

NGH Monthly Digest

November 15th 2025

News, Events, Updates and More!



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reading celebrating the **creatures and colours that brighten the winter months**

Exciting news about **plans for the “What a Wonderful World” Festival in 2026** – and how you can get involved.

And of course, there'll be plenty of **coffee, tea, and delicious locally baked treats** to enjoy while we chat.

We'd love you to join us and be part of the conversation shaping a greener, more connected Northumberland.

Please book your place [here](#) to help us plan refreshments.

1. Hub & Steering Group News

NGH Winter Gathering

It's less than a month until the Winter Gathering on **Saturday, 6th December from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 noon at St James Church Centre, Pottergate, Alnwick.**

This will be a relaxed and friendly morning — a chance to **chat, make new connections, and share ideas** as we head into winter.

What's On ?

► A fun **15-minute podcast quiz**

► A seasonal



2026 Event Dates for your Diary

We've now booked dates for **NGH Community Events in 2026**. They are - March 21st, June 20th, September 12th and December 5th. Don't miss out – make sure to put them in your diary.

2. Podcast Project

In Tune with Nature: Conversations for a greener future



We were unsuccessful in our recent grant application to the Powergen fund however, undaunted, we'll be applying again to other suitable funders through the Community Foundation.

We'll be recording a pilot episode for release early in 2026. The theme will be Northumberland food and growing stories.

If anyone has a positive story to tell or contacts who are involved in an inspirational environmental project relating to food and growing, or you are generally interested in getting involved in the podcast, please contact Caroline/ Lesley via email intunewithnaturepod@gmail.com

3. Community Food

Are you interested in food issues ?

Following the September event which focused on food, a small group of NGH members have expressed an interest in taking these issues forward jointly with others. Some are interested in forming a group to take action, others to be part of a WhatsApp group sharing action ideas.

The most popular topics are reducing food waste, minimising packaging and the availability of local seasonal food. There is also interest in engaging with the Northumberland food strategy and in a practical food related project.



One practical outcome of the September meeting was the creation of an interactive food map of Northumberland. People have been submitting additional food projects, farm shops, etc. so we are developing a useful and practical guide to buying local and supporting access to healthy food.

You can find the [map here](#). Please use the online form to let us know of anything we have missed.

Next steps:

- We plan to set up a WhatsApp group for any members interested.
- Unfortunately there is no capacity on the Steering Group to run a group. Sue Brown has offered to convene an initial meeting to see if anyone might be willing to take this on but is not able to take on the group herself. Anyone interested in joining a group, please email Northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com and we will add you to the list.

Warkworth Food Conversation

In October a food conversation was held in Warkworth. The conversation covered a range of topics including environmental impact, the need to support farmers as well as access to healthy, local, seasonal food.

A number of people have expressed an interest in forming a local group. If you live near Warkworth and would like to get involved, please let us know by emailing Northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com.

4. Biodiversity & Wildlife

Support for Rothbury Estate



Source: BBC News
October 29th 2025

Sir David Attenborough has put his support behind a bid to raise £30m to buy all of the huge Rothbury Estate.

With just a year to go to raise the full amount or risk the estate being divided up and sold off, Sir David encouraged people to get behind the bid.

The Rothbury Estate is the largest area of land to be put up for sale in England for many years and would be a key part of a 40-mile wild corridor, stretching from the coast to Kielder and the Scottish border.

Mike Pratt, Northumberland Wildlife Trust's chief executive said that the purchase was a 'once in a lifetime opportunity' to bring nature back at scale.

Donations can be made at <https://www.wildlifetrusts.org/appeals/rothbury-estate-nature-and-nation>

Free Trees from NCC

Northumberland County Council have announced that its free tree scheme is once again open for applications, with both individual saplings and packs up for grabs.

The scheme is open to residents, businesses, schools, community groups and town and parish councils. Applicants can choose from a variety of species, with something suitable for all types of spaces.

Apply at <https://nland.cc/freetrees25>.



5. Rivers, Sea & Coast



A salmon swims up the River Coquet

There was great energy in the Swarland Village Hall for the CRAG meeting on October 23rd. About sixty people gathered to celebrate the achievements of CRAG during 2025 and to look forward to the coming year.

