

* **Green Bullet**

28th June 2016

North West Environment Link (NWEL) is a partnership of environmental voluntary sector organisations, representing hundreds of thousands of members in the North West.

We are members of VSNW, the regional voluntary sector network for the North West, whose purpose is to support a connected and influential voluntary and community sector (VCS).

This bulletin is intended to keep NWEL members and wider networks up to date on events and issues that will be of interest to environmental voluntary and community sector organisations in the North West. Please send any items for inclusion in the next bulletin to [andyyuille@gmail.com](mailto:andyyuille@gmail.com) - and feel free to forward all or parts of these bulletins throughout your own networks to help spread the word!

The Green Bullet is also available to download from the [VSNW](http://www.vsnw.org.uk/publications/nwel-green-bullet) website.

**CPRE North West have kindly agreed to continue their support to enable the Green Bullet to be produced throughout 2016 – very many thanks!**

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***Campaigns***

**Europe**

George Eustice says that “the birds and habitats directives would go”, as they are “[spirit-crushing](http://www.theguardian.com/politics/2016/may/30/brexit-spirit-crushing-green-directives-minister-george-eustice)”. He does argue that the Government will have the opportunity to replace it with better legislation - but no-one seems to believe him. Natalie Bennett and Ed Davey call it an “[environmental disaster](http://www.edie.net/news/11/Natalie-Bennett-Ed-Davey-Brexit-EU-Referendum-energy-environment-policy/?utm_source=dailynewsletter,%20edie%20daily%20newsletter&utm_medium=email,%20email&utm_content=news&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter,%2079709e3db2-dailynewsletter)”. Green Alliance sums up the aftermath and the prospects going forwards by saying that “[The environment community is in shock](https://greenlivingblogorguk.wordpress.com/2016/06/24/we-must-now-avoid-a-race-to-the-bottom/?iframe=true&theme_preview=true)…Brexit is the biggest threat to the UK environment and countryside in our lifetime…We will have to organise the mother of all campaigns to give our sector and our supporters a voice to ensure that politics addresses the future of Britain’s environment.   The nation appears divided, yet our love for the environment will always be something we have in common.” Britain’s MEP lead on [reforming EU carbon action](http://www.euractiv.com/section/energy/news/brexit-calls-eu-climate-action-into-question-as-top-mep-quits/) has resigned, leaving its progress in doubt. The status of [the Paris Agreement has been called into question](http://www.edie.net/news/9/EU-out-vote-puts-UK-commitment-to-Paris-climate-agreement-in-doubt/) and it will need to be re-written, and the UK’s commitment to it is in doubt. Brexit could [weaken recycling and air quality standards](http://www.edie.net/news/11/Brexit-could--weaken--business-standards-for-recycling-and-air-quality/?utm_source=dailynewsletter,%20edie%20daily%20newsletter&utm_medium=email,%20email&utm_content=news&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter,%20e11a68000f-dailynewsletter). There are fears that the UK could return to its standing as “[the dirty man of Europe](http://www.edie.net/news/11/EU-Referendum-remain-or-Brexit-poll-results-green-economy-climate-change/?utm_source=dailynewsletter,%20edie%20daily%20newsletter&utm_medium=email,%20email&utm_content=news&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter,%20ede0e8a06e-dailynewsletter)” that it ‘enjoyed’ [before joining the EU](http://www.carbon2018.com/news/brexit-the-uk-decides-we-are-better-on-our-own). [Green business, professionals and campaigners](http://www.edie.net/news/11/Environmental-policies-could-be--eroded--by-Brexit--the-green-business-reaction/?utm_source=dailynewsletter,%20edie%20daily%20newsletter&utm_medium=email,%20email&utm_content=news&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter,%200b15273268-dailynewsletter) – including the [Wildlife Trusts](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/EU-Ref), [CIEEM](http://www.cieem.net/news/333/uk-votes-to-leave-eu-what-now-for-the-natural-environment), [WWF](http://www.wwf.org.uk/wwf_articles.cfm?unewsid=7889), and dozens of others - are down but not out, worried but committed to salvaging something from the disaster. Watch this space, this struggle has only just begun!

