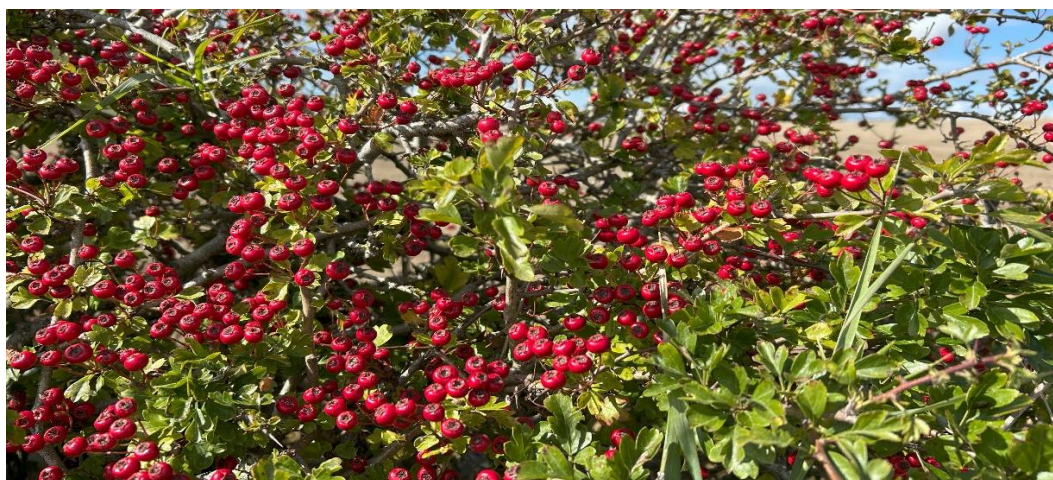


NGH Monthly Digest

October 15th 2025

News, Events, Funding and More!



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1. Hub & Steering Group News

Welcome to New Members

First, we'd like to welcome our new members since the last edition of the Digest – Helen, Isabel, Michelle, Jan (our 150th member!), Louise, Laura, Kath and Gill. We hope you enjoy being part of the network and connecting with other members.

NGH Community Event – The Future of Food

Attendees at September's event were treated to a lively talk by Sarah Bredin-Kemp from the Full Circle Food Project in Ashington. The project provides food education giving people the skills they need to grow their own produce, as well as running cooking classes and workshops. There was also a short video highlighting a range of issues from land

use to the impact of different farming practices and the impact of big business. Sue Brown provided an overview of both the National and Northumberland Food Strategies and during the break participants contributed to the creation of a resource identifying a wide range of food initiatives, community orchards and farmers markets in Northumberland. Finally, members discussed a range of topics from Northumberland's Food Story to Influencing Strategy Makers.

NGH Holds First AGM

We held our first Annual General Meeting at the beginning of the morning. This included an Annual Report about the how the network has grown and developed over the last 12 months.

After thanking Colin Elliot for his work on the Steering Group since NGH was formed in September 2023, current members Julia Chambers, Mike Powell and Liz Clark were re-elected and were joined by Lesley Long.

Whilst NGH has continued to develop and grow, Liz highlighted an over reliance on a small number of individuals on the Steering Group, which may impact on the network's capacity in the future. The Steering Group would love to be able to move towards a more sustainable model in which there is greater

capacity to meet existing and future demands and where tasks are shared across a wider group of members, whether or not they sit on the Steering Group – so if you'd like to get more involved – perhaps in organising events, helping with the Digest or attending events on NGH's behalf, please do get in touch by emailing Northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com.

Dates for your Diary

Our next event is on **Saturday December 6th** at St James Church Centre in Alnwick. There will be three short 'features' during the morning, alongside plenty of time to meet up with familiar faces and meet new ones. We'll have some delicious local treats to share too. Whether you've been to an NGH event before or this is the first time, you can be sure of a friendly welcome.

Dates for 2026 events announced – March 21st, June 20th, September 12th and December 5th

2. Podcast Project

Project Update



NGH has submitted a funding application to the Community Foundation for the sum of £5,000 to launch a pilot, collaborative, community podcast called *'In Tune with Nature- Conversations for a Greener Future'*. The aim is to train and mobilise members of the NGH network and other local environmental groups in north and southeast Northumberland to record and publish their stories and inspire others to get involved.