Julia and Jamie from CRAG described how CRAG has grown during 2025. CRAG volunteers have started riverfly surveying, invasive plant removal and testing for E. coli alongside the regular chemical water testing at more than fifty test sites.

Perhaps the highlight for 2025 was the submission of an application for Bathing Water status for Little Shore at Amble. Julia described the huge effort by the Amble volunteers, surveying bathers and local businesses, and building links with government agencies and other community organisations.

Steve Lowe then became a salmon and described his journey from the mouth to the upper catchment of the Coquet. He described the physical and environmental barriers that try to stop him successfully breeding.

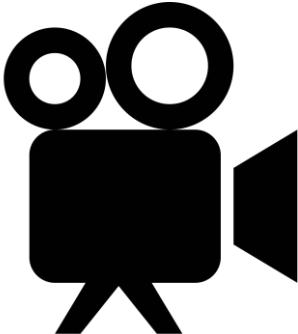
Suzie Hardy described the fantastic work that her Natural England team are doing. They work with farmers to change farm management to prevent fertilizers and soil running off fields and farmyards into the Coquet.

Colin Hall from the Environment Agency described some of the impacts of floods on the Coquet. His job is to work with communities to build resilience against flood events. Colin introduced us to the Rothbury and Warkworth volunteers who work with his team to provide resilience during flood events.

The talks were interesting, and we learned a lot. But the strength of the meeting was in the chat before and after the talks. CRAG volunteers mixed with representatives from a wide array of government agencies and community groups. The communication, linking communities along the river together and linking the work of CRAG with that of other stakeholders, suggests that the future is bright for CRAG.

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 coqueriveractiongroup@outlook.com.

6. Film Nights



Thinking of showing a film?

Hear from NGH member Katie Scott about her experience

In September 2023 I decided to screen **Kiss The Ground** in our village hall, the Jubilee Hall, in Rothbury. It's a film about the soil, and the idea was to hold a discussion after the showing about farming and the environment, from the point of view of food.

A local landowner/farmer, Walter Riddell of Hepple Wilds, was invited to lead the discussion, and it was chaired by Aidan

Harrison, who has farmed on Simonside all of his life. The event was incredibly well attended. Farmers came too, so the discussion was excellent.

In 2024 we screened **Six Inches of Soil**. Again, we had Walter, but this time he was joined by Rachel Henry, another local farmer.

In 2025 we screened a wonderful film called **Ocean**. This time we paid for support for the discussion from The Sea We See, a marine consultancy.

We recently had a stand-alone film screening, taking Farming and Food as the theme. This is especially relevant to our community, as the Wildlife Trusts are in the process of purchasing the Rothbury Estate. This year was the best event so far. We screened two shorter films this time. The first was **Leaving it Better**, with Rakesh Prakash, the producer, plus Kate, one of the activists in the film, at the discussion. The second film was **Growing Rich With Nature**. Gus Nelless, a highly respected organic farmer, who knows the farm and the people in the film, led the discussion.

What we've learnt

We're fortunate that the Jubilee Hall has a monthly cinema, so is equipped with the necessary equipment. If that's not available, the links to many of the films below offer advice and resources about putting on a screening – with some including prompts for discussions, technical requirements etc.

Events were advertised through our mailing list, on Facebook, in our local community magazine, and through posters in local shop windows.

Recently we've started to arrange the room in 'cabaret style' - small tables with four chairs at each. This allowed for a better discussion afterwards, and chatting between films.

Useful Links

The Sea we See: <https://www.theseawesee.co.uk/>

Kiss the Ground: <https://kissthegroundmovie.com/>

Six Inches of Soil: <https://www.sixinchesofsoil.org/>

Ocean: <https://www.oceanfilm.net/home/>

Leaving it Better: <https://tippingpointuk.org/leaving-it-better/>

Growing Rich with Nature: <https://growingrichwithnature.net/>



7. Updates from Groups



Greener Berwick Action Group – Growing a Sustainable Future

Greener Berwick continues to thrive, with volunteers working across the town to make Berwick greener, cleaner, and more connected.

