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A network diagram consisting of numerous light blue circular nodes of varying sizes, connected by thin, light blue lines. This diagram is overlaid on a background image of a bridge and trees, which is tinted in shades of blue and purple. The diagram is more prominent on the right side of the cover.

FINAL REPORT

SEPTEMBER 2025

STRENGTHENING CUMBRIA'S CIVIL SOCIETY

**A report of findings
and recommendations**

Many thanks to our Funders

Seed funding:

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Project funding:

- Cumberland Council
- Westmorland and Furness Council
- UKRI: University of Cumbria Policy Support
- Innovate UK: CDEC Community Research

Project Team



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Note: The views expressed in the report are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the partner organisations.

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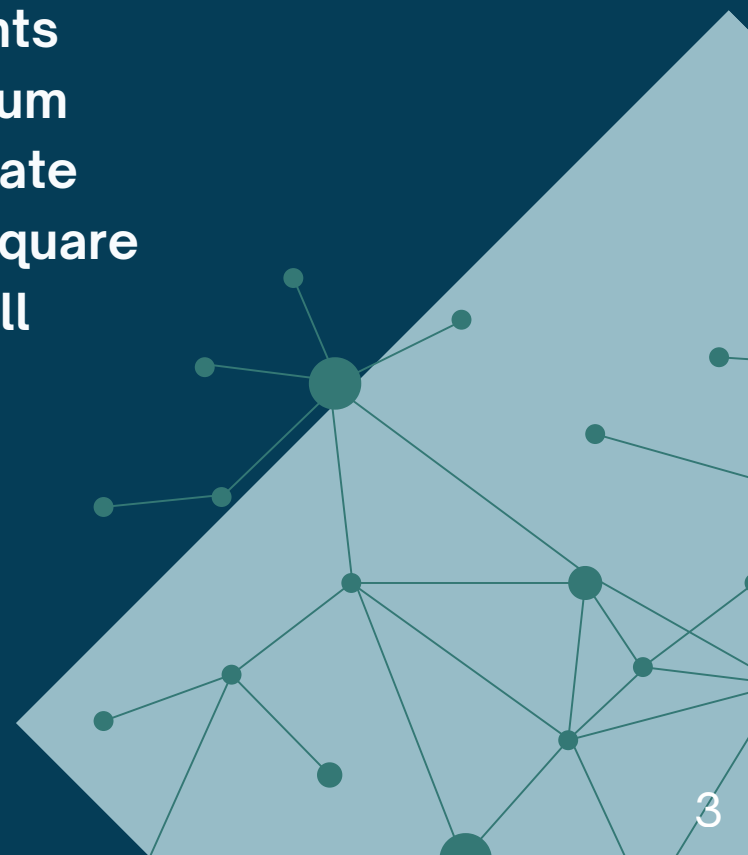
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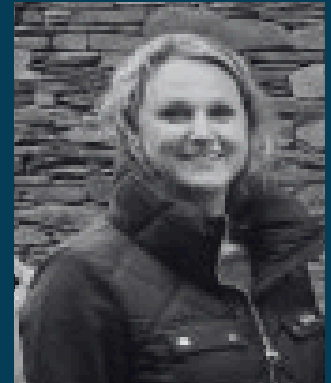
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Background to the Study

This report presents the findings of a collaborative action research and knowledge exchange project aimed at understanding what is most needed for a more thriving and equitable community life in Cumbria. The project brought together The Office of the Lord Lieutenant of Cumbria, University of Cumbria, Cumbria Development Education Centre (CDEC) and Thinking Philanthropy. Since July 2023, the partners have been working together on various activities in support of this process – developing an online directory of Cumbrian civil society groups and organisations, undertaking desk-based research, and designing a Q Method study for online and face-to-face provision which Q enables with relatively small samples (see more in Methodology section).

We subsequently engaged various representatives of Cumbria's civil society via a series of workshops across the county from March-July 2024 – in Ambleside, Carlisle, Workington, and Barrow-in-Furness.

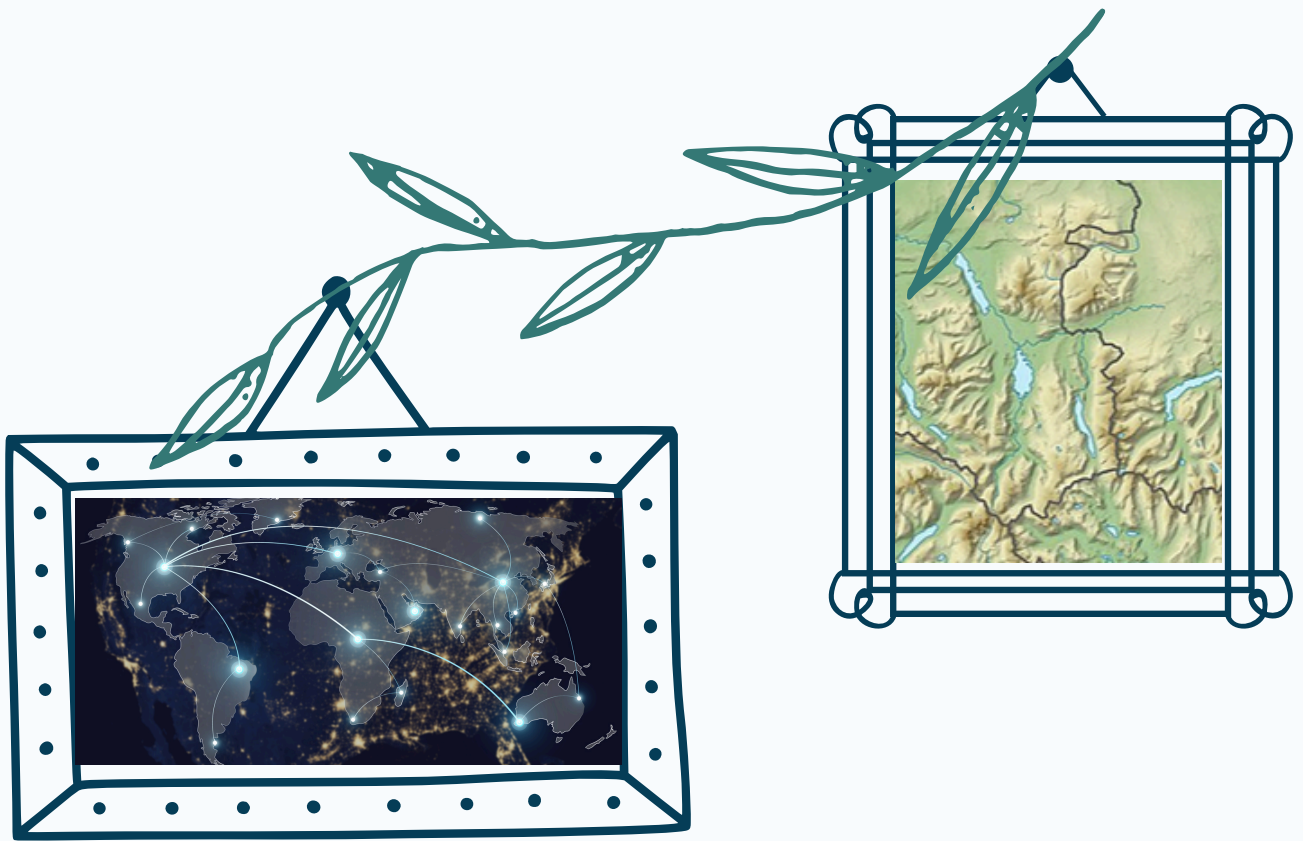


The findings from these workshops and the online version of the Q study have enabled us to gain a bottom-up, influenced view of what mattered most to our 92 study participants to empower Cumbrian communities to be more thriving and equitable.

“ A bottom-up
influenced view of
what matters most ”

By exploring diverse perspectives across the county, we uncovered four distinct viewpoints from Cumbria’s civil society. Our report describes the key learnings and presents recommendations for a strategic understanding of the aims and values of the Cumbrian Lieutenancy, offering potential pathways for integrating this understanding into a strategic approach for strengthening Cumbria’s civil society.

Relevant Global-Local Contexts



Strengthening Cumbria's Civil Society is part of a growing movement of place-based, collaborative action research that connects local realities to global sustainability agendas. It builds on earlier University of Cumbria SDG Action projects carried out with partners in South Cumbria and North Lancashire between 2020 and 2023, and extends this work into new contexts across Cumbria.

At its heart, this project seeks to translate broad global frameworks into practical, local applications that can benefit Cumbria's communities.

These frameworks include the United Nations' *Transforming Our World: The 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development* and its 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the University of Cumbria's *A Bright Future – Towards 2030* strategy, and the Zero Carbon Cumbria Partnership's Emission Reduction Pathways, which set out how the county can achieve net zero emissions by 2037 (ZCCP, 2024).

