

* **Green Bullet**

29th November 2017

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 - 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](https://www.vsnw.org.uk/green-bullet) website.

**CPRE has agreed to continue funding the Green Bullet throughout 2017 – many thanks!**

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# *Campaigns*

**Warning to humanity**

Over [15,000 scientists from 184 countries](https://academic.oup.com/bioscience/advance-article/doi/10.1093/biosci/bix125/4605229) have come together to sign and support a dire "[warning to humanity](https://www.forbes.com/sites/trevornace/2017/11/15/15000-scientists-from-184-countries-just-issued-a-dire-warning-to-humanity/#6b069011324e)." It is an update on the original mass intervention by independent scientists in 1992, when 1,700 scientists [issued a warning](http://www.ucsusa.org/about/1992-world-scientists.html#.WgxuiraZORs) about the ever-growing list of threats humans, plants, and animals face to our survival, including population growth, climate change, deforestation, lack of access to clean water, and widespread species extinction. It has been 25 years since the original letter and in no category, except the ozone hole, is the Earth better off today than it was 25 years ago. However, critics have suggested that the warning fails to identify the [real underlying problem](https://entitleblog.org/2017/11/23/why-warning-to-humanity-gets-the-socio-ecological-crisis-and-its-solutions-wrong/) and instead risks scapegoating the global poor for the damage caused, now and in the past, by the global rich.

**Climate change**

* The UN has warned that the concentration of [carbon dioxide in the atmosphere increased at record speed last year](https://public.wmo.int/en/media/press-release/greenhouse-gas-concentrations-surge-new-record) to hit a level (403.3 parts per million (ppm)) not seen for more than three million years, and, in a separate report. They claim, in a separate report, that the gap between what we know that governments and companies need to do to mitigate climate change and what they are actually doing is “[catastrophic](http://www.worldenvironment.tv/2017/11/11/un-releases-warning-about-catastrophic-lack-of-action-on-climate-change/)” and that the world is [on course to exceed 2030 emissions targets by 30%.](https://www.reuters.com/article/us-climatechange-un/world-set-to-bust-global-warming-goal-but-u-n-cool-on-threat-from-trump-idUSKBN1D01A2)
* 2017 is on track to be [one of the three hottest years on record](https://www.edie.net/news/9/2017-set-to-be-one-of-top-three-hottest-years-on-record/?utm_source=dailynewsletter,%20edie%20daily%20newsletter&utm_medium=email,%20email&utm_content=news&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter,%209f58f63f0f-dailynewsletter) – the other two being 2015 and 2016.
* One of the biggest stories from the UN climate talks in Bonn is that [19 countries, including Britain, have agreed to phase out coal](https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2017/11/16/climate/alliance-phase-out-coal.html). But while this is obviously a very good thing, they really don’t use very much coal. Edie provides a round-up of [week 1](https://www.edie.net/news/9/What-went-on-in-Bonn--COP23-week-one-round-up/?utm_source=dailynewsletter,%20edie%20daily%20newsletter&utm_medium=email,%20email&utm_content=news&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter,%20c167967a6f-dailynewsletter) and [week 2](https://www.edie.net/news/9/What-went-on-in-Bonn--COP23-week-two-round-up/?utm_source=dailynewsletter,%20edie%20daily%20newsletter&utm_medium=email,%20email&utm_content=news&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter,%20b13635a043-dailynewsletter) of the talks.
* However, some of the world’s most prominent climate change experts reassure us that there is hope, and in particular highlight [seven “megatrends”](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/nov/08/seven-megatrends-that-could-beat-global-warming-climate-change) that they say show that the problem of climate change is still manageable.
* [The UK is “strongly outperforming” the rest of the G20](https://www.pwc.co.uk/services/sustainability-climate-change/insights/low-carbon-economy-index.html) in its decarbonisation programme - but much more action is needed to achieve the Paris Agreement goals
* And in a sign of far we have to go, lack of scrutiny in an interview with climate sceptic Lord Lawson has led the BBC to admit it [breached its “guidelines on accuracy and impartiality".](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-41744344) The sceptic ex-chancellor claimed in an interview with the Today programme that “official figures” showed average world temperatures had “slightly declined”. This was false, and is well known to be false, but was not challenged on air.
* But if someone’s making a big difference near you, you have just a couple of days left to nominate them for the Climate Coalition’s [Green Heart Hero](https://www.theclimatecoalition.org/green-heart-hero) Award

