

MEDIA RELEASE



We're delighted to announce that North East Lincolnshire is set to lead the way in inspiring change through creativity, following a £1.45m funding award from the National Lottery, for 'Our Future Starts Here'. This bold, future-facing, public programme delivered over five years brings together partners to uplift and champion the area, raise pride levels and inspire environmental protection while also growing skills and connecting young people to our world-leading green industries.

£1.45 Million National Lottery Community Fund boost set to drive climate action through creativity in North East Lincolnshire

Thanks to National Lottery players, **Our Future Starts Here** has received £1,450,014 over five years, from The National Lottery Community Fund, the largest community funder in the UK.

This five-year project running from 2025-2030 will deliver a bold, transformational and future-facing public engagement programme that aims to educate, inspire and support more people to take climate action in the North East Lincolnshire region. Creative community activities, including youth-led 'influencer' projects, will increase environmental awareness, inspire community action and generate opportunities for 'green skills' development, linking to locally-based, world-leading green industries.

This opportunity comes from the Climate Action Fund, a £100 million commitment over 10 years from The National Lottery Community Fund to help reduce the carbon footprint of communities and inspire community-led climate action. This forms part of one of the funder's four key missions in its 2030 strategy, '[It starts with community](#)' - supporting communities to be environmentally sustainable.

Our Future Starts Here, originally established in 2022 by Grimsby-based arts organisation The Culture House, sees an evolved initiative transition into a longer-term and wider partnership project, managed by **Voluntary Action North East**

Lincolnshire (VANEL). Project Partners include The Culture House, Franklin Sixth Form College, Hammond House and the University of Hull, who will be monitoring and evaluating Our Future Starts Here over the next five years to evidence its impact.

The five-year programme will include:

- The creation of five nature-based murals in residential areas co-created with the region's young people, highlighting local wildlife and promoting environmental protection
- Five annual arts programmes featuring local, regional and national indoor and outdoor art, including installations, immersive activities and performance
- Weekly young Green Influencers groups and activities led by VANEL, leading to collaborative installations and participatory activities at pop-up events
- An annual STEM conference with a green skills focus hosted at Franklin Sixth Form College
- The production of creative soundscapes by young people and Hammond House joined by Freestyle Academy exploring future-facing, sustainability themes

Our Future Starts Here will also include five case studies, tracking individuals and families over the five years to evidence their 'journey' and the impact the programme and activities have had on them personally and their lifestyle.

Our Future Starts Here is additionally supported by Create North East Lincolnshire through North East Lincolnshire's Arts Council England Place Partnership Programme, with the 2026 programme taking place in April and due to be announced in February.

The concept was originally developed by The Culture House with investment from the Cultural Development Fund, previously known locally as Grimsby Creates.

Charlotte Bowen, Chief Executive and Artistic Director of The Culture House, an Arts Council England National Portfolio arts charity based in Grimsby, said: "The new partnership is thrilled to have secured funding from The National Lottery Community Fund to deliver the next five years of Our Future Starts Here.

"Our joint aim is to support, educate and inspire on what is often challenging subject matter, using arts and culture as a basis to engage, have fun, grow skills and understanding and create a sense of a shared journey for the better."

Paula Grant, Chief Officer at VANEL, said: “This is a fantastic opportunity to work even more closely with creative partners to embed a sustainable environmental impact across North East Lincolnshire. Our existing youth Green Influencers programme will be building on its great success in supporting children and families to engage with nature.

“As part of this new development, we’re going to be ensuring more young people are leading the way in positively influencing their peers and wider family members, by making a huge positive difference across our communities, in local green spaces, and for the future of our planet.”

Find out more and stay up to date at www.ourfuturestartshere.co.uk

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Notes to editors

About Our Future Starts Here:

Our Future Starts Here was originally developed in 2022 by The Culture House and was commissioned as a pilot, placemaking arts programme exploring environmental themes by Create North East Lincolnshire. The programme has now evolved to include a wider partnership: VANEL, Franklin College, University of Hull and Hammond House and will run from 2025 - 2030.

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About VANEL:

Voluntary Action North East Lincolnshire (VANEL) is a registered charity which supports voluntary and community groups across North East Lincolnshire to grow and develop. VANEL operates a nationally accredited Volunteer Service to assist member groups to promote volunteering opportunities and find residents to match up with them. It operates a micro community hub and supports social club activities in Cleethorpes.

[Website](#) | [Facebook](#)

About The Culture House:

The Culture House CIO is an award-winning arts organisation based in Grimsby whose mission is to transform futures using the power of creativity and culture. A national portfolio organisation of Arts Council England, The Culture House was established in 2010 and has contributed to spearheading cultural transformation in North East Lincolnshire.

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About Franklin College:

North East Lincolnshire's only sixth form college, Franklin College, takes great pride in the reputation it has established as specialists in 16-19 education. Striving to enable every student to achieve more than they thought possible, the college has earned a 'Best in the Region' position for student progress. A college for the community, Franklin College is recognised as the region's only Ofsted Outstanding provider of sixth form education that is 'embedded within its local community and creating an environment in which young people thrive'.

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About the University of Hull:

For nearly 100 years, the University of Hull has been teaching people to think differently. To live and breathe a tradition of community spirit and unconventional thinking. Twin forces that unite us in tackling the big issues challenging humanity. Hull was rated Gold in the Teaching Excellence Framework (TEF) 2023 - the highest possible ranking for teaching quality and student success, meaning its students learn from the best, so they'll be at their best. And that means they'll have the highest chance of achieving whatever they want in their lives and careers. Research leaders in renewable energy, flood resilience, palliative and wound care, mental health and addiction, knife crime, and the fight against modern slavery, the University of Hull's research is also helping the next generation build successful careers in anything from AI to social justice.

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About Hammond House:

Hammond House promotes the culture and heritage of North East Lincolnshire through its publishing house, art galleries, music label and TV channels: Heritage Channel, Clee TV and Billboard TV. Through creative activities, Hammond House champions creative talent, promotes positive mental health and addresses loneliness and isolation in urban and rural communities.

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About The National Lottery Community Fund:

We are the largest non-statutory community funder in the UK – community is at the heart of our purpose, vision and name. We support activities that create resilient communities that are more inclusive and environmentally sustainable, and that will strengthen society and improve lives across the UK.

We're proud to award money raised by National Lottery players to communities across England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and to work closely with the Government to distribute vital grants and funding from key Government programmes and initiatives.

As well as responding to what communities tell us is important to them, our funding is focused on four key missions, supporting communities to:

1. Come together
2. Be environmentally sustainable
3. Help children and young people thrive
4. Enable people to live healthier lives.

Thanks to the support of National Lottery players, we distribute around £500 million a year through 10,000+ grants and plan to invest over £4bn of funding into communities by 2030. We're privileged to be able to work with the smallest of local groups right up to UK-wide charities, enabling people and communities to bring their ambitions to life.

National Lottery players raise over £30 million each week for good causes throughout the UK. Since The National Lottery began in 1994, £47 billion has been

raised, and more than 670,000 individual grants have been made across the UK - the equivalent of around 240 National Lottery grants in every UK postcode district.

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