Together, these strategies highlight the importance of people, place, planet, prosperity, peace and partnership as the foundations for a thriving Cumbria. They remind us that civil society is not a separate sphere, but a web of relationships that connects individuals, communities, voluntary organisations, local authorities, and businesses in working for the common good.

SDGS 2030 AGENDA



TOWARDS 2030





As the world approaches 2030, attention is turning to what comes next. The UN's recently adopted Pact for the Future (2024) emphasises priorities that resonate deeply at the local level:

- **Collaborative financing for sustainable development**, which speaks to the importance of pooling resources across sectors in Cumbria;
- **Science, technology and innovation**, relevant to building the skills and digital capacity of our communities and young people;
- **Youth and future generations**, a key concern raised repeatedly in this project's workshops;
- **Transforming governance**, which aligns with Cumbria's recent local government reorganisation and the need for more inclusive and participatory decision-making.

These global-local frameworks are not distant aspirations. They provide practical touchstones for local action, helping us to see Cumbria's civil society as both rooted in its own history and culture, and connected to wider global challenges such as climate change, social equity, and the wellbeing of future generations. By holding these local-global perspectives together, we can strengthen Cumbria's resilience and shape a future that is fair, sustainable, and inclusive for all.

PACT FOR THE FUTURE



SDG ACTION CUMBRIA



Global-Local Contexts: In Brief

- **Global frameworks matter locally:** UN Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the Pact for the Future (2024) set priorities that resonate in Cumbria — from youth and future generations to climate resilience and inclusive governance.
- **Local commitments:** The University of Cumbria's A Bright Future – Towards 2030 and the Zero Carbon Cumbria Partnership's target for net zero by 2037 provide a strong regional framework.
- **Shared foundations:** People, place, planet, prosperity, peace, and partnership are guiding principles for action.
- **Overall aim:** Strengthen Cumbria's resilience and inclusion, so that no one will be left behind.



What is Civil Society?

The idea of civil society has been widely debated, yet its meaning remains elusive. While there are many interpretations, few offer precision (Flyvbjerg, 1998). The boundaries of civil society are also unclear, with writers often pointing to shifting language and the increasing overlap between sectors (Flyvbjerg, 1998; Tjahja, Meyer & Shahin, 2021). This ambiguity makes it challenging to provide a single, universally agreed definition.

Historically, civil society has evolved both globally and locally, with increasing emphasis on cross-sector collaboration in sustainable development (Murphy & Stott, 2021; Chapman & Wistow, 2023). Although expressions vary across cultures and contexts, civil society is often understood as the sphere outside government and the market where people and groups contribute to the well-being of society (Harris, 2017). It encompasses both the social space where participation occurs and the individuals and organisations who operate within it to drive social change.

Some writers frame civil society as a distinct entity, separate from the public and business sectors, with its own actors and dynamics (Liv & Kaspersen, 2021). Others highlight its interconnectedness with wider systems, particularly in addressing “grand challenges” such as collaborative governance, climate change, and sustainability transitions (Giddings et al., 2002; Dörgő et al., 2018; Stanberry et al., 2024).

Uphoff and Krishna (2004) note that as boundaries blur, it becomes harder to identify who counts as civil society: is it only formal NGOs and charities, or also government employees and business staff volunteering in community projects, alongside less formal grassroots initiatives?

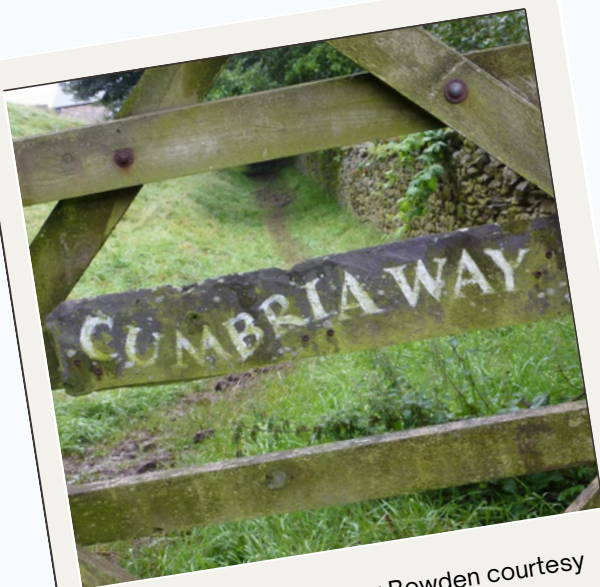


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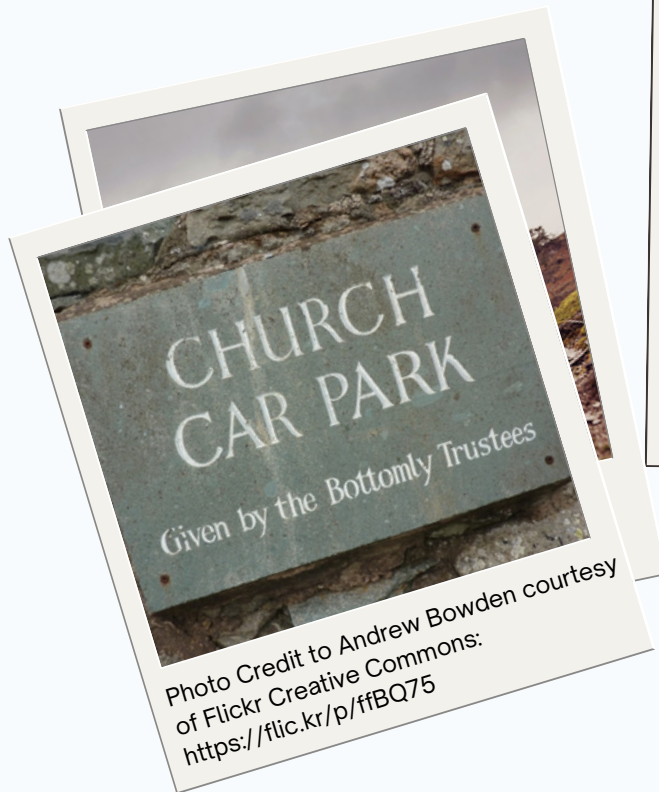


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Recent developments have added further complexity. The rise of hybrid organisations, multi-stakeholder partnerships, and digital activism demonstrate that civil society is dynamic, adaptive, and embedded within wider governance systems (Ashman, 2001; Alves & Costa, 2020; CIVICUS, 2024; Tjahja et al, 2021).

Tackling difficult human-environment challenges such as zero hunger and gender equality is at the heart of civil society collaborations, but this requires better understandings of place. For example, how proximity between decision-makers and communities figures into local empowerment and how measurements of ‘progress’ are chosen and implemented (Stanberry & Balda, 2023).

Despite varied interpretations, several common themes emerge:

- **A Space for Collective Action:** Civil society provides a place for individuals and groups to work together on social, environmental, cultural, political, and economic issues, often promoting shared interests and advocating for others (Edwards, 2014; Fyfe, 2005; O'Connell, 2000; Sampson et al., 2005). Universal norms of voluntary and mutual association help people from diverse backgrounds find common ground (Jensen, 2006).





Jacquetta Gomes, WFDEIP Lead on Interfaith and Multifaith with the former Mayor of Kendal Councillor Guy Tirvengadam who is Chair of Westmorland and Furness Diversity Equity and Inclusion Partnership (WFDEIP).

- **Independence from the State and Market:** Civil society organisations and groups typically operate independently of government and business, sustained by intentional participation and shared values (Afridi, 2023; Edwards, 2014). In many contexts, this independence allows them to safeguard personal autonomy by providing support, advocacy, and choice (Edwards, 2014).

- 
- **A Diverse Range of Actors:** Civil society encompasses a wide array of actors, from engaged citizens, community groups, charities, voluntary and faith-based organisations, to social movements, social enterprises, philanthropic organisations, trade unions, and multi-stakeholder networks (Borkowska et al., 2024; CIVICUS, 2024). It also includes informal groups, campaigners, and protest movements, though generally not organisations using coercive or violent methods (Harris, 2017). In the UK, surveys show both the scale and generosity of civil society activity, with levels of giving and volunteering continuing to play a vital role in community life (CAF, 2024).
 - **Vehicle for Social Change, Innovation and Transformation:** Civil society plays a crucial role in advancing sustainability, social justice, human rights, democratic governance, and just transitions (Bromley, 2020; Gunningham, 2018). It strengthens decision-making processes and communication, often acting as a driver of people-powered movements that push for broader societal benefit (Harris, 2017).



A Working Definition

Building on the literature and insights from our research, we propose the following working definition for Cumbria:

- A diverse network of organisations, local groups, and individuals who share common values and work to improve their communities and wider society.
- A space for dialogue, debate, and dissent, where diverse perspectives can be expressed freely.
- A force for social change that challenges the status quo through problem-solving and innovation.
- A movement of collective action through which needs are directly met.



