



NGH Monthly Digest

September 2026

1. NGH SURVEY

A New Look Digest

We're trialling a new look for the Digest this month, following feedback from the recent Member Survey.

You told us you'd like a more visual layout and clear sections for content.

Tell us what you think at Northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com.

Steering Group News

Welcome to Dan Avery and Cath Basilio who were elected to the Steering Group, alongside Julia, Nat, Mike and Liz.

Very many thanks to Dan and Cath for volunteering to get involved.

CONTENTS

1. NGH Survey	1
2. Environmental News	2
3. Updates from Groups	4
4. Funding	5
5. Repair Cafes	6
6. More NGH News	6
7. Events	8

What You Told Us

Thank you to the 50 members who responded to our 2026 survey. Your feedback provides an invaluable picture of what members like about Northumberland Green Hub (NGH), where we can improve and what our priorities should be over the coming year.

The overall message was very positive: 92% of respondents would recommend NGH to others, while 94% said membership helps them feel better connected and informed. Members valued the quarterly community events, Monthly Digest, networking opportunities and the sense of community.

Of those surveyed, 60% had attended at least one community event in the last year, 86% found events useful and 90% rated the networking opportunities highly. Suggested themes for future events included nature recovery, climate adaptation, water quality, greener buildings, campaigning and community organising and transport and travel.

The Monthly Digest is also highly valued, with 88% rating it useful or very useful and 80% saying they would miss it if it stopped. However, members would welcome clearer navigation, a more visual layout and easier ways to find relevant information.

Looking ahead, members want NGH to continue bringing people together while creating more opportunities for practical collaboration and shared projects. Feedback also suggested strengthening Special Interest Groups, reaching more communities across Northumberland, encouraging wider participation and supporting more member-led activity. Suggestions for future training events included fundraising, digital skills, social media, AI and grant applications.

The Steering Group will use the results to shape priorities over the coming year and to continue building a stronger environmental community across Northumberland. Thanks again to everyone who took part. We welcome suggestions and feedback at any time – you can contact the Steering Group by emailing Northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com.

2. ENVIRONMENTAL NEWS

Power plant continues to exceed standards

Local and national campaigners are calling for Lynemouth power plant to meet safety limits, after it was revealed that its emissions of two toxic pollutants have exceeded standard guidelines more than 600 times. Over 1,400 letters have been sent to the Environment Agency in recent weeks, and four campaign groups have sent a detailed technical challenge to Lynemouth's application for a further seven-year long exemption.

Jane Small from Newbiggin Environment Network said: *"If this permit for Lynemouth is agreed, it will mean residents and wildlife don't have the standard safety protection enjoyed by most people.....We urge the EA to say enough is enough: install the usual safety equipment like other responsible organisations."*

The challenge was supported by Alnwick Area FoE, Climate Action Wansbeck, Climate Action Newcastle and Biofuelwatch.

The plant's owners claim it would not be possible to install equipment to clean flue gases in the converted coal power plant. Lynemouth Power is owned by Czech billionaire Daniel Kretinsky's EPH and TotalEnergies, two large multinational companies that invest heavily in dirty energy.

Anyone wishing to send a letter to support the campaign can find a draft letter at <https://actionnetwork.org/letters/stop-lynemouths-permit-to-pollute-no-special-treatment-for-billionaires-or-biomass>

Nurdle Update

On 17 July, a collision at the Port of Tyne released more than 17 tonnes of plastic pellets ('nurdles') into the River Tyne. Since then, nurdles have washed ashore across 45 miles of north east coastline. Volunteers across the region have been cleaning beaches, documenting pollution and helping agencies track how far the pellets have travelled.

North Northumberland beaches including Cambois, Newbiggin and Blyth remain among the most heavily affected. Local groups continue to play a crucial role in monitoring and recovery.

Other ongoing actions include

- Scientific modelling and monitoring — The EA is using drones, patrol vessels and modelling tools to track nurdle movement and identify high-risk habitats.
- Expert-led ecological risk assessment — The Scientific and Technical Advice Committee is evaluating impacts on different habitats to guide safe, targeted clean-up.
- Government and local authority coordination — Defra, the Environment Agency and local councils are deploying additional resources to support recovery.

If you'd like to help, the Great Nurdle Hunt runs from 4 September to 4 October 2026 (nurdlehunt.org.uk). You can also report sightings or join clean-ups through local CRAG groups or Northumberland Wildlife Trust.