**Tree Charter**

A new Tree Charter aims to increase protection for Britain's woodland and reframe our relationship with trees. The original [Charter of the Forest](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Charter_of_the_Forest) was drawn up as a companion to the Magna Carta and dealt with the rights of common people, not landed gentry. On Monday 6 November, the 800th anniversary of the original document’s sealing by Henry III, a modern [Charter for Trees, Woods and People](https://treecharter.uk/) was launched. The medieval charter returned to ‘free men’ traditional rights to draw sustenance from ‘royal forest’. It recognised the importance of woodland, heathland and pasture to the survival of ordinary people. Its modern equivalent recognises the role that woodland can continue to play in our lives. Its 10 principles – distilled from 60,000 public submissions – enshrine the contribution that trees make to species survival, environmental protection, economic activity and human well-being.

**Living Seas**

A [new report from the Wildlife Trusts](http://www.wildlifetrusts.org/marinestrategy) outlines how a radical approach to marine planning and a joined-up network of Marine Protected Areas could bring our seas back to their former abundance.

**Greater Manchester Sustainable Food Vision**

The [Greater Manchester Sustainable Food Vision](https://kindling.org.uk/FoodStrategy) has been launched, the culmination of 18 months’ work and the input of a hundred community groups, small businesses and the public sector who came together to imagine a sustainable food future. The Vision is the product of many hundreds of volunteer hours and several Feeding Manchester conferences, brought together by the team at Manchester’s Kindling Trust. It contains examples and ideas from all ten boroughs of Greater Manchester and explores the benefits of, and actions required, to transform Greater Manchester into a Sustainable Food City. For more information, contact emily@kindling.org.uk or ring 0161 818 8384.

**Air quality**

* [New research on UK pollution](https://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/news/research-shows-44-uk-cities-breach-world-health-organization-guidelines-air-pollution) published today by the Royal College of Physicians (RCP) and the international [Lancet Countdown research collaboration](http://www.lancetcountdown.org/)shows that 44 UK towns and cities, out of 51 assessed, are in breach of recommended World Health Organization (WHO) guidelines for air quality. Published alongside global research into the impacts of climate change on the public, the research highlights how the UK government is failing to take advantage of the benefits of action on both. However, [sales of ultra-low emission vehicles](https://www.edie.net/news/6/Ultra-low-emission-vehicle-sales-surge-in-the-UK/?utm_source=dailynewsletter,%20edie%20daily%20newsletter&utm_medium=email,%20email&utm_content=news&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter,%205de3245a6b-dailynewsletter) have increased (albeit from a very low base) by 1,800% in five years.
* Client Earth have launched their [third legal action against the Government](https://www.clientearth.org/clientearth-launches-new-air-pollution-legal-action/) – having won the previous two – for their persistent failure to bring air pollution down to within legal limits.

**Litter**

According to Defra figures, the amount of [marine litter has increased by 150%](https://ciwm-journal.co.uk/marine-litter-rises-150-in-a-year-defra-figures-show/) in a year. However, a YouGov poll shows strong support from the public for a [deposit-and-return scheme](http://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-5048675/Consumers-demand-20p-plastic-bottle-deposit-scheme.html) on glass and plastic bottles. CPRE and others are [working with the government](https://consult.defra.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/call-for-evidence-drinks-containers/) to try to progress such a scheme.

**Save our Spuds**

Love food, hate waste have launched a [Save our Spuds](https://www.lovefoodhatewaste.com/) campaign, to try to tackle the estimated 5.8 million potatoes thrown away every day in the UK, at an astounding cost of £230 million.