This definition emphasises the inclusion and importance of both formal organisations and informal groups and networks in shaping civil society. It also highlights the role of citizens and other residents in actively engaging in public life and working to create a better future. As noted by Edwards (2010): civil society is about “ordinary people in large numbers engaging with one another across the lines of difference to build constituencies for change” (p.8). Civil society is made up of diverse groups of people coming together, for collective action; it is about working together towards societal transformation. A vibrant civil society strengthens relationships, benefits individuals, groups, organisations and communities, and fosters collaboration across sectors to provide impetus for social, environmental and economic change.

“

Civil society is about “ordinary people in large numbers engaging with one another across the lines of difference to build constituencies for change”

(Edwards, 2010, p.8).

”

Broad

“Our definition of civil society is broad and covers non-governmental organisations, activists, civil society coalitions & networks, protest and social movements, voluntary bodies, campaigning organisations, charities, faith-based groups, trade unions and philanthropic foundations.”

CIVICUS (2024)

Inclusive

“Ordinary people in large numbers engaging with one another across the lines of difference to build constituencies for change.”

Michael Edwards (2010)

Two definitions of Civil Society



What is Civil Society? In Brief

- **The People's Space:** Civil society is where people and groups organise outside government and business to improve community life.
- **Independent but Connected:** Civil society often works independently from state and market but increasingly collaborates across sectors on big challenges.
- **Diverse & Dynamic:** From local community groups and charities to social movements, faith groups, networks, and new digital activism.
- **A Force for Change:** Civil society drives innovation, social justice, sustainability, and collective action for a fairer future.



Mapping Cumbria's Civil Society

The Office of the Lord Lieutenant is the only national institution formally tasked with supporting and recognising civil society. The UK is home to many strong civil society organisations at national and local levels. While most civil society funding comes from the public, government continues to be an important contributor – estimated at around £600 million in direct grants from local government – plus HM Treasury's Gift Aid scheme, which adds 25% to eligible individual donations to registered charities. The Office of the Lord Lieutenant (supported by committed Deputy Lieutenants based in their communities) already plays a distinct, catalytic role in the sector.

This project has focused on identifying ways to maximise that role for the sector's resilience, effectiveness, visibility and funding. This is particularly important in the context of budgetary constraints, competing priorities for charitable and public resources, and the sector's heavy reliance on many informal groups and organisations. Indeed, recent crises – from the COVID-19 pandemic to refugee arrivals and the cost-of-living pressures – have highlighted how grassroots groups can mobilise quickly to support vulnerable people (LGA, 2024), underlining the critical role of informal civil society alongside formal charities.



The Charities Aid Foundation's UK giving survey *Mapping Generosity* offers a helpful reminder of the diversity of donors and the multiple ways people offer support (CAF, 2024). For example, three-quarters of people nationwide supported charities and total donations rose to about £13.9 billion in 2023. This generosity has held steady despite continued pressure on household finances, with a typical donation of £20 (a figure that has remained stable for seven years). Notably, some of the least affluent areas are among the most generous. A core of around one million “Super Givers” supports good causes in multiple ways – donating money and goods, sponsoring others, volunteering, and fundraising.

However, volunteering patterns have been shifting with national surveys showing a recent dip in informal volunteering after the pandemic. Around 46% of people volunteered informally in 2021/22, down from 54% a year earlier even as community needs remain high (NCVO, 2024). Globally, civil society also faces a mixed landscape. There are inspiring examples of people coming together, but the space for civic action is under pressure in many countries. Over 70% of the world's population now lives in countries where civic freedoms are highly restricted (CIVICUS, 2024). Even in the UK, which has a vibrant tradition of voluntary action, watchdogs have noted a narrowing civic space in recent years (Bond, 2025). These broader trends underscore the importance of strengthening local civil society networks as a foundation for resilient communities.

Trends in Cumbrian Civil Society

Cumbria's civil society sector is a vibrant and diverse ecosystem of individuals, groups, organisations and umbrella bodies playing a crucial role across the county. With over 2,500 registered organisations, the sector comprises charities, grantmakers, social enterprises and more informal groups. The sector employs over 10,000 full-time equivalent roles and relies on at least 52,000 volunteers (Chapman & Wistow, 2023). By comparison, estimates suggest the UK's volunteer 'workforce' contributes billions of hours of service annually. Adding informal volunteering could double the counted effort which indicates how much community life depends on people's unpaid contributions (RSN, 2016).

Cumbria's culture of giving is also strong. The county's individual giving and charity landscape, as mapped by CAF (2024) to parliamentary constituency level, shows high rates of donor participation across all areas.

Constituency	Donors	Donations as a percentage of income	Total Donations	Registered Charities
Barrow and Furness	58%	1.5%	£13,052,000	251
Carlisle	58%	1.4%	£12,486,000	201
Penrith and Solway	60%	1.8%	£15,673,000	512
Westmorland and Lonsdale	63%	1.4%	£13,497,000	569
Whitehaven and Workington	57%	1.3%	£10,849,000	245

For instance, Westmorland and Lonsdale has about 63% of adults donating and in Penrith and Solway donations average 1.8% of household income (the highest in Cumbria), with an annual total of over £15.6 million given. Even constituencies with lower incomes maintain donor rates around 57–60%, contributing millions of pounds annually, and every area hosts hundreds of registered charities.

This data illustrates both the generosity and the geographic variation within Cumbria's civil society. Rural areas like Westmorland have a very high density of community organisations (over 560 registered charities), while more urban centres like Carlisle and Barrow have fewer registered charities but similarly large donor engagement by their populations.



In this context, we identified four ways in which the Office of the Lord Lieutenant could further strengthen the social fabric of Cumbrian communities. These focus on ensuring that civil society actors are acknowledged and that their passion and commitment are made visible – to each other, to those seeking support, and to funders of all types. The four focus areas are: **Looking Differently, Making the Sector Visible, Connecting the Sector, and Resourcing the Sector.** Each is discussed below.



Photo Credit to Cumbria Community Foundation



Looking Differently

It is consistently noted that formally registered charities make up around half of civil society. Research has not routinely identified these informal organisations or assessed ways to make them more visible to donors, partners, and others.

We started by looking at social media posts and local news based on location and service rather than formal registration. This was put into a Community Box directory, with around half of entries being informal organisations. We would focus additional resources on automatically loading and tagging registered organisations and more locally driven offline input for informal organisations. This could be energised by the network of Deputy Lieutenants, sharing digital and physical forms for self-recording in libraries and community hubs, plus technical support to upload information on registered organisations and manage shared tagging. This would provide a more detailed and nuanced snapshot of civil society and would be a major contribution to strengthening the sector by mapping its true reach and existing vitality.

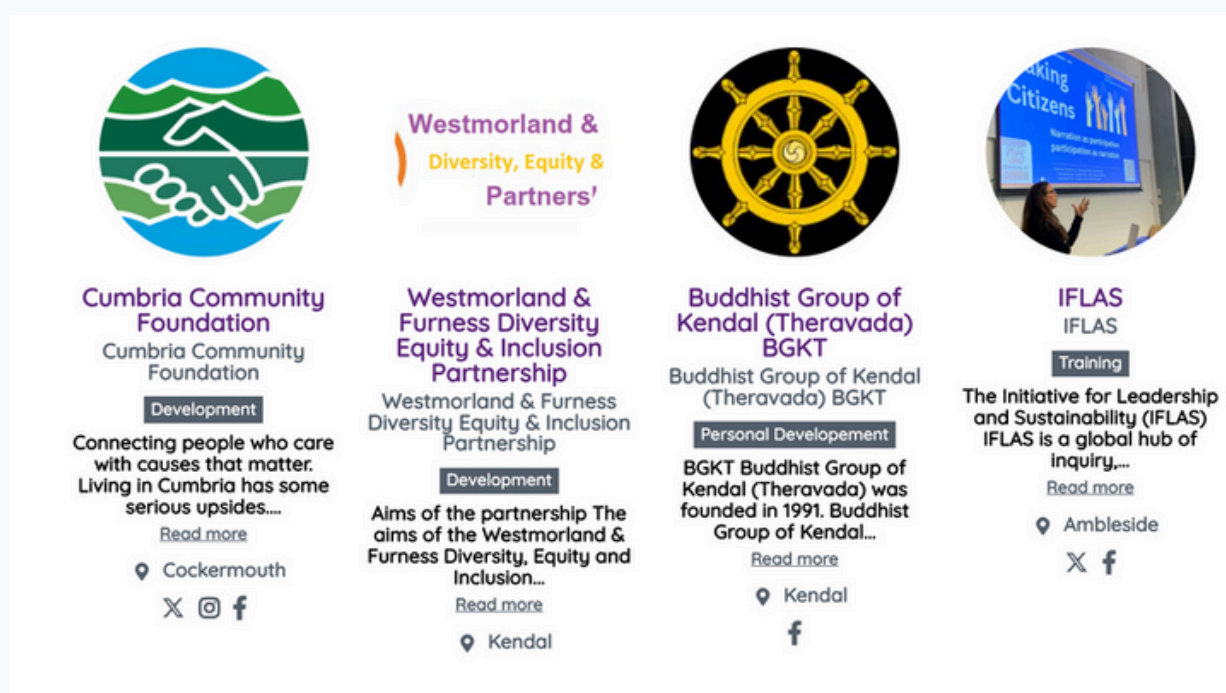
Mapping these emergent shifts to national demographic trends reveals dynamic relationships beneath the conventional delivery of government services. These initial findings were included in an internal Cabinet Office report in 2024.