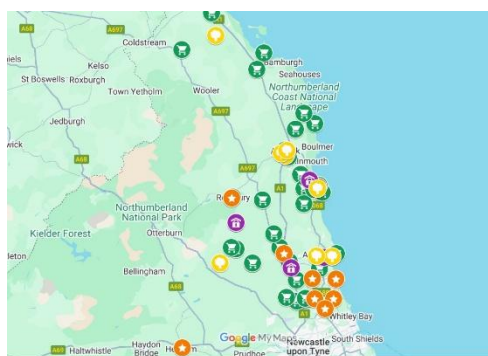
The intention is that the podcast will reach a wider audience, including those who might not otherwise engage with environmental and sustainability topics. It will focus on environmental issues and successes that are specific and relevant to our community. The conversational format of a podcast will allow for in-depth exploration of issues such as the impact of pollution on local health, or rewilding a neglected space in a former mining area. Using storytelling, the podcast will make these topics engaging and relatable.

We know that NGH network members, and other grassroots community groups in our area, possess invaluable local knowledge and expertise about their environment. The podcast will provide a platform to share their experiences. We hope this will enable listening communities to develop solutions which are more relevant and appropriate for them.

It's anticipated that the podcast will add another means of communication to those already delivered by the NGH network. Currently these are the Monthly Digest newsletter circulated to 150+ members, the www.nghonline.co.uk website with regular blog updates, our WhatsApp Community and Special Interest Groups and the quarterly in-person community events.

We will hear if we have been successful at the end of October. In the meantime, if you are curious and would like to register your interest in the project, please contact Lesley by emailing Northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com putting **Podcast Project** in the email subject heading.

3. Community Food Food Mapping Project



NGH members have identified nearly 70 food-related locations – from farmers markets to food banks and other food-related initiatives. All of that information has now been mapped, and you can find it on the NGH website at [Community Food – Northumberland Green Hub](#).

You can choose to look at all the locations, or select different types of location, then click on an icon to find more details. Instructions on the Community Food webpage.

We're hoping to add to the map so if you know of locations that are missing, please use the online form to tell us about them.

We'd also like to add brief details about each location. If you think you could help and have a couple of hours to spare, please get in touch on Northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com with **Map Help** in the title.

New Community Orchard in Ashington

A new community orchard, marking the 100th anniversary of the creation of the allotments, was opened in September by Councillor Pauline Thompson, Civic Head of Ashington Town Council. It's been a collaboration involving multiple organisations including the Wansbeck Allotment Association, Climate Action Wansbeck and Ashington Town Council. The orchard is now an area where members can relax and bring their families, as well as a place where the community can be invited for special events.



Starter Group Sought for New Allotments



The small national charity Green Allotments has recently bought a plot of land on the northern edge of Morpeth as an allotment site and is seeking a starter group to set the project up and take on some of the plots.

For more information email info@greenallotments.org.uk.

4. Biodiversity & Wildlife

Clean up at bird sanctuary

Source: BBC News

September 21st 2025

Green algae have recently been removed from Budle Bay near Bamburgh in an attempt to protect local wildlife. The algal bloom can kill valuable seagrass and damage delicate habitats.

Researchers from Newcastle University have been trying to find out why the blooms have grown at the bay and are pioneering new ways to safely remove it.

Budle Bay is part of the Lindisfarne National Nature Reserve and is home each winter to thousands of wildfowl and wading birds. It's thought that the algae blooms are linked to an increase in nutrients flowing into the bay and scientists have been working to find the source.

The work is part of the Life Wader project being carried out by Natural England, Newcastle University, the Environment Agency and Tweed Forum. The team are even exploring whether the algae can be repurposed into fertiliser or to create paints and dyes.

New Science Hub on Lindisfarne

Source: BBC News

September 19th 2025

A new volunteer-led science hub has opened on Lindisfarne and will support studies on climate adaptation, marine ecology and species protection across the north east.

Research will focus on the nature reserve's unique landscape which supports large bird colonies as well as nationally important seagrass beds. Scientists from across Northumberland, Natural England and regional universities are involved. A variety of health and wellbeing programmes will also be available, looking at the role of nature in improving mental health.

5. Rivers, Sea & Coast

Little Shore Update

After all the planning, organising and counting over the summer, the Amble Little Shore Bathing Water Status application has been sent to DEFRA! Now the wait.....