***Information update***

## The Budget

[The Budget](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/autumn-budget-2017-documents/autumn-budget-2017#housing) (and associated [speech](https://www.gov.uk/government/speeches/autumn-budget-2017-philip-hammonds-speech)) was brought back to November this year. Housing and planning played a fairly big part (echoing earlier statements by [Teresa May](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/pm-we-must-get-back-to-building-the-homes-this-country-needs) and [Sajid Javid](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/more-homes-delivered-as-government-outlines-housing-vision)), with pledges to increase building to 300,000 per year by 2020, and another £15 billion to support housebuilding over the next five years. Affordable homes will also receive a (much smaller) boost, additional council tax can be levied on empty properties, and some money is being made available for small sites, small builders and regeneration. The Homes and Communities Agency will be rebranded as Homes England and make greater use of expanded planning powers. Five new “Garden Towns” are mooted but not located, and the need for strategic planning is recognised, particularly for the South East and the Cambridge-Milton Keynes-Oxford corridor. The Government intends to increase densities on urban, well-connected brownfield sites, and speed up build rates (all good!), and ignore local plans if any application is made with a sufficiently “high proportion” of homes discounted for first-time buyers or affordable rent (less good). Partial changes to the way that land value uplift is captured are proposed. Pledges to protect the Green Belt were re-issued. On transport, fuel duty has been frozen, driverless cars are advocated for 2021, electric car charging points will be rolled out further, and there was a bit of transport money for the metro Mayors. A fairly small amount of money from taxing older diesel cars a bit more will go into a ‘clean air fund’ to help tackle pollution. On [energy](https://www.cleanenergynews.co.uk/news/transport/budget-2017-the-clean-energy-sector-responds), there will be no new support for renewables projects post 2020, a freeze on carbon taxes, and tax breaks for North Sea fossil fuels. There will be a consultation on taxing single-use plastics.

## Brexit and beyond

* **The** [first casualty of the EU Withdrawal Bill](https://www.rspca.org.uk/whatwedo/latest/details/-/articleName/2017_11_21_AnimalSentience) **looks like being … all non-human animals, as the Government pushed through a vote to explicitly drop EU provisions that animals be recognized as experiencing pain and emotional states. This would open the way for stark reductions in legal provisions for animal welfare on farms, in domestic settings and in the wild – although due to the resulting row Michael Gove has pledged to make “**[any necessary changes](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2017/nov/23/uk-law-will-specifically-recognise-animal-sentience-michael-gove?utm_source=esp&utm_medium=Email&utm_campaign=Brexit+briefing+2016&utm_term=254311&subid=19091915&CMP=ema-3239)**” to UK law to ensure this doesn’t happen.**
* **Bees and pollinating insects have a reprieve, though, as Michael Gove says that the UK will move to a** [total ban on neonicotinoid pesticides](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/nov/09/uk-will-back-total-ban-on-bee-harming-pesticides-michael-gove-reveals)**…although the UK did in the same month vote** [renew the five year licence for the weedkiller glysophate](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-41928007) **(‘Roundup’), controversial for its possible links to human cancers, but more worrying for its devastating effects on biodiversity (some background on the issue can be found** [here](https://anewnatureblog.wordpress.com/2017/10/30/thoughts-on-the-glyphosate-saga/)**).**
* **The Government has** [outlined plans](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/new-environmental-protections-to-deliver-a-green-brexit)**, to be consulted on next year, for a new, statutory, independent body to oversee environmental protection in the UK post-Brexit, with the possibility of new policy statements to replace the key EU principles that the Government refuses to transpose into UK law, such as the precautionary principle and ‘the polluter pays’. However, the** [lack of commitment to both principles and powers is of concern](http://resource.co/article/gove-consult-new-environmental-protection-body-uk-12224) **to many.**
* **Regarding the** 25-year environment and food & farming plans,[Michael Gove has told the Environmental Audit Committee](https://www.edie.net/news/11/Michael-Gove-outlines-plans-to-address-environmental--governance-gap-/?utm_source=dailynewsletter,%20edie%20daily%20newsletter&utm_medium=email,%20email&utm_content=news&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter,%20fdccd71086-dailynewsletter) **that** there would now be only one document published, by January 2018 at the latest.
* Wildlife & Countryside Link published a [guest blog](https://www.wcl.org.uk/the-withdrawal-bill-why-our-voices-must-be-heard.asp) about how the Withdrawal Bill is the most significant piece of legislation the UK has seen in a generation, and another about the [importance of a robust Government 25 Year Environment Plan](https://www.wcl.org.uk/an-environment-for-success.asp), to launch the Wetlands and Wildfowl Trust’s [Nature’s Way](https://www.wwt.org.uk/support/timetobeheard/) report, setting out their priorities for the 25 Year Plan.
* Sustain have written a [thinkpiece](https://anewnatureblog.wordpress.com/2017/11/07/legos-landscapes-and-catchments-guest-blog-by-uksustain-farm-campaigner-vicki-hird/) on how we deliver new farming and land management support after we leave the CAP. How will new schemes work out on the farm? How will decisions actually get made? What unintended consequences should we consider in any change?