**Climate change**

Good news: G7 leaders [pledged to eliminate fossil fuel subsidies](http://newsroom.unfccc.int/paris-agreement/g7-leaders-declaration-addresses-paris-agreement/) by 2025, and encourage all other countries to do so as well. G20 Governments collectively handed out $452 billion in fossil fuel subsidies over the last two years – more than four times more than spent on renewables. Good news: [Scotland has exceeded its 2020 target](http://scottishgovernment.presscentre.com/ImageLibrary/detail.aspx?MediaDetailsID=4971&HUserId=n2bwGTDhkbSUAL1KX8G9_Q..) to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 42% six years early and confirmed plans to establish a "new and more testing" objective. Bad news: according to a [new Met Office report](http://www.nature.com/nclimate/journal/vaop/ncurrent/full/nclimate3063.html), atmospheric concentrations of CO2 will shatter the symbolic barrier of 400 parts per million (ppm) this year, a year earlier than expected, and will not fall below it in our lifetimes. The IPCC says that CO2 concentrations [must be stabilised at 450ppm](https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/syr/AR5_SYR_FINAL_SPM.pdf) to [have a fair chance](https://www.ipcc.ch/publications_and_data/ar4/wg1/en/ch1s1-6.html) of avoiding global warming above 2C, which could carry [catastrophic consequences](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/oct/10/climate-2c-global-warming-target-fail). Doing that that [will require a 40-70% emissions cut by 2050](https://www.ipcc.ch/pdf/assessment-report/ar5/syr/AR5_SYR_FINAL_SPM.pdf), compared to 2010 levels, and zero emissions by the end of the century. We are not remotely on track to achieve this; the report’s author estimates we are currently likely to breach 450ppm within 20 years.

**Dark skies & light pollution**

The most detailed ever [satellite maps](http://nightblight.cpre.org.uk/maps/) of England’s dark skies have been released by the Campaign to Protect Rural England (CPRE).They enable users to search by postcode, and provide a detailed and up-to-date analysis of England’s skies. They also give us an unprecedented level of understanding into where light pollution is most invasive, and where we can find oases of darkness in our brightest areas. Nineteen of the brightest 20 skies are above London boroughs, while Manchester is the only non-London district in the top 20. Nationwide, the maps show that just 22 per cent of England is untouched by light pollution, and that 53 per cent of the darkest skies are over National Parks and Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty. The maps are analyzed and recommendations made in the accompanying [Night Blight report](http://nightblight.cpre.org.uk/images/resources/Night_Blight_cpre.pdf).

**A new charter for trees, woods and people - please share your story**The Woodland Trust is leading over 50 organisations in a call to create a new [charter for trees, woods and people](https://treecharter.uk/). The charter will be rooted in stories and memories. They want to collect thousands of tree stories from across the country. It just takes a couple of minutes to [add your own story](https://treecharter.uk/share-your-story/?utm_source=treechampions&utm_medium=social&utm_campaign=treecharter). The Charter steering group of over 50 cross-sector organisations will work together to build a charter that is rooted in these stories – reflecting what people in UK society value about trees, the issues they feel need addressing, and the things they want changed so that future generations can benefit from trees and woods. The resulting charter will have strength because it represents the voices and experiences of thousands of people across all sectors of society. It will provide guidance for individuals, communities, businesses and policy makers.

**Planning reforms**

Over 8,000 people have written to their MPs supporting CPRE’s campaign to ensure that impending changes to the planning system protects open countryside and the Green Belt and prioritises development on brownfield sites. [Join them!](http://takeaction.cpre.org.uk/ea-action/action?ea.client.id=21&ea.campaign.id=46682&ea.tracking.id=campaigns-update-e&utm_medium=email&utm_source=engagingnetworks&utm_campaign=Campaigns-update-June-2016-NPPF-update&utm_content=Campaigns+update+June+2016+NPPF+update)

**Air pollution**

More terrifying facts about the [global public health emergency](http://www.edie.net/news/9/Air-quality-crisis--7-shocking-statistics-that-will-take-your-breath-away/?utm_source=dailynewsletter,%20edie%20daily%20newsletter&utm_medium=email,%20email&utm_content=news&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter,%209843935c28-dailynewsletter) of air pollution that will literally take your breath away.  
  
**Manchester – City of Trees**

[City of Trees](http://www.cityoftrees.org.uk/) is an innovative and exciting movement set to re-invigorate Greater Manchester’s landscape by transforming underused, unloved woodland and planting a tree for every man, woman and child who lives there, within a generation. City of Trees will be driven by the team that were previously known as the Red Rose Forest.