The application will be sent out for consultation to more than a dozen different bodies and the outcome is expected in 3 – 6 months.



CRAG Annual Meeting

The Coquet River Action Group has had a great year with chemical and bacterial testing, invasive weed removal and river fly testing increasing all along the river. New activities involving schools, electronic sondes (a device to measure water quality in inaccessible locations) and collaboration with the Environment Agency are also being planned.

The group's Annual Meeting is being held on October 23rd at 7pm for a 7.30pm start. The meeting is open to all and this time the focus is on 'Current Affairs – the Coquet River Story'. It promises to be a wide ranging and interesting evening, beginning with a roundup of CRAG's activities during the last year followed by 3 speakers led by Steve Lowe (formerly of The Rivers Trust). Subjects will include river ecology, catchment sensitive farming and flooding.

New members are always welcome whether you'd like to have a go at testing or just come along to a meeting. You can get in touch at coquetriverractiongroup@outlook.com.

6. Updates from Groups



Climate Action Wansbeck

Late September brought the culmination of a year working with a range of groups, charity funding, and the hard work of allotment members to finish our new orchard.

The orchard is a celebration of 100 years of the establishment of Wansbeck Road, Ashington Allotment Association and to commemorate the men of Ashington returning from WW1. The orchard, being the first and only one in Ashington, will leave a legacy for the Allotment Association as we share the beautiful space and produce with the wider community.

Despite the torrential rain, we went ahead with an opening event on Saturday 20th September and a good number of people involved with the project came along together with their friends and families. The event was officially opened by Pauline Thompson, the Civic Head of Ashington Town Council.

After a three month break, CAW had its AGM meeting on 23rd September at the White Swan in Morpeth. After the chair, secretary and treasurer's reports, we discussed future projects. It was decided to focus on the river Wansbeck in the hope of bringing together CAW members and to connect with other environmental groups involved with Wansbeck protection. We agreed to name the project 'Is the Wansbeck Alive?' as a nod to Robert MacFarlane's book 'Is the River Alive'?

Climate Action Wansbeck meetings are on the 3rd Tuesday of the month. Contact details: Climateactionwansbeck@gmail.com.



Alnwick Area
Friends of the Earth

Alnwick Area Friends of the Earth

On October 7th Alnwick Area Friends of the Earth (AAFoE) held a free film night at Alnwick

Playhouse. This began with two films, one showing school pupils engaging with nature and talking about how they felt about the climate crisis, followed the film 'Leaving it Better' about a project that brought together environmental campaigners and Pennine farmers to discuss environmental issues and find common ground. The evening concluded with a very interesting discussion.

Terry Smith has recently demonstrated the Tipping Point game at Rothbury Climate and Nature's 'Great Big Green Event' and at Northumberland Wildlife Trust's 'Nature for Health & Wellbeing Fair'. He will also be taking the game to Greener Amble's Fair on Saturday October 18th.

AAFoE also joined FoE's 'Big Climate Plan' campaign by contacting the local MP and NE mayor, urging them to back a national climate plan that fully meets the UK's climate targets and empowers local leaders to take action. Members have also participated in the 'Stop Rosebank' Day of Action, engaged with the consultation on the expansion of Newcastle airport, and arranged the annual 'Apple Pressing Day' at Bullfield Community Orchard.

The next committee meeting is at 7pm on Wed 12th Nov in Alnwick Youth Hostel. If you would like to join Alnwick Area Friends of the Earth, just send a message expressing your interest to contact@alnwickfoe.org.uk.

7. Round Up of Other Events

The Green Table NORTHUMBERLAND



Resilient Rural
Communities

The first meeting of The Green Table, organised by Northumberland CAN, was hosted by Leanne Shipley, Climate Action Officer and Christine Nichols, Community Development Officer. Around 30 people from organisations across north and southeast Northumberland attended the event in Rothbury.

The Green Table plans to deliver two more events to unite organisations and community groups keen to tackle climate change and promote local sustainability. These events are on 27th January 2026 in Humshaugh, and Berwick on 14th May 2026.

The speaker for the event was Paul Barrett, Community Development Officer with Northumberland Wildlife Trust, who gave an update on his work with communities in the area as part of the acquisition strategy for the [Rothbury Estate](#).