Our *Growing Communities* team has been busy caring for the raised beds in the town centre, now flourishing with herbs, flowers, and food plants. Friday mornings bring together a regular group of volunteers to keep the beds looking their best. Plans are also underway to install a rainwater collection system to help with summer watering.

The *Transport & Active Travel* group has been surveying bus shelters, checking timetable information, and exploring options for electric bike charging points. Their aim is to make sustainable travel in Berwick safer and easier for everyone.

Meanwhile, the *Tweed Estuary Pollution* team continues vital monitoring of algae and nitrate levels in local waterways. Their work, in collaboration with the Environment Agency, is helping shape initiatives to improve river health—such as creating ponds to capture pollution before it reaches the estuary.

Our *Warm Homes* volunteers have been offering free energy-efficiency advice at local Repair Café sessions, helping residents cut costs and carbon while keeping their homes warm.

The *Zero Waste* team is building momentum with the monthly Repair Café and Tool Library. A new feedback system is providing valuable insights for future improvements, and collaboration with groups in Duns and Morpeth is helping to strengthen a regional repair network.



Looking ahead, Greener Berwick hopes to bring all its activities under one roof and secure funding for next year's projects.

To find out more or get involved, email info@greenerberwick.org.uk

Volunteer with Climate Action Wansbeck



CAW hopes to have some active outdoor events soon and will be looking for volunteers. They would welcome help with admin and publicity, so if you are nifty with spreadsheets or social medial, why not consider whether you could help out for a couple of hours a month. Send an email to climateactionwansbeck@gmail.com

Climate Action Wansbeck meetings are on the 3rd Tuesday of the month.

Contact details: Climateactionwansbeck@gmail.com

Alnwick Area Friends of the Earth

At their last meeting Alnwick Area Friends of the Earth (AAFoE) discussed progress on their main campaigns, 'The Big Climate Plan' and 'Right to a Healthy Environment' as well as the consultation on Newcastle Airport's expansion plans and the What a Wonderful World festival.

Terry has continued to demonstrate and distribute the environmental Tipping Point game he developed, including taking it to Greener Amble's Fair and the Duchess's Community High School. He is now working with Katie, a visiting student from St Cloud, Minnesota, USA to develop an American version of the game.



Alnwick Area
Friends of the Earth

The next committee meeting is at 7pm on Wed 3rd Dec in Alnwick Youth Hostel. If you would like to join Alnwick Area Friends of the Earth, just send a message to contact@alnwickfoe.org.uk

Swarland & Newton Action on Climate



SNAC has been working with Forestry England to remove invasive species from around an area of 'wet woodland' in Swarland Woods.

The area was the former Boating Lake of Swarland Hall, which over the years has evolved into this unusual habitat, which can support a wide range of plants, fungi and

invertebrates due to the mixture of wet and dry areas, sunlight and shade and high humidity.

Later this month, volunteers will be creating a dead hedge to help define a path to the area and more work is planned in 2026.



Green Table Event

The Green Table Northumberland is a series of three roundtable events designed to bring together organisations and community groups working to address climate change and improve local sustainability.

The aim is to encourage dialogue between those who are already active and those at the early stage of projects by offering peer support and signposting.

A key part of the focus is to support communities to understand their carbon footprint, enabling them to identify the best ways to reduce emissions and improve energy efficiency.

The first event was held in Rothbury in October and the next Green Table will be in Humshaugh in January and Berwick upon Tweed in May 2026.

8. Events

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.



Climate Action Wansbeck Meeting

Date: Tuesday November 18th

Time: 7 – 9pm

Venue: Upstairs Lounge at the White Swan, Newgate Street, Morpeth

For more details email climateactionwansbeck@gmail.com.

Is the River Wansbeck Alive ?

IS THE RIVER WANSBECK ALIVE?

WHAT
SHARE VIEWS ABOUT THE HEALTH OF THE RIVER AND ITS FUTURE

WHEN
WEDNESDAY 26th NOVEMBER 7PM

WHERE
MORPETH METHODIST CHURCH
Howard Terrace Morpeth NE6 1HU (Centenary Room)

WITH CONTRIBUTIONS FROM
Sarah Best, Newcastle University
Lesley Silvera, Groundwork North East & Cumbria
Jamie Day, Coquet River Action Group



WHY DOES THIS MATTER?
THIS RIVER AND ITS FUTURE WERE A TOP CONCERN OF RESIDENTS WE TALKED TO THIS YEAR

THE EVENT IS FREE AND ALL ARE WELCOME

Over the course of several successful listening stalls run by Climate Action Wansbeck, it was clear that there was significant local concerns about local rivers, streams and the sea.