A new model for rewilding ?

In a remote corner of Northumberland lies the largest single-ownership rewilding site in England. The 7,500 acres Emblehope Moor, once used for sheep farming, grouse shooting and dog training, has just been bought for £8.5 million by Restore, a nature restoration company.

What makes it unusual is the plan for its future. Over the next 20 years, Restore plans to rewet drained peatland, clear sitka spruce plantations and introduce Exmoor ponies to encourage biodiversity.

The crucial part is that once investors have received a promised two-times return and a loan is repaid, Restore plans to hand the entire estate over to a community trust or charity, rather than holding onto it indefinitely.

Founder Benedict Macdonald describes the goal as a model that combines commercial investment with community ownership and hopes it can become a model for the uplands.

Source: The Guardian, 6th September 2026

Data Centres – What’s Happening Around Blyth ?

Blyth and the surrounding area are becoming a focus for several major data centre proposals. The most advanced project is the Cambois Data Centre Campus, on the former Blyth Power Station site which has had first stage planning approval by NCC.

Developed by QTS, the scheme could eventually comprise up to 10 buildings, covering 6 million square feet. The investment has been estimated at up to £10 billion. Other proposals include a potential campus at Cambois and a further scheme at West Sleekburn. These projects vary in their planning status and scale and their details may change as applications progress.

While supporters point to investment and opportunities to diversify the local economy, concerns have been raised about electricity demand, infrastructure, water and cooling requirements, emissions, light, noise and the impact on nature and the landscape.

QTS has funded some local community projects including Ashington’s Full Circle Food Project’s Meals that Matter scheme. Similar funding has been taken up by other community groups in Cambois.

Local opposition has been growing. Residents have taken part in regular demonstrations near the Cambois site to help residents understand the possible issues while the Newbiggin Environmental Network has expressed concerns about the potential effects on water resources, wildlife and the local environment.

Data Centres – Continued

Some campaigners also question whether the number of permanent jobs will match the scale of the investment. These concerns highlight the importance of transparent environmental assessments, meaningful community engagements and ensuring that economic benefits are felt genuinely locally.

3. UPDATES FROM GROUPS

Climate Action Wansbeck

The first Festival of Communities, Nature and Environment in Morpeth Greener Weekend was a huge success with over 400 people attending three events over the first weekend of September.

The event in the town hall brought together community groups and organisations to share with visitors what they are doing. Climate Action Wansbeck talked about the Wansbeck river testing project and made river guardian ‘crowns’ that displayed river-based creatures and features. Newminster school showed nature themed artwork made by their pupils.

Climate Action Wansbeck River volunteers also met to review the data analysis provided by



Paul Gibson, discussed reasons for high readings east of Morpeth and Bothal Burn and talked about where we need to go next. Alison Silvera also spoke about a project involving river fly testing.

New litter picking group in Amble



The Amble Swimmers now have a litter picking group. Whilst sitting on the beach chatting after a swim, we were commenting on rubbish and things left on the beach. We decided to do something about it so have started meeting 4pm on Sundays at the harbour office for a litter pick.

Newbiggin Environment Network

The group has been busy over the summer, writing campaign letters about pollution coming from Lynemouth power station, supporting local calls for a moratorium on AI data centres along the River Wansbeck, a national call for zero plastic pellet (nurdle) loss in line with EU law and bringing together different parties to hasten solutions to severe coastal erosion at Church Point.

We had a very successful 3-day presence at Newbiggin's Maritime Festival which resulted in many good conversations and volunteer sign-ups. This autumn there will be activities of our usual groups: Biodiversity Group; Street, Beach and Nurdle cleaning; community garden planting (including Common Thread's October Bloom Festival); Plastic Free Newbiggin and Repair Café development.

In October and November, we will be hosting the Newbiggin screening of the important national film '[People's Emergency Briefing](#)' and follow-up workshop with Ian Lavery MP.

**If you'd like to share what your group has been doing, why not send us a short article for a future edition of the Digest ? It's great to include a photo too if you can.
Just email Northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com.**

Canva licences

NGH still has several FREE Canva Pro licences that are available to community groups. These are normally £100/year, so it's big saving.