Making the Sector Visible

Using the Community Box software - which is affordable and requires no coding skills - has allowed us to develop a digital platform to trial a way to make the sector more visible with limited outlay of time or money.

Organisations are tagged using a shared taxonomy plus geographical markers linking to Google Maps. Visual and simple searches and displays connect them with those looking for services or partners.

This can also connect with search terms used by funding databases and by funders looking for locations and/or focus areas. The directory can automatically be included on other websites, with only one point of updating required.



Connecting the Sector

The Lord Lieutenant of Cumbria hosted place-based workshops for the project bringing together civil society stakeholders from across the formal and informal sectors, including funders and public sector representatives. Participants noted that this was unusual and welcomed, especially in a sector whose workforce (paid and volunteer) faces extreme pressures (Hilbert, 2020).

The digital platform also allows organisations to search across shared tags and localities to identify others working in complementary ways and support collaboration.



Photo Credit to Cumbria Community Foundation



Photo Credit to Cumbria Community Foundation



Resourcing the Sector

Cumbria has a strong and diverse funding base for civil society, including the public sector, foundations and family trusts, corporate support, social impact investment, and individual donations, including the vibrant Cumbria Community Foundation.

The rise of formal and informal food banks and ‘warm hubs’ is impacting on funding allocations. For example the Cumberland Building Society, a consistent funder across the county, donated over £200,000 in both 2023 and 2024 to support regional food banks (Cumberland Building Society, 2024).

However the landscape of civil society activity in Cumbria remains more diverse, and the Office of the Lord Lieutenant can contribute to funders being informed through sector and community engagement.

Cumbria Community Foundation participated in the project to explore ways to direct resources effectively and equitably. They highlighted Q methodology and the Community Box as ways to understand community priorities and to minimise organisations’ investment of time in applying for funding.



Recommendations

To conclude the mapping exercise, we propose a set of practical recommendations to strengthen Cumbria's civil society infrastructure:

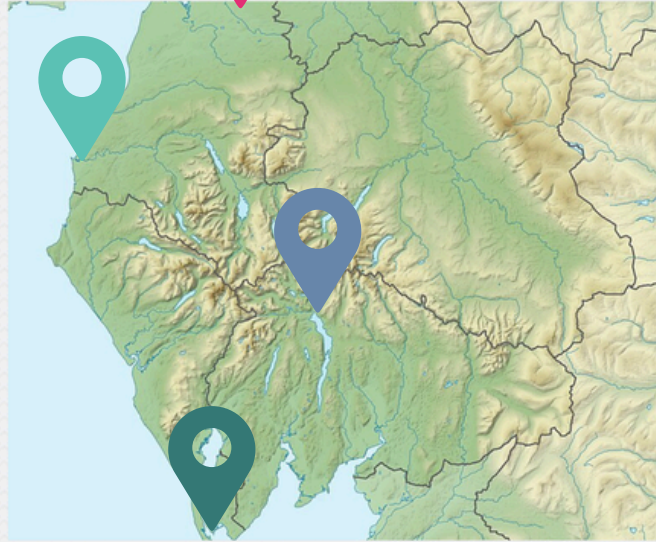
- **Expand the Community Box Directory:** Establish a research internship (or dedicated project role) to grow and regularly update the Community Box directory. This would involve working closely with Deputy Lieutenants, Cumbria Community Foundation, local councils, and other partners to integrate publicly available information and actively gather data on informal groups. Technical support should be provided to ensure the directory remains user-friendly and comprehensive.
- **Integrate the Directory into Websites:** The Office of the Lord Lieutenant and the new unitary councils (Cumberland and Westmorland & Furness) should integrate the Community Box widget into their official websites. They should also provide simple forms (both digital and paper-based) for organisations to register themselves, so even those with limited internet access can be included.
- **Host Regular Sector Forums:** The Office of the Lord Lieutenant should host place-based workshops and 'town forum' style meetings for the civil society sector, bringing together funders, volunteers, and organisations (formal and informal alike). These convenings, perhaps rotating through different parts of Cumbria, will sustain the momentum of connectivity and encourage ongoing dialogue, peer support, and collaborative problem-solving.

- 
- **Promote the Map to Funders:** The Office of the Lord Lieutenant should actively promote the Community Box directory (and the insights from this mapping) to national and regional funders. Encouraging funders to use the directory to search for local organisations in their areas of interest will help inform their priorities and highlight opportunities to fund grassroots initiatives that might otherwise be overlooked
 - **Invest in Ongoing Research and Impact Measurement:** Form research partnerships with academic institutions or specialist organisations to periodically study and quantify the impact of Cumbria's civil society. This could include updating the economic value of volunteer work, assessing social outcomes (like improved wellbeing or community cohesion), and mapping contributions to environmental sustainability goals. Such research will keep the evidence base fresh and can inspire policy support and further investment in the sector.

By implementing these recommendations, Cumbria can build on the findings of this project and ensure that its civil society (in all its diversity, formal and informal) is visibly appreciated, well-connected, and strongly resourced for the challenges and opportunities ahead. Ultimately, strengthening civil society strengthens our communities, creating a more thriving and equitable Cumbrian community life for all.

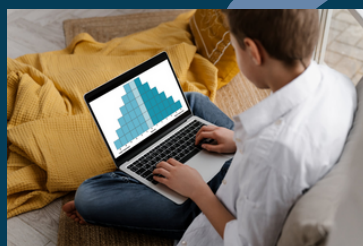
Listening

PARTICIPATORY ACTION RESEARCH WORKSHOPS



March-July,
2024

- Introductions
- Q Sorting
- Debriefing Dialogue



AMBLESIDE



19 participants

CARLISLE



21 participants

WORKINGTON



23 participants

BARROW



14 participants



ONLINE

15 sorts,

3 were anonymous



Listening: Participatory Action Research Workshops

The project included four face-to-face workshops that brought together a wide range of participants representing different groups, organisations, networks and sectors from across Cumbria's civil society:

- Ambleside, 21 March (19 participants)
- Carlisle, 22 May (21 participants)
- Workington, 13 June (23 participants)
- Barrow-in-Furness, 4 July (14 participants)

The workshops offered the participants opportunities to share their personal viewpoints about how to strengthen Cumbria's civil society and to learn from each other. Each participant completed an individual card-sorting exercise designed to support their individual prioritisation of what is most needed to create a more thriving and equitable community life in Cumbria.

The workshops also enabled the participants to identify challenges and gaps, as well as enhancing their appreciation and understanding of the diversity, vibrancy and innovation of Cumbria's civil society. For those unable to attend one of the workshops, opportunities were offered to respond and contribute to the project through an online version of the card-sort.



The workshops were geographically located across Cumbria in urban (Carlisle), coastal (Barrow & Workington), and South Lakes (Ambleside) communities, which allowed for a deeper understanding of civil society from different and distinct areas of the county, while also gaining an overall wider Cumbrian perspective. Each workshop in the main attracted people who live and/or work within the catchment area of the four locations, however there were some exceptions. For example, Ambleside participants included some who were based in Carlisle and West Cumbria, Carlisle involved people from Penrith and South Lakes, and both Workington and Barrow drew some contributors from other parts of Cumbria.

“

Gaining a wider
Cumbrian perspective

”

Workshop participants comprised a rich diversity of Cumbrian groups, organisations, networks and sectors – community volunteered groups, faith groups, registered charities, social enterprises, grantmakers, businesses, local authorities, colleges/universities and umbrella membership organisations, among others.



