 May 2024

Reporter: Helena Horton

England's rivers are likely to remain in a poor state for years to come because the government is failing to put in place EU clean water laws post-Brexit.

Under the Water Framework Directive, all rivers are supposed to attain “good” ecological status by 2027. In 2019 just 14% of rivers were in good ecological health and none met standards for good chemical health. A report by the OEP states that this aim will not be met at the current rate.

Dame Glenys Stacey, the chair of the OEP, has called the government’s failure “deeply concerning”, with the report finding that England is failing to put in place measures to improve the condition of rivers, lakes, and oceans. [Read the full article on The Guardian website here](#)

Britain’s Climate Action Plan Unlawful – High Court Rules

Source: The Guardian – Fri 3rd May 2024

Reporter: Helena Horton

The environmental charities [Friends of the Earth](#) and [ClientEarth](#) took joint legal action with the Good Law Project against the Department for Energy Security and Net Zero (DESNZ) over its decision to approve the carbon budget delivery plan (CBDP) in March 2023.

In a ruling on Friday [3rd May], Mr Justice Sheldon upheld four of the five grounds of the groups’ legal challenge, stating that the decision by the former energy security and net zero secretary [Grant Shapps](#) was “simply not justified by the evidence”.

.....The judge agreed with ClientEarth and Friends of the Earth that the Secretary of State was given “incomplete” information about the likelihood that proposed policies would achieve their intended emissions cuts. This breached section 13 of the Climate Change Act. Sheldon also agreed with the environment groups that the central assumption that all the department’s policies would achieve 100% of their intended emissions cuts was wrong. The judge said the secretary of state had acted “irrationally, and on the basis of an incorrect understanding of the facts.”

[Click HERE to read the full article](#)

Library of Things – The New Way to Save Money

Source: The Observer – Mon 6th May 2024

Reporter: Laura Whately

Rental ‘libraries of things’ have become the new way to save money. From baby clothes to popcorn makers, borrowing items rather than buying them is a growing trend.

The London-based Library of Things opened three new locations across the city this year and are planning two more. Co-founder Rebecca Trevelyan says their mission is to make “borrowing better than buying. We really want to make rental go mainstream, make it more affordable, convenient, and socially rewarding than buying something from Amazon,” she says.

There are many success stories of similar ‘Libraries’ up and down the country - including one in Edinburgh that has thousands of options to choose from. In Bath, you can book in a cargo bike delivery and collection to pick up your item from its Share and Repair shop.

Perhaps it’s time for something similar in Northumberland!

[Read the Full Article Here](#)

What Is a Library of Things?

A Library of Things is a place where you can borrow useful things for your home, projects and adventures. <https://www.libraryofthings.co.uk/>

‘Washout winter’ spells price rises for UK shoppers with key crops down by a fifth

Source: The Guardian – Mon 29th April 2024

Reporter: Jack Simpson

UK harvests could be down by nearly a fifth this year due to the unprecedented wet weather farmers have faced, increasing the likelihood that the prices of bread, beer and biscuits will rise and more food imported.

The warnings come as farmers have borne the brunt of the heavy rainfall and bad weather experienced over the winter, with the UK experiencing 11 named storms since September.

In England, there was [1,695mm of rainfall between October 2022 and March 2024](#), the wettest 18-month period since records began in 1836.

This has resulted in planted crops either being flooded or damaged by the wet weather, or farmers not being able to establish crops at all.

[Read the full article here](#)

June Digest – Copy Deadline

Please send your items for the next edition by email together with any attachments to northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com by **June 10th latest!**



To ALL contributors to this month's Digest.

You know who you are, and your efforts made pulling this edition together so much easier.