If you're interested, contact us at Northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com

4. FUNDING

Thriving Together are holding a Funding Fair in Cramlington in early November. There will be opportunities to meet grant funders face-to-face and speak directly with regional and national grant-makers at their exhibition tables in Zones 2 & 3 to discuss project ideas and eligibility.

There will also be private 1-to-1 sessions – dedicated consultation slots held in the private Conference Room with key funding officers (pre-booking required).

The event is a great chance to connect with other local charities, non-profits, and community groups from across Northumberland.

- **Date:** Tuesday 3rd November 2026
- **Event Time:** 1:00pm – 3:00pm
- **Location:** Top Floor (Zones 2 & 3 and Conference Room), Cramlington Community Hub

The full line up of attending funding bodies is currently being finalised together with details of how to register.

5. REPAIR CAFES

Coquetdale Repair Café – Saturday 21st November, Jubilee Hall Rothbury 10.00-2.00pm. Book your repair on our website www.coquetrepair.co.uk or pick up a form in the Rothbury RSPCA shop. Email info@coquet-repair.co.uk.

Greener Berwick Zero Waste Group Repair Café – Saturday 26th September , 10-1pm at The Salvation Army Hall, 53 Church Street, TD15 1EE. Repairs are free but donations very welcome. We're always looking for volunteers All skills welcome. Visit <https://www.greenerberwick.org.uk/repair-cafe>.

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

Warkworth Repair Café - Saturday 10th October 10am-12, Memorial Hall, Castle Street. Clothing, soft toys, small household and electrical items.

Amble Repair Café – Saturday 26th September, 2.30 – 4.30pm, Dry Water Arts. Volunteer repairers cover sewing, darning, toys, small electrical appliances, sharpening, ceramics and small items of furniture. <https://www.drywaterarts.uk/pop-up-event/repair-cafe>

Felton Repair Café - Saturday 7th November, 10.30 am to 2 pm, Long Room at Gallery45, Main Street. Knife and tool sharpening, toy mending and ceramics, small electricals repairs, table top furniture mending, sewing repairs, computer advice. Email feltonrepaircafe@gmail.com.

Morpeth Repair Café – Saturday 3rd October, 9.30 – 12.30, Wellspring Church Hall, Dark Lane. Repairs for electrical items, clothing, toys and mechanical items.

6. MORE NGH NEWS



Annual General Meeting

Thanks to everyone who came along to the AGM on September 12th. You can find a copy of the Annual Report on the website at [agm-report-2526.pdf](#)

Julia, Mike, Nat and Liz were re-elected to the Steering Group and they are joined by Dan Avery and Cath Basilio.

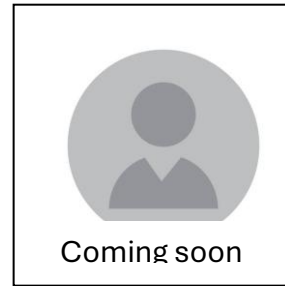
A Different Way to Communicate

What happens when you put words to one side and let creativity take over? That was the question explored at Northumberland Green Hub's Community Event on September 12th.

The morning workshop, led by NGH member and environmental artist Ali Elly, introduced participants to the ways art can help us connect, share ideas and communicate important messages. We were encouraged to dust off our artistic abilities and get involved — and the results were certainly creative!

Working together, participants produced an artistic representation of environmental connections across Northumberland. It was great to see ideas taking shape, conversations flowing and new connections being made along the way. The workshop was a great reminder that there are many ways to communicate and understand the world around us.

The Steering Group



Top row – Dan Avery, Julia Chambers, Cath Basilio
Bottom row - Liz Clark, Natalie Goodman and Mike Powell

What Does the Steering Group Do ?

The Steering Group is responsible for organising Community Events, producing the monthly Digest, updating the website, overseeing the Special Interest Groups, managing NGH's finances and generally keeping NGH going.

If you'd like to get involved in running a vibrant and welcoming network, why not get in touch ? We're always looking for people who can help to plan and organise events, or perhaps you've got web skills and could spare a couple of hours a month. Whatever your skills, we'd appreciate the help!

October 2026 Digest – Copy Deadline

The deadline for items for the October edition of the Digest will be earlier than usual – *Friday October 4th* – but you can send items at any time to Northumberlandgreenhub@gmail.com.

Thanks to everyone who contributed to this edition – you know who you are and you made pulling this edition together so much easier.