## Energy

* [Cuadrilla has breached the environmental conditions of its permit](http://www.spinwatch.org/index.php/issues/climate/item/5982-third-environmental-permit-breach-this-year-by-cuadrilla-at-lancs-fracking-site) to drill at Preston New Road for the third time this year, despite repeated claims that the regulation and compliance of the fracking industry must and will be gold-plated and bullet-proof, while new research shows that pollutants released during fracking processes could pose a [health risk to infants and children](https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/oct/25/pollutants-from-fracking-could-pose-health-risk-to-children-warn-researchers)
* The annual [Levelized Cost of Energy report](https://www.lazard.com/perspective/levelized-cost-of-energy-2017/) reaches the [stunning conclusion](https://thinkprogress.org/solar-wind-keep-getting-cheaper-33c38350fb95/) that building *and* running new renewables is now cheaper than *just* *running* existing coal and nuclear plants
* …And so while renewable energy generation in Germany soared, leading to forecasts that [prices would be pushed down below zero](http://www.independent.co.uk/environment/germany-grids-paying-electricity-customers-renewable-energy-power-surplus-wind-solar-generation-a8022576.html) on a particularly windy day, the [UK Public Accounts Committee](https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/public-accounts-committee/news-parliament-2017/hinkley-point-c-report-published-17-19/) reports that British consumers will be forced to pay [£30 billion above market prices for electricity from Hinkley C](https://www.ft.com/content/cd7227ca-cec5-11e7-b781-794ce08b24dc) nuclear power plant (a 500% increase from the Government’s estimate of 2013) due to “grave strategic errors” by the Government.
* …and according to the Energy and Climate Intelligence Unit, the Government's "[increasingly perverse](http://eciu.net/press-releases/2017/britain-in-1bn-block-on-cheapest-energy-technology)" policy on onshore wind could cost the UK around £1bn over the next four or five years
* The [independent Cost of Energy Review](http://www.dieterhelm.co.uk/energy/energy/cost-of-energy-review-independent-report/) carried out for the Government by Dieter Helm has called for radical changes to UK energy policy, while [delays to renewable heat legislation](https://www.edie.net/news/11/Renewable-heat-legislation-delays-a--significant-threat--to-UK-s-climate-change-goals/?utm_source=dailynewsletter,%20edie%20daily%20newsletter&utm_medium=email,%20email&utm_content=news&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter,%20d6f5757899-dailynewsletter) have been branded a significant threat to achieving our biding climate change goals.
* Although [low-carbon sources (including nuclear) provided over half of the UK’s energy](https://www.edie.net/news/10/Shrinking-solar-growth-darkens-UK-s-record-low-carbon-electricity-mix/?utm_source=dailynewsletter,%20edie%20daily%20newsletter&utm_medium=email,%20email&utm_content=news&utm_campaign=dailynewsletter,%20cb5289e7c3-dailynewsletter) over a the last three month period, deployment of solar has declined substantially over the past two years due to government policies, threatening future progress.
* Sajid Javid has [refused an appeal for seven wind turbines](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/recovered-appeal-land-to-the-south-of-fen-lane-west-of-louth-canal-north-of-fulstow-lincolnshire-ref-3005975-25-october-2017) in Lincolnshire, ruling that harm to the character of the area outweighed the benefits of renewable energy.
* Steve Rotheram has revived plans for a major [tidal renewables scheme in the Mersey](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-41981255) estuary