**Lake District World Heritage Site**

Add your voice to the campaign to get the Lake District recognised as a [World Heritage Site](http://lakesworldheritage.co.uk/), alongside the Great Barrier Reef and the Taj Mahal!

### Search for England's top community meadows

As part of the ‘[Save Our Magnificent Meadows](http://www.magnificentmeadows.org.uk/)’ project, Plantlife and partners are celebrating the work of the communities and schools who are working to protect our meadow heritage.  Entries for the best 'meadow makers' is open until 31st July.

***Information update***

**Energy**

* A High Court judge has quashed planning permission for a single wind turbine because the council unlawfully took account of promised annual payments to the community. The judge re-affirmed that [planning consent cannot be bought or sold](http://www.landmarkchambers.co.uk/news.aspx?id=4090).
* Greg Clark has refused permission for a solar farm in [Cambridgeshire](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/recovered-appeal-land-north-of-dales-manor-business-park-west-way-sawston-refs-3012014-3013863-15-june-2016), citing harm to the Green Belt, while a Planning Inspector overturned the local council to approve one in [Somerset](https://acp.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/ViewDocument.aspx?fileid=16363275).
* Mr Clark also refused permission for a single wind turbine in [Northamptonshire](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/531080/16-06-23_DL_IR_Bugbrooke_Northants.pdf), against the recommendation of an inspector. He held that while overall the turbine would not harm the character and appearance of the countryside, "siting the turbine at this location would inevitably have a visual impact which would be apparent to local communities".
* A new report, [Letting in the Light:](http://www.irena.org/menu/index.aspx?mnu=Subcat&PriMenuID=36&CatID=141&SubcatID=2735)How Solar Photovoltaics Will Revolutionize the Electricity System, finds the solar industry is poised for a huge expansion in the next 15 years, driven primarily by cost reductions, and able to claim 13% of global supply by 2030.

**Planning**

* The CLG select committee has launched an [inquiry](http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/communities-and-local-government-committee/inquiries/parliament-2015/local-plans-expert-group-recommendations-16-17/commons-written-submission-form/) into the [Local Plans Expert Group](http://lpeg.org/)’s recommendations for changes to the planning system.
* On the first day that Ministers were given the power to intervene in Local Plan making under the Housing and Planning Act, they did so, putting the [Birmingham Local Plan on hold](http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/plan2031). Look forward to more interventions in your area soon!
* Research from a planning consultancy suggests that even councils that claim a five-year supply may struggle to prove it in practice due to a [reliance on sites without planning permission](https://www.planningportal.co.uk/news/article/315/new_research_questions_local_plan_housing_supply_claims)
* The number of newly built homes continues to rise and is now at the highest level since 2008 to 2009, according to [new figures released by DCLG](https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/house-building-in-england-january-to-march-2016). These show that 139,690 new homes were completed in the year to March, a rise of 12 per cent on the previous year. These latest house building figures also show that the number of new homes started is also at its highest level since 2007 to 2008.
* [CPRE has raised concerns](http://www.cpre.org.uk/media-centre/sound-bites/item/4299-queen-s-speech-positive-signs-on-neighbourhood-planning-but-concerns-about-planning-conditions) that proposals in the Neighbourhood Planning and Infrastructure Bill to relax pre-commencement conditions might result in environmental surveys being skipped over and greater environmental damage occurring as a consequence
* In last minute [guidance on new “garden” villages](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/529363/160609_EOI_Guidance.pdf), the Government insists on community support for the scheme as a criterion, and imposes a deadline of the end of July for expressions of interest from councils
* Housing targets may continue not to be met because [there aren't enough builders](http://www.knightfrank.co.uk/research/reports/uk-housebuilding-report-2016-3851.aspx) to build the homes needed, according to a survey of Britain's biggest housing developers conducted by estate agent Knight Frank. Over half of those questioned also said that the government had not been helpful enough in loosening building regulations or ensuring an increase in access to public sector land, indicating a move not to more homes, but to less sustainable ones.

**Waste**

* Welsh [recycling rates](http://www.keepbritaintidy.org/wales-recycling-figures-soar-ahead-of-england/2695/2/1/999/3) have surged even further ahead of England’s, reaching almost 60% in June, compared to English rates that have been languishing at less than 45% for the last two years.
* A new [global food standard](http://flwprotocol.org/) has been launched to help quantify and tackle food waste. With the UN Food and Agriculture Organization stating that around [one third of all food is wasted](http://www.fao.org/food-loss-and-food-waste/en/) – costing $940bn each year – the standard introduces the first set of international reporting requirements that businesses, governments and NGOs will follow in order to highlight areas where efficiency can be improved. If food waste were a country, it would be the [third largest emitter of carbon](http://www.wri.org/blog/2015/09/what%E2%80%99s-food-loss-and-waste-got-do-sustainable-development-lot-actually) after the USA and China.