SCCS Workshop, Barrow-in-Furness

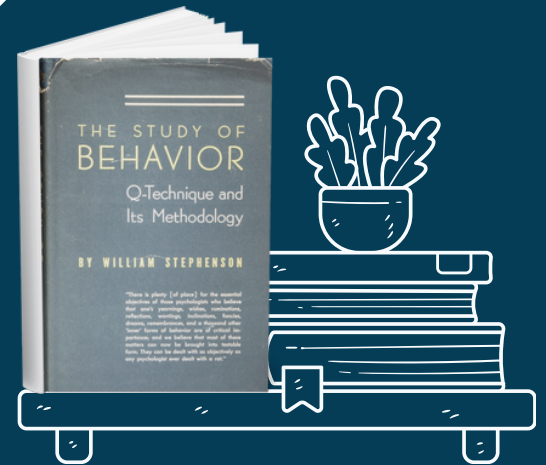


SCCS Workshop, Workington

The position roles and titles of workshop participants also varied widely ranging from frontline workers such as volunteers, community connectors, engagement workers, enablers, development officers, psychologists, teachers, learning officers, researchers, chaplains and priests, to people working as coordinators, consultants, managers, local councillors, deputy lieutenants, directors, trustees, chairpersons, chief executive officers and in other senior leadership roles.

Various participants indicated that they had multiple affiliations and responsibilities, for example volunteer work as charity board chairs, trustees and community outreach duties.

William Stephenson,
British Psychologist
(1902-1989)



Q Study

This study used Q methodology, which mixes qualitative and quantitative methods, to investigate, uncover, describe, and understand the multiple divergent views actors hold about what is needed for a more flourishing and equitable community life in the region.

- ✓ Condition of Instruction
- ✓ Concourse to Q Sample (from local context)
- ✓ Structuring the P Set (participants as variables)
- ✓ Q Sorting
- ✓ Post-sort survey (and workshop dialogue)
- ✓ Q Analysis
- ✓ Factor Interpretation





Methodology

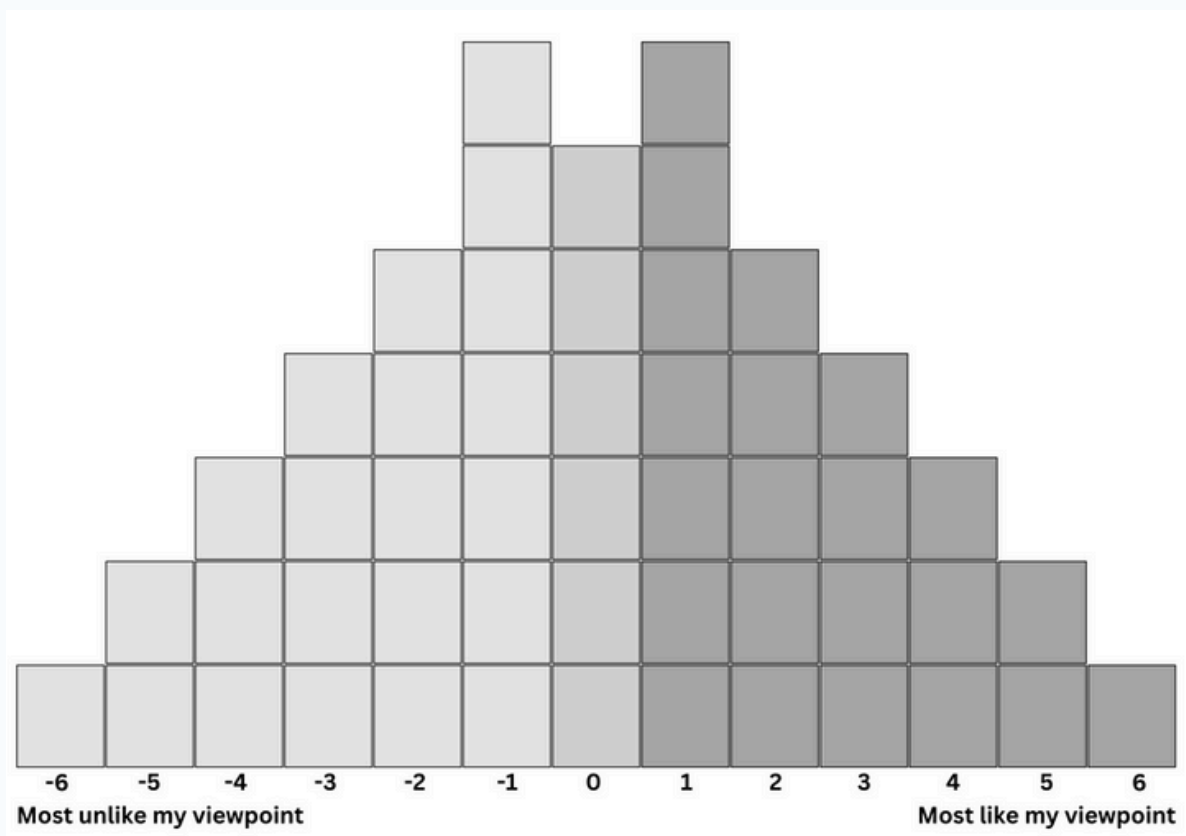
Developed in the 1950s by British psychologist William Stephenson, Q methodology is the specific approach that was used for data collection within our participatory action research project. The methodology mixes qualitative and quantitative research aspects to reveal and describe multiple, unique viewpoints about any topic. It also contains within it processes for developing a holistic awareness of the landscape of ideas on a particular subject.

In this case, the preliminary steps work to find, as best can be developed within a limited number of statements, a comprehensive set of ideas that represent the way real people in Cumbria think about the topic at hand.

In this study, the ways in which a person in Cumbria might respond to the question posed in the workshops, “what is most needed for a more thriving and equitable community life in Cumbria?” The possible answers that emerged captured leaned into those topics that civil society organisations are focused on.

Card sorting activity

The participants sorted the statements based on their personal opinion. This process also allowed for the workshop attendees to develop a shared language around the topics under discussion, and prompted awareness of other key issues that needed to be brought into view. On the whole, community members enjoyed the experience, though some struggled with the forced rank aspect of the grid created for the statements which required some statements to be valued above others.





“

We encouraged participants to engage with the local people they serve and who they work with to gather further insights.

”

Additionally, other community members were offered the opportunity to participate through a specialised online software programme. This allowed for those who were unable to attend the workshops to have their opinion included in the final results. In total, 94 community members participated in the study. One workshop participant opted not to complete a sort, 15 people completed the study online, and of those four chose to remain anonymous.

Participants were invited through word-of-mouth as well as Facebook posts by civil society groups and organisations in Cumbria and some posted flyers in public spaces. We encouraged participants to engage with the local people they serve and who they work with to gather further insights. Some workshop attendees took away cards and posters with the grid shape to support this outreach.



It was hoped that the mixture of participants would reflect a variety of areas around the region especially more rural places, people who live in deprived areas, diversity of gender, of topic areas relevant to their professional and volunteer work, representation from council leadership, councillors and officers, community-engaged business leaders, young people, and to have a mix of cultural backgrounds including ethnicity and religious affiliation.

This was largely achieved, though the barriers of day time workshops and availability of local transport may have reduced the variety of people who attended. Unlike traditional surveys, in Q methodology the demographics of those participating are not analysed but form part of how the study is configured based on the ideas included. The concepts included in the statements enabled the research team to structure the types of categories of participants. The ‘sampling’ are the actual statements that are developed and chosen from the concourse, meaning the whole of the ways the topic is discussed.

Data Analysis & Findings

Q methodology recognises broad descriptions of a phenomenon as complex and varied as civil society. Previous research has demonstrated that as a topic, civil society holds divergent underlying meanings for different people that can be unalterable or sacrosanct.

Due to these factors, our study worked to understand what might constitute these underlying meanings, what priorities emerge for these different perspectives, how the viewpoints perceive relevant ways of working on problems, and what the various viewpoints had in common as a way of working towards a shared vision as a region.



Photo Credit to Cumbria Community Foundation

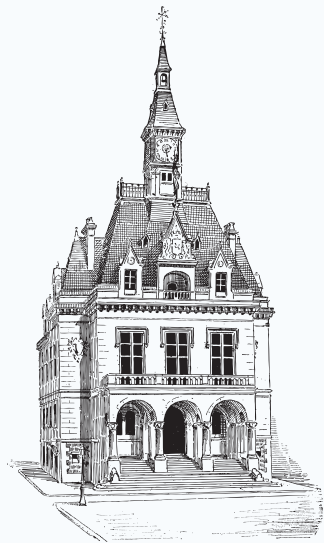


Photo Credit to Cumbria Community Foundation

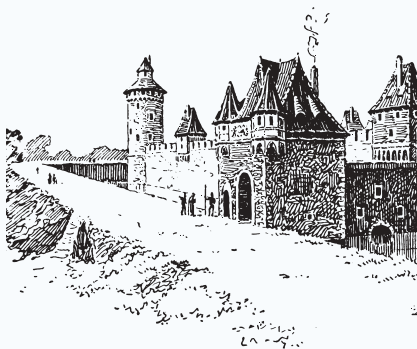
FINDINGS

- **Overview of Four Viewpoints**
- **Viewpoint 1: The Town Forum**
- **Viewpoint 2: The Village Gate**
- **Viewpoint 3: The Market Square**
- **Viewpoint 4: The Water Mill**
- **Additional Key Findings**
- **Findings for Impact**
- **Connecting to Strategy**

An Overview of the Four Viewpoints



A place that brings diverse people together to make plans, to see the bigger human-nature picture, and to develop a sense of belonging, effectiveness, and ownership for the future.