## Planning

* [Analysis by Savills](http://www.planningresource.co.uk/article/1447932/analysis-97-authorities-set-lose-five-year-supply-standard-method?bulletin=strategic-planning-bulletin&utm_medium=EMAIL&utm_campaign=eNews%20Bulletin&utm_source=20171025&utm_content=Strategic%20Planning%20Bulletin%20(29)::www_planningresource_co_u_6&email_hash=) (paywall protected) suggests that, under the new proposed methodology for calculating housing supply, 97 of the 241 councils that can currently demonstrate a 5-year supply would no longer be able to do so, leading to more ‘planning by appeal’ in those areas. However, of the 83 authorities that cannot currently demonstrate a five-year supply, 42 - mainly in the Midlands and the North - would gain a five-year supply as a result.
* In a sign of its increasing importance, a judge has upheld the decision of an Inspector to refuse an appeal for planning permission [on the grounds of impacts on air quality](http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWHC/Admin/2017/2768.html) – even though the council hadn’t originally objected on air quality grounds. Also, the decision on the [Silvertown tunnel](https://www.bdb-law.co.uk/blogs/planning-act-2008/775-silvertown-delayed-third-air-quality-jr-launched/) Nationally Strategic Infrastructure Project has been delayed for the second time to further consider the impacts on air quality.
* Arguments over whether or not a council has a five year housing land supply were assisted by a [Court of Appeal ruling](http://www.bailii.org/ew/cases/EWCA/Civ/2017/1643.html) that states that a site only need have a “realistic prospect” of coming forward within five years, i.e “be capable of delivery” - a lower bar than the requirement that it would “certainly” or even “probably” be developed, as sought by the developer. The ruling has already been used to refuse at least one application where a developer has [tried to illegitimately argue down a council’s five year supply](http://www.landmarkchambers.co.uk/userfiles/documents/Appeal%20Decision%203165930.pdf).
* The courts have also clarified in a recent ruling how to interpret the NPPF with regards to [isolated houses in the countryside](https://andrewlainton.wordpress.com/2017/11/18/courts-clarify-what-is-isolated-under-nppf/).
* Sajid Javid has published a [list of 15 councils](http://www.parliament.uk/business/publications/written-questions-answers-statements/written-statement/Commons/2017-11-16/HCWS254/) that he has written to, saying that he will intervene to take over their local plan preparation process unless they can justify their failure to produce a plan before the end of January. The list includes Liverpool and the Wirral
* Research by thinktank IPPR suggests that [92% of councils are not delivering enough affordable homes](https://www.planningportal.co.uk/news/article/529/planning_news_-_16_november_2017?utm_source=PPQ+Newsletter&utm_campaign=75991a91ee-Newsletter_16112017_HTML&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_734e0b63a9-75991a91ee-6976173#four) to meet need.
* A potential partial solution to the affordability crisis and housing shortage could be a more support for modular homes, as [advocated by the Government’s advisor](https://www.planningportal.co.uk/news/article/530/planning_news_-_23_november_2017?utm_source=PPQ+Newsletter&utm_campaign=ae49c24f47-Newsletter_23112017_HTML&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_734e0b63a9-ae49c24f47-6976173#three) – and an Italian architect has designed one that costs as little as [£24,000 and takes 3 people 6 hours to assemble](http://uk.businessinsider.com/eco-friendly-flat-pack-tiny-home-takes-six-hours-to-build-2017-11) on-site
* Andy Burnham has invited each of the ten Greater Manchester councils to nominate one town to be a part of his ‘Town Centre Challenge’, in a move to deliver [a “new approach to planning and development”](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-manchester-42037268) in Greater Manchester, moving away from what he has called the “developer-led, greenfield-first approach of the past.”

## Transport

* The government is to create an [Independent Commission on Civil Aviation Noise](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/uk-airspace-policy-a-framework-for-the-design-and-use-of-airspace) to monitor the noise impacts of new airspace and infrastructure changes. It also plans to give the transport secretary a new call-in power for aviation developments that could have noise impacts.
* The leader of Sefton Council has called for a judicial review into the decision by Highways England to build a [£200m dual carriageway through Rimrose Valley](https://www.localgov.co.uk/Council-leader-warns-of-legal-action-over-dual-carriageway-decision/44068).
* Highways England have announced their preferred routes for a [link road at Mottram Moor](https://www.placenorthwest.co.uk/news/highways-england-picks-preferred-option-for-trans-pennine-link-road/#utm_source=Place+North+West&utm_campaign=Place_Daily_Briefing__Friday_3_2017-11-03&utm_medium=email) as part of its £242m Trans-Pennine route, and a [£100m bypass in Fylde](https://www.placenorthwest.co.uk/news/fylde-bypass-proposals-move-forward/#utm_source=Place+North+West&utm_campaign=Place_Daily_Briefing__Wednesda_2017-10-25&utm_medium=email). Not enough money left for rail electrification in the North, though.
* Manchester has been ranked as having the t[hird most sustainable transport network in the UK](https://www.placenorthwest.co.uk/news/tram-and-bus-use-push-manchester-up-transport-rankings/#utm_source=Place+North+West&utm_campaign=Place_Daily_Briefing__Tuesday__2017-10-31&utm_medium=email), second only to London and Edinburgh, and it comes in 35th globally.  But more than three-quarters of surveyed Greater Manchester residents want [more protected cycle routes across the region](https://www.sustrans.org.uk/report-shows-greater-manchester-wants-more-protected-bike-lanes), according to a report commissioned by Transport for Greater Manchester and charity Sustrans.
* Meanwhile, [Merseytravel’s updated long term rail strategy](https://www.placenorthwest.co.uk/news/liverpool-city-region-bosses-asked-to-endorse-rail-strategy/#utm_source=Place+North+West&utm_campaign=Place_Daily_Briefing__Wednesda_2017-11-01&utm_medium=email) will be presented to the Liverpool City Region’s transport committee this week for approval, and metro Mayor Steve Rotheram has pledged to [create a fully integrated public transport system](http://liverpoolcityregion-ca.gov.uk/news/metro-mayor-shares-vision-for-future-and-delivers-10-big-pledges).
* After worries earlier this month that it would remain advisory, the Government has announced that [Transport for the North will become a statutory body](https://www.transport-network.co.uk/Transport-for-the-North-to-become-statutory-body-from-April/14608).
* [The Ordsall Chord](https://www.placenorthwest.co.uk/news/ordsall-chord-completion-paves-way-for-northern-hubs-december-opening/#utm_source=Place+North+West&utm_campaign=Place_Daily_Briefing__Thursday_2017-11-09&utm_medium=email) has been completed, connecting Manchester Victoria and Piccadilly stations, a vital part of the expansion of rail capacity round Manchester known as the Northern Hub.