There was a significant presence from CAN, representing the [CAIRN](#) project, Off Grid Energy Advice, projects along the River Wansbeck and the [Rural Employment Hubs](#) project amongst others. CAN has a range of resources available for voluntary, community and social enterprises to borrow for free including infrared cameras and other items aimed at enhancing household energy efficiency and safety.

Representatives from the [National Innovation Centre for Rural Enterprise \(NICRE\)](#) spoke about the various projects they are engaged with, including lower carbon food business logistics, innovation in agriculture, net zero transitions in community spaces and the redevelopment of rural buildings and community-led housing.

Finally, there were representatives from several parish and town councils including Bowden, Rothbury, Bedlington all eager embrace their role in tackling climate change resilience and energy efficiency solutions.

Humshaugh Village Hall, 27th January 2026. Contact annarevell@ca-north.org.uk
Berwick Voluntary Centre, 14th May 2026. Contact andrewberesford@ca-north.org.uk.

These meetings are for organisations only. Registration is available through Eventbrite and all attendees must register. Lunch is provided.

(Note: Details of the CAN, NWT, NICRE and EA staff who attended the events can be found on the NGH Resources page at [Local Groups & Contacts](#)).

Nature for Health Fair



The Nature for Health Fair organised by Northumberland Wildlife Trust took place at Woodhorn Museum on Saturday 4th October.

The aim of the fair was to enable visitors to discover how time in nature can boost their mental health and physical

wellbeing. The event was pitched at social prescribers, link workers, carers, and anyone curious about the healing power of nature.

Over 20 stalls showcased a host of volunteering opportunities, training opportunities, campaigns, and activities across Northumberland's green and coastal spaces. Mental health, wildlife, biodiversity and community action groups from across the county were represented.

There was a real buzz in the venue for this well-organised and upbeat event with self-service refreshments encouraging visitors to linger and chat with the stall holders.

8. Events

Greener Amble Fair



Date: Saturday October 18th



Venue: St Cuthbert's Parish Hall and Dovecote Centre 2 – 5.30pm



Venue: Dr Water Arts 10.30 – 3.00pm



A community event to celebrate the environment and raise awareness of green matters and climate change. It's being run in conjunction with Dry Water Arts across three venues. It will include stalls, workshops, talks, exhibitions, family activities and refreshments.

Free refreshments.

For more info contact sue.greeneramble@gmail.com or natasha.hemsley@northwt.org.uk.

For Dry Water Arts events, contact info@drywaterarts.uk.

Climate Action Wansbeck Meeting



Date: Tuesday October 21st



Time: 7 – 8.30pm





Venue: To be confirmed.

For more details email climateactionwansbeck@gmail.com.

Current Affairs – The Coquet River Story

 **Date:** Thursday October 23rd

 **Time:** 7 for 7.30pm

 **Venue:** Swarland Village Hall, Coastview, Swarland, NE65 9JG

An evening designed to show the breadth of work taking place on the Coquet, bringing together the biological life of the river with the challenges facing land users and the physical constraints of our climate.

With speakers from Natural England and the Environment Agency, the evening will also highlight the work being done by CRAG and be introduced by Steve Lowe, formerly of The Rivers Trust.



Rothbury CAN – Film Night

Food and Farming: Free Film Screening

 **Saturday 25th October**
Jubilee Hall 7.00pm 

Leaving it Better

Commissioned by Defra's Farming in Protected Landscape and Tipping Point UK

Growing Rich With Nature


Simon Hare, livestock and Land Management Consultant shares his farming year.


2 short films, followed by a discussion, led by **Gus Nelless**, Thistleyhaugh Farm; **Aidan Harrison**, formerly of Morrell Hirst, and **Rakesh Prashara**, Tipping Point.

rothbury.can@gmail.com

 **Rothbury**
CAN
Climate And Nature 

 **Date:** Saturday October 25th

 **Time:** 7.00 for 7.30pm

 **Venue:** Jubilee Hall, Rothbury, NE65 7SD

Two short films about regenerative farming - *Leaving it Better*, commissioned by DEFRA's Farming in Protected Landscapes Programme and Tipping Point UK and *Growing Rich with Nature* – Simon Hare, a livestock farmer and land management consultant from Trees House Farm in County Durham, shares a year in his farming life.