Just outside of town, a place to find all the people with the greatest needs and those who might feel excluded so they can be helped. Here, the resources coming in and how they could help are visible.



Here the wider world and rural connections come into view as opportunities to develop bustling businesses and advanced skills become possible, especially for young people.



A place that strengthens the food and energy needs of the community, paying attention to the natural world and working with it beyond utility towards intergenerational wellbeing and connection.

The Town Forum

Networked and Green Local Solutions through Empowerment

This viewpoint sees that complex issues are interconnected and equipping local people to work together and shape their futures is vital. The urgency of issues like climate change point to the need for networked community resilience from a diversity of people.

The Village Gate

People First to Leave No One Behind

This viewpoint points at the plight of deprived and underserved communities, focusing on how moving resources can generate local solutions through empowerment. Innovative solutions connect social issues together, and success comes when the able Third Sector can collaborate with other sectors to do what they do best.

The Market Square

Invest in the Future

This viewpoint attends to the way that a thriving, well managed, and vibrant economy enables transformation of other social issues in the community and retains young people as the future of the region. It looks outward, but also to rural places, family, and heritage, for new opportunities to invest, innovate, and develop skills.

The Water Mill

Sustainable Places for People

This viewpoint wants a more sustainable future for Cumbria, seeing social and physical infrastructures as key leverage points. Food, energy, and climate change are all vital but contested environmental concerns. People, especially young people, need to feel connected and to thrive.



Factor 1: The Town Forum

A place that brings diverse people together to make plans, to see the bigger human-nature picture, and to develop a sense of belonging, effectiveness, and ownership for the future.

Action is required which enables multiple objectives to be achieved at the same time, hence the need for a joined up approach towards a set of community led objectives.

We need to equip communities with the skills to self-organise...People are disillusioned and distrusting of centralised authorities, more consultations and data gathering, technological solutions.

We need to build the skills to enable people to collaborate with people who aren't like them - in schools, at work and more.

QUOTES

Factor 1: The Town Forum

	Highest Ranked Statements	
# (see p. 58)	Statements	Factor 1
10	Create strategies that connect multiple local issues and address the most complex challenges as a connected system	6
	Positive Statements Ranked Higher in Factor 1 Array than in Other Factor Arrays	
#	Statements	Factor 1
3	Give more power to local communities as their complex issues can only be solved by the communities themselves	5
11	Get more diverse people involved in creating solutions and implementing them would widen participation in community life	5
13	Ensure that everyone in a community feels welcome, and so should reduce racism, promote LGBTQ+ inclusion and enable support for refugees	4
43	Improve networking between communities to share experience and gain mutual support and enable resilience and prosperity	4
8	We need to develop more local people and develop our own plans to create change because what we are currently doing isn't working	3
47	Cut waste and emissions, conserve natural resources, and protect the environment by transitioning to a circular economy based on ideas like 'Donut' economics	3
6	Encourage better collaboration between our leaders at the top - people who have responsibility	3



Factor 2: The Village Gate

Just outside of town, a place to find all the people with the greatest needs and those who might feel excluded so they can be helped. Here, the resources coming in and how they could help are visible.

I always say people over systems and places and things.

QUOTES

Improving the skills and aspirations of local people, encouraging investment in the area, to give people highly skilled and highly paid opportunities to enable them to lift out of poverty and live happier and healthier lives.

We as locals know what's needed and should pay more of a part in decisions as our government is so far out of touch with the reality of life for most people.

Factor 2: The Village Gate

	Highest Ranked Statements	
# (see p. 58)	Statements	Factor 2
1	Give local organisations and community groups more resources as they already do a lot to help people	6
	Positive Statements Ranked Higher in Factor 2 Array than in Other Factor Arrays	
#	Statements	Factor 2
27	Provide hubs to support struggling families and children to improve local services and wellbeing	5
3	Give more power to local communities as their complex issues can only be solved by the communities themselves	5
33	To address homelessness, poverty and disadvantage, we need more comprehensive support for people in need to live independently	3
25	Attract and deliver as much new economic investment and jobs as we can, especially for the working class	3
9	Highlight Cumbria's best qualities by shining a light on all the great communities, solutions, and people here	3
2	Central government should send more resources into Cumbria so we could make more progress on overcoming our problems	2



Factor 3: The Market Square

Here the wider world and rural connections come into view as opportunities to develop bustling businesses and advanced skills become possible, especially for young people.

QUOTES

It's about the economy - we need thriving businesses, providing great jobs to families within and those who may move to Cumbria because its such an amazing place to live. So, more self-help and economic growth, supported by a proud and productive workforce. More success means a thriving community because inclusive success will help everyone - even the most needy.

We need to get our heads out of the sand and be more outward facing. We are very muscular as as a country and we don't promote ourselves or play to our strengths nearly as much as we should.

Factor 3: The Market Square

	Highest Ranked Statements	
# (see p. 58)	Statements	Factor 3
17	Create and highlight better job opportunities for young people , to help them stay and raise their families in Cumbria	6
	Positive Statements Ranked Higher in Factor 3 Array than in Other Factor Arrays	
#	Statements	Factor 3
24	Attract investment that supports industries, companies or sectors that can provide decent work is an important strategy for improving community life	5
31	Improve education and skills training and open more places of learning for people of all ages as an investment in the future	5
23	Creating new businesses is the key to improving our situation, so we must foster innovation and entrepreneurship to drive economic growth and prosperity	4
20	Highlight and address concerns of rural people in Cumbria in such areas as connectivity, mobility, job opportunities, and social services as these are overlooked and need attention	4
7	Effective local governance, expertise, and leadership is needed to enable better management of local communities	3
9	Highlight Cumbria's best qualities by shining a light on all the great communities, solutions, and people here	3



Factor 4: The Water Mill

A place that strengthens the food and energy needs of the community, paying attention to the natural world and working with it beyond utility towards intergenerational wellbeing and connection.

QUOTES

Developing an understanding of all those aspects of society that have no apparent economic or utilitarian value but are critical to our civic wellbeing.

Cumbria can lead the way in a green transition.

I am arguing that there is another process, more urgent, that lists, considers, prioritises and addresses the immediate and local manifestations of those forces that inhibit civil society.

Factor 4: The Water Mill

	Highest Ranked Statements	
# (see p. 58)	Statements	Factor 4
48	Strengthen food security and reduce the need for food banks through access to good-quality, affordable food	6
	Positive Statements Ranked Higher in Factor 4 Array than in Other Factor Arrays	
#	Statements	Factor 4
38	The impacts of climate change create an urgent need for action to reduce our use of carbon, increase wild spaces, and to improve the long-term sustainability of Cumbria	5
15	Reduce fuel poverty so people don't have to choose whether they eat or heat, and then we could improve issues like black mould, and exacerbated health problems	5
21	Adequate and well-maintained public infrastructure, including roads and public transportation, is necessary for local communities and the tourism sector	4
39	Pollution, especially of our waterways, impacts everyone in Cumbria and needs to be mitigated	4
46	Addressing Cumbria's transport and mobility challenges would result in reduced pollution, increased public health, safer roads for cycling and walking and lower congestion	3
40	Protect Cumbria's natural assets and adopt greener farming practices to promote sustainable tourism and leisure activities and increase health and wellbeing for all	3

Key findings for impact

Making sense of strategy, strengths, and signals in Cumbria

STRATEGIC DIRECTION

Shaping working groups & approaches for the Office of the Lord Lieutenant via the four viewpoints and consensus ideas. Peer learning across the UK to 'feed up' learnings.

BUILDING ON STRENGTHS

Building the four distinct perspectives into the work of conveners - funders and councils - towards greater inclusivity & resourcing diverse collaborations.

SIGNALS AND TRENDS

Key findings demonstrate avenues for improved policy & programming (eg. demographic shifts, disinformation, religious voices, AI, and green tourism).

Strategy, Strengths, and Signals

The findings of the SCCS project will help inform the strategy of The Office of the Lord Lieutenant by informing the shape of the Deputy Working Groups and their geographic organisation, as well as feeding into the main themes that are the focus of strategic action from 2025 to 2033.

With uptake from the councils, the University of Cumbria, and the leadership of the Civil Society sector in Cumbria, a peer learning and ‘feeding up’ approach can enhance action on the findings. In particular, the findings showed how young people create the convening context for the social, economic, and environmental challenges facing Cumbria, and its best hope for a flourishing future.

The four viewpoints demonstrate key points of consensus regarding the needs of vulnerable populations such as the elderly, homeless people, and refugees. At the same time, some viewpoints resisted

conceptions of civil society that perceive these issues as interlinked problems that require joined-up solutions. Work in communities needs to enhance collaboration and drive forward initiatives that tackle problems through knowledge and resource sharing.

