

Consultation launched to decide on future good causes to benefit from £738 million Dormant Asset Fund in England

- Consultation seeks views on the social and environmental purposes of dormant assets funding in England
- £880 million for good causes across the UK, £738 million of which will be made available for England over time

The Government has launched a public [consultation](#) on what social and environmental causes should benefit from more than £700 million of dormant assets funding in England.

Currently, dormant assets funding in England is required to be spent on three causes: youth, financial inclusion and social investment. As the national recovery from the COVID-19 pandemic continues, as well as cost of living pressures, the Government believes that now is the right time to review whether these remain the right causes for where funding from dormant assets can be allocated.

It comes as the Dormant Assets Scheme was recently expanded from bank accounts to include the insurance and pensions, investment and wealth management, and securities sectors, estimated to unlock around £880 million for good causes across the UK, £738 million of which will be made available for England over time.

Dormant assets are financial assets, such as bank accounts, that have been untouched for a long period. The Dormant Assets Scheme is led by the financial services industry and backed by the government with the aim of reuniting people with these financial assets. Where this is not possible, the Scheme unlocks this money for social and environmental initiatives across the UK.

Nigel Huddleston, Minister for Sport, Tourism, Heritage and Civil Society, said:

This consultation will allow everyone's voice to be heard so that the Scheme can make a difference where it matters. With the cost of living crisis, it is more important than ever that we hear views from communities up and down the country on what causes we should support.

I encourage everyone to participate in this unique opportunity to have your say on the future of dormant assets funding in England.

To date, the Scheme has released £892 million, including £44 million allocated in England this year to tackle youth unemployment, to support communities in deprived areas, and give people in need access to finance.

In England, the scheme has already channelled £110 million to breaking down barriers to employment for disadvantaged young people and £100 million to increasing access to fair and affordable financial products and services for vulnerable individuals. This is on top of £485 million of much-needed funding for both charities and social enterprises since the scheme's inception.

This has included investment in thousands of social enterprises and charities working in the most deprived parts of the country through [Access – The Foundation for Social Investment](#) and [Big Society Capital](#), such as £150 million of investment into 305 organisations supporting young people at risk of unemployment. Bemix CIC in Kent received £80,000 to further develop their 'Discovery Catering' Cafe, which employs the young people they support and the Single Homeless Action Initiative in Durham (SHAID) received a £150,000 investment to support young people making the difficult transition to living independently.

Now, individuals, communities, and industry participants can have their say on what causes matter most to them. One option under consideration for views is a community wealth fund proposal that would see pots of money distributed over long periods of time in local communities in England, with decisions made by residents to make a difference where it is most needed.

ENDS

Notes to editors:

- The [consultation](#) is now open for responses and will close on Sunday 9 October.
- The government encourages all those with an interest – including the public, community groups, and industry stakeholders – to help shape the direction of the Dormant Assets Scheme in England over the coming years.
- Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland are not required to publicly consult on the broad purposes of their portions
- To have your say, please respond to the consultation using this [online survey](#).
- All responses to the consultation will be carefully considered, if you have any further questions please email dormantassetsconsultation@almaeconomics.com.

[Jobcentre closures in areas with red](#)

severe weather warning

Benefit payments will be made as normal. We will make every effort to contact everyone who has an appointment on one of those days to have it over the telephone or to rearrange, so they need not contact us or worry about their claim.

Our telephony enquiry lines will be open as usual. Numbers to call can be found on www.gov.uk/contact-jobcentre-plus

Media enquiries for this press release – 0115 965 8781

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Follow DWP on:

Riverside Resource Recovery Facility, Belvedere Permit Variation

The operators of Riverside Resource Recovery Facility have applied to the Environment Agency to vary the site's current operational permit.

This will allow increased energy generation, an increase in the maximum amount of waste going through the system, and the use of more raw materials.

After the earlier public consultation in 2021 on their initial variation application, the Environment Agency is 'minded to' issue the permit variation. Before making its final decision, it is running a further period of public consultation for people and organisations to submit their views.

The consultation is now open and will run until Tuesday 9 August 2022.

See [further information on the permit application, with details of how to take part in the consultation](#)

Permit variation

If granted, the environmental permit variation will allow Riverside Resource Recovery Limited to:

- Amend the energy generation limit from up to 72MW to 'up to 80.5MW;
- Increase the maximum amount of waste going through the system from 785,000 tonnes per annum (tpa) to 850,000 tpa;
- Increase the annual amounts of some raw materials used.

Under the variation emission limit, values for releases to air will be reduced. This is due to the current technology of combustion control, abatement and monitoring which can achieve, and accurately monitor, much lower levels of emissions.

These changes together are called the Riverside Optimisation Project, or ROP.

An Environment Agency spokesperson said:

An environmental permit sets out stringent conditions that all waste sites must adhere to. We will not issue an environmental permit for a site if we consider that activities taking place will cause significant pollution to the environment or harm to human health.