***Publications***

**Sub-national population projections**

According to [2014-based sub-national population projections](http://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationprojections/bulletins/subnationalpopulationprojectionsforengland/2014basedprojections) published this month by the Office for National Statistics (ONS), the population of England is projected to grow by 7.5% over the ten years to mid-2024. The population is projected to be larger and older compared to the 2012 projections. The sub-national population projections provide the base for household projections, expected next month, which are the starting point for determining Local Plan housing numbers and planning decisions by local authorities. London, the East and South East are projected to grow faster than this average; the North West is projected to be the second most slowly-growing region, at 3.9%. Seven of the nine areas that are projected to have shrinking population are in the North West.

**Soil health**

The Government’s stated ambition to manage the UK’s soil sustainably by 2030 will not be met unless significant further action is taken, the Environmental Audit Committee has warned in a report published this month on [the health of UK soil](http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/environmental-audit-committee/news-parliament-2015/soil-health-report-published-16-17/). Failing to prevent soil degradation will lead to increased flood risk, lower food security, and greater carbon emissions. Failing to treat contaminated soils may lead to public health problems and prevents brownfield sites from being developed. Soil health isn’t sexy or charismatic, but it underpins all our social, environmental and economic systems.

**“The North”**

IPPR North and the RTPI have released a [blueprint for a Great North Plan](http://www.ippr.org/publications/blueprint-for-a-great-north-plan), to provide a “coherent approach to economic planning” involving regional businesses and focusing on key themes: transport, economics, energy and population, and including the natural environment as a key area for strategic collaboration and mapping. IPPR North have also released a report arguing that [the role of small and medium sized cities](http://www.ippr.org/publications/city-systems) (SMCs) in driving northern prosperity needs to be acknowledged and factored into regional and sub-regional strategies. It argues that “the empirical evidence for agglomeration effects in Europe (and in the UK in particular) is at best mixed, and is even negative in some studies. In this context, the role of SMCs is too often overlooked.” The Centre for Cities has said that the Northern Powerhouse should focus on [productivity, not transport connectivity](http://www.centreforcities.org/publication/building-the-northern-powerhouse-lessons-from-rhine-ruhr-randstad/).

**Fit for Life**

[Fit for Life](http://www.sustrans.org.uk/sites/default/files/images/files/Sustrans%20Fit%20for%20Life.pdf), a new report by Sustrans, presents independent research, by leading experts, into the public health benefits of new walking and cycling routes. Sustrans, supported by a grant from the Big Lottery Fund, completed many new high quality walking and cycling routes between 2009 and 2013.

***Events***

**Local impacts of cultural ecosystem services**

#### A Participatory GIS tool for Morecambe Bay, 1st July, 1-2pm - Marion Frandsen from ADAS and Hugh Inwood from The Research Box will talk through the Participatory GIS tool they have developed with Natural England. This tool captures [public perceptions about the natural environment](https://ecosystemsknowledge.webex.com/mw3100/mywebex/default.do?nomenu=true&siteurl=ecosystemsknowledge&service=6&rnd=0.7651638767425389&main_url=https%3A%2F%2Fecosystemsknowledge.webex.com%2Fec3100%2Feventcenter%2Fevent%2FeventAction.do%3FtheAction%3Ddetail%26confViewID%3D3822476192%26%26EMK%3D4832534b00000002a00a0afa15ca24f2b7c7873e8cdb311d7864c1535d9b340ac647cf98c92ab83d%26email%3Droisin%2540ecosystemsknowledge.net%26encryptTicket%3DSDJTSwAAAAJzKkv9TrlNwMyN0Mlp9U97LW1BfZ7c0Wi4OEevPsdx1Q2%26%26SourceId%3D34d93acbeb695494e0530ba2fd0a52c8%26siteurl%3Decosystemsknowledge), specifically the **cultural ecosystem services** that people derive from the environment.