FREE but donations welcome to pay for the hire of the hall.

Contact RothburyCAN@gmail.com.

Warkworth Green Matters – Coffee Morning

 **Date:** Saturday October 25th

 **Time:** From 10.00am

 **Venue:** Memorial Hall, Castle Street, Warkworth

Warkworth Green Matters are having a special coffee morning to explore setting up a Repair Café in Warkworth. Representatives from Felton and Rothbury Repair Cafes will be there to share their experiences.

It is an opportunity to find out more about repair cafes, express an interest in either using one or sharing your skills. And of course, enjoy a cuppa and cake with like-minded people.

Refreshments will be served from 10.00 am with time to chat informally with the representatives, followed by some short presentations and time for questions and discussion.

Berwick Seed Swap

 **Date:** Saturday November 15th

 **Time:** From 10.00 – 12.30

 **Venue:** Berwick Parish Church, TD15 1DF

Bring seeds to share, pick up something new for your garden and connect with fellow growers. Whether you're a seasoned gardener or just getting started, everyone is welcome.

Refreshments available, plant and seed swap, free pots and trays, secondhand gardening equipment and books, seed sowing and saving advice, edible and medicinal seed display.



9. Repair Cafes



Coquetdale Repair Café – Saturday November 22nd, 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. Book your repair on our website

www.coquetrepair.co.uk or pick up a form in the Rothbury RSPCA shop.

Booking really helps us get the right volunteers in place. Email info@coquet-repair.co.uk. Tea and cakes available.

Felton Repair Café – Saturday 18th October, 11.00am – 3.00pm, Gallery Forty5, Main Street, Felton, NE65 9PP. All small repairs considered.

Clothes, ceramics, small items of furniture, help with IT.

Contact feltonrepaircafe@gmail.com.

We do small electrical repairs, knife and tool sharpening, sewing, toy and ceramic mending, IT advice and digital restoration of old photos. The latest additions are jewellery cleaning and advice on repairs, advice about old phones, tablets, laptops etc, making these safe and how to recycle them. Bicycle repairs are no longer available, but basic IT instruction is - but it must be booked in advance.

Greener Berwick Zero Waste Group Repair Café – Saturday October 25th, 10-1pm at The Salvation Army Hall, 53 Church Street, BERWICK-UPON-TWEED, TD15 1EE. 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. We're always looking for volunteers and you don't have to be a professional. All skills welcome. Visit <https://www.greenerberwick.org.uk/repair-cafe>.

Berwick Tool Library is also now operating. Visit <https://berwicktoollibrary.myturn.com> or contact info@greenerberwick.org.uk for more details.

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.

Amble Repair Café – Saturday November 22nd, 2.30 – 4.30pm, Dry Water Arts in Amble.

Join the repair revolution, don't throw it away, give it a second life. Bring your broken items along and we will see if we can mend them. Our volunteer repairers cover: sewing, darning, toys, small electrical appliances, sharpening, ceramics and small items of furniture. Enjoy tea and cake while you wait for your repair. For further information please contact: amblerepaircafe@gmail.com

10. Funding

Naturesave Trust – Funding Window Open

The Naturesave Trust has announced that the theme for its October / November funding window is **biodiversity**. Applications are invited from charities, community groups and organisations who are working to connect communities to nature.

The deadline for applications is 12 noon on Thursday November 27th 2025. Grants are available for up to £5000.

Full details plus the application form can be found at [Naturesave Trust - Naturesave](https://www.naturesave.org.uk).

National Lottery Awards for All – Environment Fund



This fund is for community-led projects that improve the environment and help people connect with and enjoy nature where they live. The funding can be used to:

- start a new activity or continue an existing one;
- help your organisation adapt to new challenges;
- run one-off events that have a clear environmental benefit.

The Fund is looking for projects that:

- help people connect with and care for nature in their area;
- make a positive difference to the environment.

For more information, go to the [National Lottery Awards for All England page](#).

Funding - £300 to £20,000 for up to two years

Application deadline - 17 December 2025

Great British Energy Community Fund

Managed by the North East and Yorkshire Net Zero Hub, funding of up to £140,000 is available to help parish and town councils, community organisations, faith groups, community interest companies get started on clean power projects that benefit their local areas.