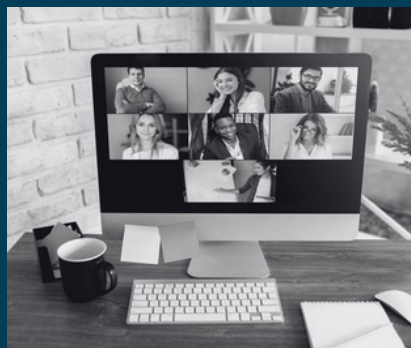
While there was some awareness regarding key opportunities and threats on the horizon such as AI as well as misinformation and disinformation, these understandings were brought forward by knowledgeable experts but not widely shared among leaders. Most importantly, their digital nature made it difficult to relate to local problems, and their relationships to a strong civil society needs to be made more clear by policy makers and convening organisations. Finally, religious voices appear undervalued in the overall discussions of civil society.

ADDITIONAL KEY FINDINGS



KEY FINDING 1

The case for taking a systems view of interlinked problems needs place-based understandings at the community level - starting with transport.



KEY FINDING 2

There is 'consultation burnout' and leaders need to be seen as removing the blocks to self-organising local communities.



KEY FINDING 3

The environmental sustainability agenda is a people, community and wellbeing ambition and can advance as such.

As emphasised on the previous page, a more joined up approach is needed to strengthen civil society. The *how* of that finding suggests that particular issues could become ways to bring people together and tackle problems coherently. For example, the issue of transportation affects young people and their prospects, the ability for job creation and thriving businesses, the health and wellbeing of the elderly, and environmental constraints.

A more locally grounded approach in communities that also learns from other areas of the county (and national and global models more broadly) could strengthen participation, volunteerism, and local ownership of challenges while giving visible and tangible improvements from consultations.

Connecting to Strategy

Council Strategies Civil Society Strategies The Office of the Lord Lieutenant Strategy

COUNCILS

Shaping working groups & approaches for the Office of the Lord Lieutenant via the four viewpoints and consensus ideas. Peer learning across the UK to 'feed up' learnings.

CIVIL SOCIETY

Building the four distinct perspectives into the work of conveners - funders and councils - towards greater inclusivity & resourcing diverse collaborations.

UOC

Key findings demonstrate avenues for improved policy & programming (eg. demographic shifts, disinformation, religious voices, AI, and green tourism).

The project was designed in part to support the development of a strategy for The Office of the Lord Lieutenant of the County of Cumbria. The upcoming strategy (expected Autumn 2025) developed these themes from the findings.



APPENDICES

- **Statements for Q Sorting**
- **Study Design: Q Sample Structure**
- **Study Design: P Set Structure**
- **Study Results: P Set**
- **P set and Factor Characteristics**

Appendix 1

Statements

These statements were gathered from the Cumbrian context including reports, social media, and interviews to represent how the various aspects of civil society are considered. Community members sorted these statements to represent their perspective and they were factor analysed statistically to show distinct viewpoints.

- Give local organisations and community groups more resources as they already do a lot to help people
- Central government should send more resources into Cumbria so we could make more progress on overcoming our problems
- Give more power to local communities as their complex issues can only be solved by the communities themselves
- Get more and better science and data from experts about the issues facing our community into the hands of decision-makers and those doing the work
- Local people, especially wealthy people and businesses, should give more freely of their time and money, to increase and enhance our resources
- Encourage better collaboration between our leaders at the top - people who have responsibility
- Effective local governance, expertise, and leadership is needed to enable better management of local communities
- We need to develop more local people and develop our own plans to create change because what we are currently doing isn't working
- Highlight Cumbria's best qualities by shining a light on all the great communities, solutions, and people here
- Create strategies that connect multiple local issues and address the most complex challenges as a connected system

Appendix 1

Statements

(continued)

- Get more diverse people involved in creating solutions and implementing them would widen participation in community life
- Create more opportunities to volunteer locally, to better connect local needs with volunteers which will create ripple effects of kindness in the community
- Ensure that everyone in a community feels welcome, and so should reduce racism, promote LGBTQ+ inclusion and enable support for refugees
- Provide ways for people to talk about and deal with mental health issues to help tackle the loneliness epidemic and mental health crises
- Reduce fuel poverty so people don't have to choose whether they eat or heat, and then we could improve issues like black mould, and exacerbated health problems
- Address alcohol and drug abuse as it is a significant problem and communities could work together to create solutions to improve health and support individuals and families
- Create and highlight better job opportunities for young people , to help them stay and raise their families in Cumbria
- More entertainment and a diversity of things to do in Cumbria would keep young people here and improve the quality of life for everyone

Appendix 1

Statements (continued)

- Create better services and infrastructure to better support year-round residents of Cumbria and reduce the harm of holiday lets
- Highlight and address concerns of rural people in Cumbria in such areas as connectivity, mobility, job opportunities, and social services as these are overlooked and need attention
- Adequate and well-maintained public infrastructure, including roads and public transportation, is necessary for local communities and the tourism sector
- When natural disasters like flooding come, the communities in Cumbria are under-resourced and not adequately prepared so we need more efforts to build resilience when hard times arrive
- Creating new businesses is the key to improving our situation, so we must foster innovation and entrepreneurship to drive economic growth and prosperity
- Attract investment that supports industries, companies or sectors that can provide decent work is an important strategy for improving community life
- Attract and deliver as much new economic investment and jobs as we can, especially for the working class
- Build more affordable housing, even if it doesn't 'match' the historic architecture and landscape

Appendix 1

Statements (continued)

- Provide hubs to support struggling families and children to improve local services and wellbeing
- Highlight the needs of disabled residents and provide more support for carers, special education needs and disabilities, and improve accessibility
- Promote sports and other team-based activities to develop character and a healthy lifestyle and provide a key leisure activity for Cumbrians
- Provide more opportunities for local people to be active and out-of-doors, spending time in nature to improve their wellbeing and value for the natural world
- Improve education and skills training and open more places of learning for people of all ages as an investment in the future
- Support the elderly in our community who are especially vulnerable and isolated
- To address homelessness, poverty and disadvantage, we need more comprehensive support for people in need to live independently
- People who have gone to prison need a second chance and integrating them into our community will help them lead happy and productive lives
- Local arts, cultural institutions and venues is our past and our present, and investment will highlight talent that we can be proud of

Appendix 1 Statements (continued)

- The heritage of our local community is important to bring into the future especially landscapes, farming, historic buildings, and craft skill, especially within our more rural areas
- Religious practices, sacred texts, and understanding of spiritual things enables personal and collective transformation and responsibility
- The impacts of climate change create an urgent need for action to reduce our use of carbon, increase wild spaces, and to improve the long-term sustainability of Cumbria
- Pollution, especially of our waterways, impacts everyone in Cumbria and needs to be mitigated
- Protect Cumbria's natural assets and adopt greener farming practices to promote sustainable tourism and leisure activities and increase health and wellbeing for all
- Address locally disinformation and misinformation to raise awareness and develop digital literacy skills
- Artificial Intelligence is a challenge and an opportunity-- even with all the struggles facing organisations, understanding and investing in its potential is vital
- Improve networking between communities to share experience and gain mutual support and enable resilience and prosperity

Appendix 1 Statements (continued)

- Support community-owned energy schemes and other utilities which enable communities to support and sustain village halls, shops and community activities
- Planning should be led by local people to facilitate wide engagement with all sectors of the community and develop and mobilise local action plans
- Addressing Cumbria's transport and mobility challenges would result in reduced pollution, increased public health, safer roads for cycling and walking and lower congestion
- Cut waste and emissions, conserve natural resources, and protect the environment by transitioning to a circular economy based on ideas like 'Donut' economics
- Strengthen food security and reduce the need for food banks through access to good-quality, affordable food
- Celebrate and collaborate around the opportunities connected to the energy sector on Cumbria's west coast
- Anti-social behaviour and youth disorder can have a detrimental impact on communities and we need strategies to address these issues, especially within our more rural areas

**Table 1: Factorial Design
for Q Sample Structure**

Main Effects	Levels	n
(A) Pathways	(a) People - Inclusion (b) People - Health (c) People - Infrastructure (d) Planet (e) Prosperity (f) Implementation - Top Down (g) Implementation - Bottom Up	7

$m = 6$ replications

Q Sample size $N = mA = (6)(7) = 42$ statements

Table 2: Final Statement Counts

(a) People - Inclusion	(a) 10
(b) People - Health	(b) 6
(c) People - Infrastructure	(c) 6
(d) Planet	(d) 6
(e) Prosperity	(e) 8
(f) Implementation - Top Down	(f) 7
(g) Implementation - Bottom Up	(g) 7