Public consultation lets people and organisations take part in our decision making. We welcome specifically, comments on environmental and health issues and where people have particular local knowledge. We take all relevant comments into account when making our decisions.

When making permit decisions, we use information on the potential environmental and human health impacts of the activity.

In deciding whether or not to issue the permit, the Environment Agency will take into account all relevant considerations and legal requirements.

For further information, please email KSLE@environment-agency.gov.uk

Further information

See [additional information on how when and how the Environment Agency consults on permit applications and standard rules for environmental permits](#)

Health and Social Care Secretary accepts JCVI advice on autumn booster programme

Press release

All people aged 50 and over will be eligible for autumn Covid booster and flu vaccine



Health and Social Care Secretary Steve Barclay said:

I have accepted the independent advice of the Joint Committee on Vaccination and Immunisation to offer an autumn Covid booster to people aged 50 and over, residents and staff in care homes for older adults, frontline health and social care workers, unpaid carers, individuals aged five to 49 in clinical risk groups and household contacts of those who are immunosuppressed.

NHS staff and volunteers provided an outstanding service to the public through the biggest and fastest vaccination rollout in England's history, which saved countless lives and allowed us to live with this virus without restrictions on our freedom.

Viruses spread more easily in the colder seasons with people socialising inside, so the risk of getting Covid is higher. It is absolutely vital the most vulnerable groups receive a booster vaccine to strengthen their immunity against serious disease over winter to protect themselves and reduce pressure on the NHS.

The flu virus could also be highly infectious at this time of year, so today I am also announcing that those eligible for a free flu vaccination this year will include everyone aged 50 and over, primary school children and secondary school pupils in years 7, 8

and 9, as well as people in clinical risk groups, unpaid carers and household contacts of those who are immunosuppressed.

If you or your child are eligible for a Covid or flu vaccine, I urge you to come forward as soon as you are invited by the NHS.

BACKGROUND:

Further information is available [here](#)

Covid

- The programme is expected to start in early autumn. Details of how the programme will be delivered including how people will be invited for vaccination will be set out nearer the start of the programme.
- The definition of frontline health and social care workers is published in the [Green Book](#)
- Clinical risk groups are set out in the [Green Book](#) – Tables 3 and 4
- The definition of carers aged 16 to 49 years is set out in the [Green Book](#) – Table 3

Influenza

The groups that are now eligible for the flu vaccine this coming season are:

- all children aged 2 or 3 years on 31 August 2022
- all primary school aged children (from reception to Year 6)
- those aged 6 months to under 65 years in clinical risk groups
- pregnant women
- those aged 65 years and over
- those in long-stay residential care homes
- carers
- close contacts of immunocompromised individuals
- frontline staff employed by the following types of social care providers without employer led occupational health schemes:
 - a registered residential care or nursing home
 - registered domiciliary care provider
 - a voluntary managed hospice provider
- Direct Payment (personal budgets) or Personal Health Budgets, such as Personal Assistants

And later in the season:

- All adults aged 50 to 64 years
- Secondary school children in years 7, 8 and 9, who will be offered the

- vaccine in order of school year (starting with the youngest first)
- The flu vaccine programme outlined above applies to England only

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Boost for North East wildlife charity as Newcastle haulier makes amends for environmental offence

Press release

A Newcastle based supplier and Haulier of quarried and recycled aggregates has agreed to pay £9,872 to Northumberland Wildlife Trust after it was found to have illegally deposited waste soils and clays at an old quarry on farmland in Longframlington.



Thorburn Bros Limited of Benton Square Industrial Estate, Newcastle, submitted an Enforcement Undertaking to the Environment Agency, after it failed to meet its environmental obligations by avoiding the costs of applying for an environmental permit, which it would have needed in order to carry out this tipping lawfully.

An Enforcement Undertaking is a voluntary offer made by companies and individuals to make amends for their offending.

The Environment Agency was made aware of large quantities of waste soils being taken from building sites to an old quarry on farmland in Longframlington in June 2018. The site was visited, and a continuous stream of waggons marked with Thorburn Bros Ltd's livery were seen depositing soil and clays, which were being levelled by a bulldozer.

Following a visit to Thorburn Bros Ltd's offices, the company produced evidence to show that they had deposited some 9,380 tonnes of waste soils at

the quarry. The quarry was not covered by any environmental permit

An Environmental Permit, in this case, would have set out the operating conditions that Thorburn Bros would be legally bound to observe in order to minimise the risk of harm to people and the environment.

Area Environment Manager, Andrew Turner, said:

Illegally disposing of waste at a site that does not include the necessary infrastructure for managing and controlling pollution presents a real risk of harm to people and the environment.

In some circumstances, Enforcement Undertakings can achieve a good resolution of our enforcement action, allowing the offender to put things right and help to improve our environment. This payment of £9,872 will do just that by supporting environmental improvements at Northumberland Wildlife Trust's site at West Chevington, a former open-cast coal mine.

The offer from Thorburn Bros Limited detailed improvements to its administrative systems and training for its staff. This will help to avoid the risk of environmental offending.

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