#### Learning from the UK’s Biosphere Reserves

#### 14th July, 1-2pm. Andy Bell, who established the UK's first modern style Biosphere Reserve, will present examples from UNESCO's Man and the Biosphere Programme in the UK. He will discuss how the reserves are [connecting people and nature at the landscape scale](https://ecosystemsknowledge.webex.com/mw3100/mywebex/default.do?nomenu=true&siteurl=ecosystemsknowledge&service=6&rnd=0.8617051016837172&main_url=https%3A%2F%2Fecosystemsknowledge.webex.com%2Fec3100%2Feventcenter%2Fevent%2FeventAction.do%3FtheAction%3Dlandingfrommail%26confViewID%3D3822476735%26%26EMK%3D4832534b0000000248d5ceb43c84d1e11cb4fb7d040fbc5bf1927577a8c98734b75208f90781cf46%26email%3Droisin%2540ecosystemsknowledge.net%26encryptTicket%3DSDJTSwAAAALK8nj2yCh55ZusZ-tqCefvwQhDnfVmuvq_D8j9I4epVg2%26%26SourceId%3D34c0b0bb43611bdfe0530ca2fd0a438a%26siteurl%3Decosystemsknowledge) in a wholly integrated way.

**Big Bee Count**

Cheshire Wildlife Trust are calling for people across Cheshire to spend an hour on July 17th looking for bees as part of their first ever [Big Garden Bee Count](http://cheshirewildlifetrust.cmail20.com/t/r-l-ehyjdul-hyabkiut-n/), which coincides with Defra's [Bees' Needs week](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/bees-needs). They’ve teamed up with the county's Biological Records Office, [RECORD](http://cheshirewildlifetrust.cmail20.com/t/r-l-ehyjdul-hyabkiut-p/), to raise awareness of their work to create a bee atlas for Cheshire and they want you to send them your sightings so that they can paint the bigger picture of the current status of the bee population in Cheshire. Once it's published, they’ll use the atlas to help manage their reserves to help pollinators and explore ways to create 'bee roads' across the county.

**What works in involving people in decision-making?**

Room 714b Maxwell Building, University of Salford, The Crescent, M5 4WT. Have you ever wondered what the success factors are for giving people a voice in local decisions? This [Jam and Justice event](http://www.vsnw.org.uk/events/view/1058) is about ways of finding out what combination of factors are needed to successfully influence local decision making. It is about designing and using evaluation methods that take account of messy real life situations, but also give concrete answers.

**Clayfest**

The Society for Protection of Ancient Buildings are supporting [Earth Building UK and Ireland (EBUKI)](http://r20.rs6.net/tn.jsp?f=001pRxvSlp1Gtzzv7FXIlEZ21bwbJU4LfuFF2jNjMPw2K7loQGmKxWknSiY4fd4FrLHcRnMOJlPXvnDH0YmIe8qdB4dJwLxrI9pXGCV9xKlUmupijfmuLQ1kICSSVettSU5gz-oTQkXC95jJyd5XpwVQA==&c=SfpF8bPFxBE-feKen3GnYXLJESsZojAJ1iZzX0pJu2D6XuwJfxwOKA==&ch=D6nolVbNb2I_2cp9uTHhCN-YA5ehr8YK7f-EId7raNm3DDBGJPNvFw==) with this year's [Clayfest](http://www.spab.org.uk/spab-events-awards/clayfest-2016/), a week-long celebration of earth building. Held at the beautiful RSPB Campfield Marsh Reserve in Bowness on Solway, Cumbria, the week will include three days of hands-on workshops from 19-21 July, a conference on 22 July, and a tour of the local clay dabbin buildings on 23 July.

**CAfS AGM event**

Cumbria Action for Sustainability are holding their [AGM](http://www.cafs.org.uk/events/cafs-agm-event-paul-allen-the-extraordinary-story-of-human-beings-energy-and-happiness/) on Thursday 7th July at The George Hotel in Penrith.  The evening will include the official AGM at 6.15pm, followed by a talk from Paul Allen, from the Centre for Alternative Technology on The Extraordinary Story of Human Beings, Energy and Happiness.

**Shifting Sands Symposium**Monday 18 July - Tuesday 19 July, Kendal and site visits. Organised by the Morecambe Bay Partnership, the [Shifting Sands Symposium](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/shifting-sands-symposium-tickets-25596399520) is a 2-day workshop for anyone involved in studying, monitoring, volunteering, managing or working on sand dunes or shingle. Fascinating presentations and site visits.