As a result, CAW are holding an exciting event on Wednesday November 26th at 7pm in Morpeth Methodist Church entitled '*Is the Wansbeck Alive ?*'

This will be an opportunity to share views about the health of the river and its future.

There will be contributions from Newcastle University, Coquet River Action Group and Groundwork North East and Cumbria.

The event is free and all are welcome.

Newbiggin by the Sea – film show

Date: Saturday November 30th

Time: From 1 – 4.00pm

Venue: The Maritime Centre, Newbiggin by the Sea, Latimer Room

A showing of the film Ocean, narrated by David Attenborough, takes viewers through the sea's ecosystem and how it can recover. Free event, no booking required.

Georgina Fuller from The SeaWeSee, will also be there to talk about local NE initiatives going on in our coastal waters and to see what action we can bring.

Newbiggin by the Sea – Festive Eco Crafts

Date: Wednesday December 3rd

Time: From 7 - 9pm

Venue: The Artisan Café, Newbiggin

Come along and join us for a session where we'll make 3 different festive decorations. (You don't need to have any crafty skills, it's all suitable for beginners and will just be a lovely festive time together!)

Book at Artisan Tearoom or by messaging 07717833288 or email jenajohnson1991@gmail.com . Places allocated on a first-come first-served basis. £10 all materials and festive treat.

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.coquettrepair.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 December 20th, 11.00 – 3.00pm, Forty5, Main Street, Felton, NE65 9PP. Contact feltonrepaircafe@gmail.com.



Volunteers will be there to sharpen knives and garden tools, fix small electrical items, answer IT queries, fix toys and broken ceramics, mend or patch loved items of clothing, mend wooden items and clean and check gold or silver jewellery.

Greener Berwick Zero Waste Group Repair Café – Saturday November 29th, 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: amblerrepaircafe@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.

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

Deadline: 12 November 2025

11. Training

NGH has booked two dates in January to run a peer-to-peer Canva support workshop at St James Church Centre in Alnwick. They are -

- Wednesday January 21st 2026 from 2 - 4pm
- Friday January 30th 2026 from 10 - 12pm.



Canva users are welcome to come to one or both dates. They won't be formal training sessions, but rather an opportunity to share skills and knowledge, perhaps look at some online tutorials together - and for you to ask any questions or raise any issues that you've been struggling with.

Unlike the Digital Skills training, we can't provide iPads for everyone to use, so if you have a laptop or tablet please bring this with you.

If you haven't already done so, please email Northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com to book your place.

NB – there are still a few FREE Canva Pro licences available. Get in touch if you would like one of these.

12. January 2026 Digest – Copy Deadline

There's no Digest in December but we'll be back in January 2026. The deadline for the next edition is **January 10th 2026** but you can send items for the Digest at any time to northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com

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.

13. Summary of Events

(See Events section for full details)



Nov

15th Berwick Seed Swap, 10 – 12.30pm, Berwick Parish Church, TD15 1DF.

18th Climate Action Wansbeck meting, 7 – 9pm, The White Swan, Newgate St.

22nd Coquetdale Repair Café, 10 – 2pm, Jubilee Hall, Rothbury

22nd Amble Repair Café, 2.30 – 4.30, Dry Water Arts, Amble

29th Berwick upon Tweed Repair Café, 10 – 1pm, Salvation Army Hall, Church St.

30th Newbiggin Film Show, 1 – 4pm, Maritime Centre, Newbiggin

Dec

3rd Newbiggin Festive Eco Crafts, 7 – 9pm, The Artisan Café, Newbiggin

6th NGH Winter Gathering, St James Church Centre, Pottergate, Alnwick. 10 – 12.00.

20th Felton Repair Café, 11 – 3pm, Gallery Forty45, Main St, Felton

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