# *Publications*

**Beauty betrayed**

A [new report published by CPRE](http://www.cpre.org.uk/media-centre/latest-news-releases/item/4705-gov-failing-to-protect-england-celebrated-landscapes-from-mass-housing-developments?utm_medium=email&utm_source=engagingnetworks&utm_campaign=campaigns-update-November-2017-nonpaper&utm_content=Campaigns+Update+2017+Nov+-+no+paper+appeal) shows there has been an 82% increase in new housing units given planning permission in England’s 34 AONBs in the past five years, despite repeated commitments by the Government to ‘maintain national protections for AONBs for the benefit of future generations’. This represents almost 15,500 housing units since 2012, while the number of housing planning applications has more than doubled in that time. Based on the findings of the report, CPRE says that unless the Government and local authorities take action now, we are in danger of losing more AONB land to housing development and seeing a significant part of these beautiful landscapes disappear from our lives, and they set out 5 key recommendations to avoid this happening.

**Food waste**

The World Resources Institute recently published its 2017 progress report on meeting the UN Sustainable Development Goal of [halving global food waste within 20 years.](https://champions123.org/2017-progress-report/)Around [88 million tonnes of food are wasted](https://ec.europa.eu/food/safety/food_waste_en) annually in the EU, with the [UK throwing away several millions of tonnes more of good food](https://www.theguardian.com/world/2015/may/22/uk-tops-chart-of-eu-food-waste) than any other nation. [WRAP research](https://wrap.us1.list-manage.com/track/click?u=65343110dd35be920e719fccd&id=244b5219bc&e=01f8caa6d2) published recently highlighted the significant financial, environmental and efficiency benefits inherent in tackling food waste in primary production in the UK. For the two sectors they assessed, strawberries and lettuce, an estimated £30 million ended up as waste in the UK in 2015. Just over 9% of mature strawberry crops ended up as waste, equivalent to 10,000 tonnes of product and valued at £24 million. And for lettuce, around 19% of all lettuces were unharvested in 2015, with 38,000 tonnes lost worth an estimated £7 million.

**Cheshire Sandstone Ridge**

The hills of the Sandstone Ridge are visible from most of Cheshire, contrasting with the low-lying plains which make up the bulk of the county. You can now find out more about the geology and history of the hills in a new publication from the Sandstone Ridge Trust. [The Ridge: Rocks and Springs - a sandstone legacy](http://www.sandstoneridge.org.uk/publications.html) is available either as a free download from the website or in printed form from information centres and local libraries, or direct from the Sandstone Ridge Trust. It summarises the work of the three-year lottery funded project of the same name.

**Urban Natural Capital Accounts**

Defra have published a scoping study testing how [natural capital accounts for urban areas](http://randd.defra.gov.uk/Default.aspx?Menu=Menu&Module=More&Location=None&ProjectID=19843&FromSearch=Y&Publisher=1&SearchText=nr0167&SortString=ProjectCode&SortOrder=Asc&Paging=10#Description) could be developed for the UK. The research identifies methods for producing accounting estimates for each ecosystem service in urban areas, including air quality regulation, noise regulation and food production. They use Greater Manchester (annex 5) as a case study area to apply the Natural Capital Approach.

**Long term monitoring of nature reserves**

Is Corporate Natural Capital Accounting an appropriate tool for [monitoring National Nature Reserves](http://publications.naturalengland.org.uk/publication/5727968978010112)? Natural England has just published an assessment of CNCA as a framework for long-term monitoring, using results from a number of NNRs which tested the technique on certain management goals (spoiler alert: it’s not appropriate).