The Great British Energy Community Fund is the first grant programme for community energy projects funded by [Great British Energy](#) – the new publicly-owned energy company

It's designed to help local communities across the UK transition to sustainable energy solutions and empower communities to take control of their energy needs, reduce carbon footprints, and create a greener, more sustainable future for all.

Funding Available

Stage 1 – Feasibility Grant. Up to **£40,000** to cover consultancy and professional costs of the development of a feasibility study.

Stage 2 – Development Grant. Up to **£100,000** for projects ready to move towards planning and delivery.

For more information, visit [Great British Energy Community Fund - North East & Yorkshire Net Zero Hub](#).

Deadline: 12 November 2025

11. Training

Carbon Literacy for Interested Organisations – Free Places

As part of the Carbon Literacy Action Day on November 13th, a number of free places are available on this brand new course, run by Anne-Marie Soulsby. The course is aimed at people who are part of an organisation or group.

This one day online course will provide practical ways to take action and inspire others. Certification is optional. To sign up, email annie@thesustainablelifecoach.com by November 1st.

FREE Digital Design Software

We still have some FREE Canva Pro licences available to NGH members. Canva is an easy to use, powerful digital graphic design tool, making it easy to design posters, presentations and social media content and is widely used for creating publicity materials.

NGH obtained 50 Canva Pro licences which usually cost £100/year per person. We still have some of these available for community groups which are part of the network.



If your group would like to take advantage of this offer, please email Northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com with the name and email address of the person who will be the user(s).

Unfortunately, there wasn't sufficient take up to go ahead with the Canva training as originally planned, but we are still exploring ways to support Canva users to get the most out of their licence.

Community Energy Training Modules and Guides

The Community Energy Team at Northern Powergrid are offering a wide range of training modules covering the lifespan of a community energy project. These training modules are constantly being updated with the most up to date information.

The training is available in bite-sized 15 – 20 minute modules that can be delivered both face-to-face and online. This means that it's possible to build a course that meets the needs of a particular group.

Currently available modules include –

- What is Community Energy
- An introduction to low carbon technologies
- A guide to calculating carbon emissions
- An overview of the connections process
- Connection – how to apply
- How to fill in a feasibility report.

Several information guides are also available, including energy savings hints and tips, information on available tariffs and an active list of funding available.

Email communityenergy@northernpowergrid.com for more information.

12. And Finally

A quote from an interview with Jane Goodall released shortly after her death -

'Even today, when the planet is dark, there is still hope. Don't lose hope. If you lose hope you become apathetic and do nothing. And if you still want to save what is still beautiful in this world – if you want to save the planet for the future generations... then think about the actions you take each day. Because, multiplied a million, a billion times, even small actions will make for great change.'

13. November Digest – Copy Deadline

You can send items for the Digest at any time to northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com but the deadline for the next edition is **November 10th 2025!**

*To ALL contributors to this month's Digest and those working behind the scenes -
you know who you are, and your efforts made pulling this edition together so much easier.*

14. Summary of Events

(See Events section for full details)



Oct

- 18th Greener Amble Fair
- 18th Felton Repair Café, 11 – 3pm, Gallery Forty5
- 21st Climate Action Wansbeck meeting, 7 – 8.30pm
- 23rd Current Affairs – The Coquet Rover Story, 7 for 7.30pm, Swarland Village Hall
- 25th Rothbury CAN Film Night, 7 for 7.30pm, Jubilee Hall
- 25th Warkworth Green Matters Coffee Morning, from 10.00am, Memorial Hall, Castle St.
- 25th Berwick Repair Café, 10 – 1pm, Salvation Army Hall, Church St.

Nov

- 15th Berwick Seed Swap, 10 – 12.30pm, Berwick Parish Church, TD15 1DF.
- 22nd Coquetdale Repair Café, 10 – 2pm, Jubilee Hall, Rothbury

Regular Events

Climate Action Wansbeck Climate Reading Group. Morpeth Library - first Tuesday of the month

Greener Amble Network Meets every 4th Thursday of month at Dry Water Arts Centre,
Wellwood St, Amble NE65 0FG. 6.30 pm for 7.00 - 8.45 pm.

Swarland and Newton Action on Climate, third Tuesday of the month, 6pm Swarland Club

Berwick Repair Café, last Saturday of every month, 10 – 1pm