See next section for details of Events

7. EVENTS

Wild Futures Conference

From the Natural History Society of Northumbria - for early career naturalists, students and career changes.

-  **Date:** Saturday September 19th
-  **Time:** 11.00am – 3.00pm
-  **Venue:** Great North Museum, Hancock

Apple Day at Wooler Library

Have a go at making apple juice, bring your own apples. Arts and Crafts for all.

-  **Date:** Saturday September 26th
-  **Time:** 10.30am – 12 noon
-  **Venue:** Wooler Library

Community Apple Pressing Day

Bring apples. Share skills. Build community

-  **Date:** Saturday September 26th
-  **Venue:** Market Place, Hexham

Little Shore Bathing Water – next steps

Northumbrian Water and the Environment Agency will look at the future of Little Shore after attaining Bathing Water Status this year All welcome. Please rsvp wariversgroup@gmail.com.

-  **Date:** Thursday October 1st
-  **Time:** 7pm
-  **Venue:** Harbour Commission Office

Data Centre Developments – public meeting

This is an opportunity for residents with views on data centre developments to share their perspectives and provide input to East Bedlington Parish Council.

-  **Date:** Thursday October 1st
-  **Time:** 6.30pm – 8.00pm
-  **Venue:** East Bedlington Community Centre, 16-17 Station St, NE22 7JN.

Northumberland Organic & Local Market

Fruit, veg, pantry items, bakery, cakes, wine, homewares, coffee, pizza and more. Mostly UK grown veg.

-  **Date:** Friday October 2nd
-  **Time:** 4 – 8pm
-  **Venue:** Rennington Village Hall

Climate Action Wansbeck Reading Group

A discussion on a climate / nature-based piece of writing that you want to share with the group. There's tea, coffee and usually biscuits!

-  **Date:** Tuesday October 6th
-  **Time:** 7 – 8.30pm
-  **Venue:** Poetry Library in Morpeth Leisure Centre



Apple Pressing Day

Apple pressing, lantern making workshops, music. For more information visit <https://www.facebook.com/p/Alnwick-Bullfield-Community-Orchard-100064601232419/>

-  **Date:** Saturday October 10th
-  **Time:** 12.30pm – 3.30pm
-  **Venue:** Bullfield Community Orchard

Derek v Derek

Rothbury CAN are showing a screening of Derek v Derek, the story of two neighbouring farmers who share a name but take a radically different approach to land use.

-  **Date:** Saturday October 17th
-  **Time:** 7pm followed by discussion led by local farmers
-  **Venue:** Jubilee Hall, Rothbury

Climate Action Wansbeck AGM

We hope new members will come along and find out about how the past year and events have gone, about new projects and how to get involved with helping to keep CAW a vibrant and progressive group. Contact us on climateactionwansbeck@gmail.com

-  **Date:** Tuesday October 20th
-  **Time:** 7pm
-  **Venue:** Upstairs in the White Swan, Morpeth.



Coquet Conversations – a CRAG Autumn Update

An invitation to CRAG volunteers and supporters to join us for a cream tea and to hear from natural England on the Protected Site Strategy for the Coquet, from Northumberland Wildlife Trust on the Caudhall Moss project and from the Rivers Trust on a Coquet fishy topic!

There will be plenty of opportunity for questions, discussions and conversation, as well as an update on CRAG's activities.

Free to attend, but donations are always welcome. If you plan to attend, please let us know as this helps with quantities of scones! Email at coquetriveractiongroup@outlook.com.



Date: Saturday October 31st



Time: 1.30pm



Venue: Swarland Village Hall, Coastview, Swarland

Creating Presence

Led by Sonia Ritter, *Creating Presence* is an interactive and animated workshop for all to those who want their expertise, passion and purpose to carry in any presentation, lecture or information that they may give or share. It offers an excellent opportunity to unlock, build and strengthen your public speaking skills and techniques - using a bit of Shakespeare into the bargain!



Date: Saturday November 14th



Time: 10.00am – 12.45pm



Venue: Alnwick Playhouse

More details at <https://alnwickplayhouse.co.uk/event/shakespeare-in-action/>

Re-wilding West Chevington

A talk by Lee Rankin, NWT and arranged by Amble & District Education Society. £5 entry fee, refreshments included.



Date: November 18th



Time: 10.00am – 12.00



Venue: Amble Masonic Hall, Gloster Hill