# *Events*

**Tyndall Centre lecture hosted by CPRE**

Professor Kevin Anderson, Deputy-Director of the Tyndall Centre for Climate Change Research at the University of Manchester, will give a [public lecture on 23 January 2018 hosted by the CPRE Northwest Regional Group](http://www.cprecheshire.org.uk/events/current-events/item/2292-climate-change-lecture). Climate change is a major issue for our future energy use, health, and towns and cities, but it will also have a dramatic impact on our countryside. In this event we will begin to highlight those impacts and explore how in the North West we can help to build the resilience of our natural environment. **10.30am** (doors open at 10am) at the [Friends' Meeting House in Manchester](https://www.meetinghousemanchester.co.uk/find-us/).

**Greater Manchester: ‘Connecting People with Nature’**

Greater Manchester Natural Capital Group is hosting their 2018 Annual Conference ‘[Connecting People with Nature](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/natural-capital-group-conference-2018-connecting-people-with-nature-tickets-40783629935)’ on Tuesday 16th January 2018. The conference will bring together leading practitioners from across the public, private and third sectors exploring how we can support Greater Manchester’s natural environment as a destination to visit, volunteer at and enjoy as part of a healthy lifestyle. Manchester Museum, Manchester M13 9PL, 9.30-4.00pm.

**Home energy training**

A new series of courses has opened for booking, to help households [transform draughty old properties into smart, efficient, low-carbon homes](http://carbon.coop/sites/default/files/attachments/2017-09-05/Carbon%20Co-op%20Training%20Programme%20Booklet.pdf) of the future. The courses, run by the Carbon Co-op, will run until December next year in Manchester and Hebden Bridge.

**Wildlife & Countryside Link annual debate**

With a panel of expert speakers including George Monbiot, Good Energy’s Juliet Davenport and WWF-UK Chief Executive Tanya Steele, [Link’s 2017 annual debate](https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/link-annual-debate-2017-global-leadership-starts-at-home-how-can-the-uk-government-take-action-on-tickets-38802934622) will discuss how the Government can be a global leader for environmental and animal welfare standards. Free and open to all, but registration is necessary. Monday 4 December, WWF Living Planet Centre, Woking.

**Integrated environmental management across the UK**

How are the different parts of the UK responding to the ecosystem approach and what do these responses say about aspirations for programmes of integrated environmental management across the UK? [Find out more and register](https://ecosystemsknowledge.us12.list-manage.com/track/click?u=0422cf0f805cd08eadbae5392&id=2207a062ce&e=324a5c6036) for this free webinar, 30th November, 1-2pm.

# *Resources*

**Heritage Updates**

Historic England has updated their guidance and advice on [maintenance, repair and adaptation of traditional farm buildings](https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/caring-for-heritage/rural-heritage/farm-buildings/). , [Historic England’s monthly ‘Planning Bulletin’](https://historicengland.org.uk/advice/planning/planning-system/planning-bulletin/)highlights some of the recent and forthcoming developments in the world of planning from a heritage perspective more widely. [The Heritage Alliance](http://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/) unites over 100 independent heritage organisations in England and was set up to promote the central role of the independent movement in the heritage sector. It advocates for heritage interests, shares good practice, experience and expertise, builds capacity in the sector and develops its members. [Heritage Update](http://www.theheritagealliance.org.uk/heritage-update) is its fortnightly newsletter and is full of useful resources and information. And also likely to be of interest. And in the North West, 30 sites have been removed from the [regional ‘heritage at risk’ register](https://www.placenorthwest.co.uk/news/historic-england-adds-25-sites-to-regional-at-risk-register/#utm_source=Place+North+West&utm_campaign=Place_Daily_Briefing__Thursday_2017-10-26&utm_medium=email) because their futures have been secured, and 25 places added to the list, while in Greater Manchester, [almost half of all historic mills have been destroyed in the last 30 years](https://historicengland.org.uk/whats-new/news/Overwhelming-Public-Support-for-Saving-Englands-Mills), with the figure reaching 66% in Salford.

**Electric cars and village halls**

[Charge my Street](https://www.facebook.com/chargemystreet) is a new co-operative operating in Cumbria and Lancashire, which is looking for village halls with solar panels that could add to the network of electric vehicle charging points while bringing in extra funds, at no upfront cost. Most village halls are paid for 50% of the electricity they generate, regardless of how much they use. With Charge my Street’s smart-grid technology, excess power is sold to the electric vehicle owner. Local residents invest in the charge point through community shares, so there is no up-front cost to the village hall. Installation and ongoing management will be carried out by Charge my Street. Contact daniel.heery@cybermoor.org.uk to find out more or register an interest.