***Resources***

**Environment & Society Tool Assessor**

Tool Assessor is the UK's new online resource to help you understand, choose from and use the wide range of tools for analysing ecosystem services, natural capital and green infrastructure: [tools that link the environment and society](http://ecosystemsknowledge.net/resources/tools/tool-assessor). This resource has attracted wide interest due to its focus on the application of these tools in the UK, rather than globally. It is expected to grow as more analytical tools become ready for use.

**Community energy**

RegenSW have just launched a set of [new resources](http://regensw.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=087cfaf09896aa1f0e6c03ffd&id=7d2ab26ff6&e=3d6467b35f) to help communities and local authorities integrate local clean energy into neighbourhood plans. Neighbourhood planning gives you the opportunity to think positively and proactively about future renewable energy and building developments in your area. These model policies and resources are designed to make that process easier, more robust and aspirational.

**Transforming derelict, or underused land through community-led models**

Locality have produced a guide to [transforming derelict, or underused land through community-led models](http://mycommunity.org.uk/resources/transforming-derelict-or-underused-land-through-community-led-models/). It serves as an introduction to the subject and demonstrates how to bring communities together to take action to bring land back into productive use. It also shows how additional community benefits can be achieved as well as creating a better local environment for everyone.

### Nature4Health

The [Nature4Health project](http://www.nature4health.org.uk/) is a three year programme being run by the Mersey Forest.  It aims to tackle health inequalities using access to the outdoors across the areas of Liverpool, Sefton and St Helens.  The scheme will provide high quality, evidence-based activity sessions utilising the assets of the local natural environment.  In a related initiative, The Centre for Sustainable Healthcare has produced a simple infographic on [prescribing access to greenspace](http://nhsforest.org/sites/default/files/Prescribing%20Green%20Space-3.pdf) to help engage GPs in making use of the natural outdoors to improve health.

***Consultations***

**National Infrastructure Assessment**

Don’t forget the NIC consultation on the process and methodology it will use to produce the first National Infrastructure Assessment – open till 5th August. Climate and environmental considerations need to be embedded in the process from the outset!

***Funding***

### LIFE Grants

The call for proposals under the [LIFE EU funding stream](http://ec.europa.eu/environment/life/funding/life2016/) is now open. This call is making €239 million available to support projects in two areas: **climate action** (climate change mitigation, climate change adaptation, climate change governance and information) with a deadline of 7th September 2016; and **environment** (nature & biodiversity, environment & resource efficiency, environmental governance & information) with deadlines of 12th and 15th September 2016. A wide range of organisation can apply. Get ‘em while you can…

**Cumbria events & environmental improvements**

Friends of the Lake District’s [Discover Cumbria and Environmental Improvement Grants](https://www.friendsofthelakedistrict.org.uk/how-to-apply-for-a-grant) (EIGs) are open for applications. Discover Cumbria events should provide an innovative opportunity for people and communities to get outside, discover and enjoy something new about the natural environment, and must help Cumbria get back on its feet after the flooding in some way. EIGs can be used to support a wide range of environmental projects.

**Community Energy**

**Funding for community energy projects is available from the** [Rural Community Energy Fund](http://regensw.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=087cfaf09896aa1f0e6c03ffd&id=073d73cef9&e=3d6467b35f)and[Urban Community Energy Fund](http://regensw.us7.list-manage.com/track/click?u=087cfaf09896aa1f0e6c03ffd&id=85f18931aa&e=3d6467b35f)**.**Up to £20,000 of DECC and DEFRA grant funding is still available, per project, so get your applications in quick! [The Naturesave Trust](http://regensw.us7.list-manage1.com/track/click?u=087cfaf09896aa1f0e6c03ffd&id=a32685005a&e=3d6467b35f) also provides start up 'seed corn' grants for community renewable energy projects. They are keen to help communities, in particular, that do not have the initial start-up capital to undertake all the preliminary work to get to the planning stage and most importantly for the community to retain as much control as possible over the operating income once the project has been successful.

**Small organisations core funding**

Comic Relief are launching a new fund to support the [core funding costs of small organisations](http://www.comicrelief.com/news/comic-relief-launches-new-core-funding-small-organisations) - annual income of between £100,000 - £500,000 – with up to two annual grants of up to £20,000. Applications open until 27th July.

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*To subscribe or contribute*

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North West Environment Link (NWEL) is a partnership of environmental voluntary sector organisations, representing hundreds of thousands of members in the North West.

VSNW is the regional voluntary sector network for the North West, whose purpose is to support a connected and influential voluntary and community sector (VCS).

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