**Councils & Climate change**

The Fuelling the Fire coalition has compiled a user-friendly map and table detailing the breakdown of the [£16 billion that UK councils are investing in fossil fuel companies](https://gofossilfree.org/uk/fuellingthefire/#map). See where your council is putting its money and see what the alternative are! While pushing the public sector to divest from fossil fuels has been a grassroots, bottom up activity up until now, in “[a shot heard around the world](https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2017-11-17/norway-idea-to-exit-oil-stocks-is-shot-heard-around-the-world?utm_medium=email&utm_source=gpeace&utm_content=19+-+Norways+proposal+to+divest+from+fossil+f&utm_campaign=weekly&source=weekly)” Norway is considering following suit and selling off its $35billion in oil and gas stocks.

**Greening new Garden Cities**

The TCPA has released a guide to help plan and implement high quality green infrastructure in new communities, including new Garden Cities, Garden Towns and Garden Villages. [Planning for Green and Prosperous Places](https://www.tcpa.org.uk/guidance-for-delivering-new-garden-cities?utm_source=Green+Infrastructure+Partnership&utm_campaign=2cc44aa3da-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2017_08_31&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_878efbafef-2cc44aa3da-103033793)is aimed at councillors, developers, local communities and planners.

**Evidence for natural flood management**

An evidence base for [working with natural processes to reduce flood risk](https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/working-with-natural-processes-to-reduce-flood-risk) has been published by the Environment Agency. It includes summaries of research into 14 different measures to protect, restore and emulate natural processes and details of 65 case studies.

**Making the case for Green Infrastructure**

Last month's Green Infrastructure Partnership conference discussed how green infrastructure can be retro-fitted and enhanced in urban areas, and how to make the case for investment in it. Presentations from the event can now be viewed online.

# *Consultations*

**Airports National Policy Statement (again)**

A year ago, the Government announced that it endorsed the Airports Commission’s recommended new runway option of a third, north-western, runway at Heathrow Airport. Then, on 2 February this year, a draft Airports National Policy Statement (NPS) was published for consultation. On 7 September, Chris Grayling announced that a further consultation on the NPS on passenger forecasts and air quality in particular would be held later in the year. This month, [that further consultation was launched](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/654123/revised-draft-airports-nps-web-version.pdf). Deadline: 19th December.

**Water National Policy Statement**

The government has launched a consultation on the [forthcoming Water Supply National Policy Statement](https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/developing-a-national-policy-statement-for-water-resources-and-proposed-amendments-to-the-planning-act-2008) (NPS), the document that sets out the policy on need for infrastructure projects and their impacts that should be assessed and examined. Deadline 22 December. The draft NPS is due to be published next year; this consultation is about what the NPS should contain and also revisions to which projects are considered nationally significant and should therefore use the Planning Act regime.

**Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone**

A consultation has started on the 356-acre [Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone, one of the largest projects of its type](https://www.blackpool.gov.uk/Your-Council/Have-your-say/Consultations/Consultation-on-the-Blackpool-Airport-Enterprise-Zone-Masterplan.aspx) in the country. The site straddles the boundary between Fylde, which forms just over half of the site area, and Blackpool, with much of the site sitting within designated greenbelt. The consultation documents outline a series of developments that could be brought forward over a 25-year period across a number of sectors.

**Food & farming**

Launched in November 2017, the [RSA Food, Farming and Countryside Commission](https://www.thersa.org/action-and-research/rsa-projects/public-services-and-communities-folder/food-farming-and-countryside-commission) is a major, two-year independent inquiry, funded by Esmée Fairbairn Foundation, and chaired by Sir Ian Cheshire.  It has been established to consider how we can achieve a safe, secure, inclusive food and farming system for the UK, a flourishing rural economy and a sustainable and accessible countryside.  Taking the North West as one of three regions for particular focus, get in touch with them ASAP if you want to help shape their vision, investigation and conclusions.

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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).

To contribute to the NWEL Bulletin, please contact:
Andy Yuille
andyyuille@gmail.com

01524 389 915

To contribute to the policy work of VSNW, please contact:
Warren Escadale
warren.escadale@vsnw.org.uk

0161 276 9307