Q Sample total statements: 50

Table 3: Factorial Design for P set structure

Dimensions	Types	n
(A) Locale	(a) Ambleside (b) Carlisle (c) Workington (d) Barrow-in-Furness	4
(B) Interests	(e) Stakeholder (f) Convener (g) Enterprise	3

$m=3$ replications

P set size $N = mAB = (3)(4)(3) = 36$ participants

Stakeholder: Those with 1:1 contact in the community

Convener: Representatives of funding bodies and local authorities

Enterprise: Those with social enterprise or business perspectives

Table 4: P set - Total of 94 Q Study participants

	Stakeholder	Convener	Enterprise	
Ambleside	12	9	4	25
Carlisle	17	4	4	25
Workington	10	13	4	27
Barrow-in-Furness	6	6	3	15
P set totals	45	32	15	92+2*

Table 5: Factor Characteristics

	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4
No of Defining Variables	24	12	13	20
Avg Rel Coef	0.8	0.8	0.8	0.8
Composite Reliability	0.99	0.98	0.981	0.988

Study Results

P SET

Met P Set conditions of the study design, and met composite reliability scores (or more variables (or participants) give over 90% reliability

*2 anonymous online participants

Table 6: P set most representative of the viewpoint

	The Town Forum		The Village Gate		The Market Square		The Water Mill	
	1	As % of Factor	2	As % of Factor	3	As % of Factor	4	As % of Factor
Stakeholder	13	54.17%	5	41.67%	4	33.33%	7	38.89%
Convener	8	33.33%	5	41.67%	3	25.00%	7	38.89%
Enterprise	3	12.50%	2	16.67%	5	41.67%	4	22.22%
Total	24		12		12		18	

Stakeholder: Those with 1:1 contact in the community

Convener: Representatives of funding bodies and local authorities

Enterprise: Those with social enterprise or business perspectives

Study Results

P SET

- Stakeholders made up the majority of the Town Forum
- Conveners and Stakeholders were even in the Village Gate and the Water Mill
- The Market Square had the largest proportion of Enterprise

The Town Forum

Composite Sort

-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
** ◀ Celebrate and collaborate around the opportunities connected to	** ◀ Creating new businesses is the key to improving our situation, so	** ◀ Attract and deliver as much new economic investment and jobs as we can,	* ◀ Anti-social behaviour and youth disorder can have a detrimental	** ◀ Adequate and well-maintained public infrastructure, including roads	** Pollution, especially of our waterways, impacts everyone in	** Highlight Cumbria's best qualities by shining a light on all the	Provide ways for people to talk about and deal with mental health	** ▶ Planning should be led by local people to facilitate wide engagement with	** Give local organisations and community groups more resources as	** ▶ Ensure that everyone in a community feels welcome, and so should reduce	* ▶ Give more power to local communities as their complex issues can only	** ▶ Create strategies that connect multiple local issues and
	Artificial Intelligence is a challenge and an opportunity—	Promote sports and other team-based activities to develop	** ◀ Attract investment that supports industries, companies or	More entertainment and a diversity of things to do in Cumbria	* Create better services and infrastructure to better support	Local arts, cultural institutions and venues is our past and	Addressing Cumbria's transport and mobility challenges	Protect Cumbria's natural assets and adopt greener farming	We need to develop more local people and develop our own plans to	** ▶ Improve networking between communities to share	** ▶ Get more diverse people involved in creating solutions and	
	** ◀ Get more and better science and data from experts about the issues	Local people, especially wealthy people and businesses, should give	Local people, especially wealthy people and businesses, should give	** Build more affordable housing, even if it doesn't 'match' the	People who have gone to prison need a second chance and integrating	Highlight the needs of disabled residents and provide more	** Reduce fuel poverty so people don't have to choose whether they	** ▶ Improve education and skills training and open more places of	Cut waste and emissions, conserve natural resources, and	** The impacts of climate change create an urgent need for action to		
		Religious practices, sacred texts, and understanding	Address disinformation and misinformation locally to	** Provide hubs to support struggling families and children to	* Create and highlight better job opportunities for young	** Central government should send more resources into Cumbria so	* Support community-owned energy schemes and other utilities which	Encourage better collaboration between our leaders at the				
		Address alcohol and drug abuse as it is a significant problem and	To address homelessness, poverty and disadvantage, we need more	** The heritage of our local community is important to bring into the	Support the elderly in our community who are especially vulnerable and	** Strengthen food security and reduce the need for food banks through access						
		Create more opportunities to volunteer locally, to better connect	** ▶ When natural disasters like flooding come, the communities in Cumbria are	** ▶ Provide more opportunities for local people to be active and								
		Effective local governance, expertise, and leadership is needed to										

Legend

- * Distinguishing statement at $P < 0.05$
- ** Distinguishing statement at $P < 0.01$
- ▶ Z-score for the statement is higher than in all other factors
- ◀ Z-score for the statement is lower than in all other factors

The Village Gate

Composite Sort

Composite Q Sort for Factor 2

-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
* Artificial intelligence is a challenge and an opportunity--	** Cut waste and emissions, conserve natural resources, and	* The heritage of our local community is important to bring into the	Religious practices, sacred texts, and understanding	Anti-social behaviour and youth disorder can have a detrimental	** Creating new businesses is the key to improving our situation, so	** Build more affordable housing, even if it doesn't 'match' the	Provide ways for people to talk about and deal with mental health	** Central government should send more resources into Cumbria so	** Strengthen food security and reduce the need for food banks through access	Improve education and skills training and open more places of	** Provide hubs to support struggling families and children to	** Give local organisations and community groups more resources as
	** Pollution, especially of our waterways, impacts everyone in	When natural disasters like flooding come, the communities in Cumbria are	Get more and better science and data from experts about the issues	Local arts, cultural institutions and venues is our past and	Highlight the needs of disabled residents and provide more	Support the elderly in our community who are especially vulnerable and	Encourage better collaboration between our leaders at the	We need to develop more local people and develop our own plans to	To address homelessness, poverty and disadvantage, we need more	Reduce fuel poverty so people don't have to choose whether they	* Give more power to local communities as their complex issues can only	
	** Protect Cumbria's natural assets and adopt greener farming	** The impacts of climate change create an urgent need for action to	Address disinformation and misinformation locally to	* Highlight and address concerns of rural people in Cumbria in such	** Adequate and well-maintained public infrastructure, including roads	Effective local governance, expertise, and leadership is needed to	** Attract investment that supports industries, companies or	Attract and deliver as much new economic investment and jobs as we can,	Create strategies that connect multiple local issues and			
		Promote sports and other team-based activities to develop	Addressing Cumbria's transport and mobility challenges	More entertainment and a diversity of things to do in Cumbria	Planning should be led by local people to facilitate wide engagement with	Improve networking between communities to share	** Create and highlight better job opportunities for young	Highlight Cumbria's best qualities by shining a light on all the				
			Provide more opportunities for local people to be active and	Support community-owned energy schemes and other utilities which	People who have gone to prison need a second chance and integrating	Create more opportunities to volunteer locally, to better connect	Address alcohol and drug abuse as it is a significant problem and					
				* Create better services and infrastructure to better support	** Local people, especially wealthy people and businesses, should give	Ensure that everyone in a community feels welcome, and so should reduce						
				Celebrate and collaborate around the opportunities connected to		** Get more diverse people involved in creating solutions and						

Legend

- * Distinguishing statement at $P < 0.05$
- ** Distinguishing statement at $P < 0.01$
- Z-score for the statement is higher than in all other factors
- ◄ Z-score for the statement is lower than in all other factors

The Market Square

Composite Sort

Composite Q Sort for Factor 3

-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Religious practices, sacred texts, and understanding	** ◀ Build more affordable housing, even if it doesn't 'match' the	* ◀ We need to develop more local people and develop our own plans to	** ▶ Artificial Intelligence is a challenge and an opportunity--	** ◀ Ensure that everyone in a community feels welcome, and so should reduce	** ◀ Provide ways for people to talk about and deal with mental health	** ▶ Celebrate and collaborate around the opportunities connected to	Attract and deliver as much new economic investment and jobs as we can,	Create more opportunities to volunteer locally, to better connect	** ▶ Effective local governance, expertise, and leadership is needed to	** ▶ Creating new businesses is the key to improving our situation, so	** ▶ Attract investment that supports industries, companies or	** ▶ Create and highlight better job opportunities for young
	Address disinformation and misinformation locally to	* ◀ Planning should be led by local people to facilitate wide engagement with	Promote sports and other team-based activities to develop	** Pollution, especially of our waterways, impacts everyone in	Highlight the needs of disabled residents and provide more	** Central government should send more resources into Cumbria so	Encourage better collaboration between our leaders at the	Protect Cumbria's natural assets and adopt greener farming	Adequate and well-maintained public infrastructure, including roads	** ▶ Highlight and address concerns of rural people in Cumbria in such	** ▶ Improve education and skills training and open more places of	
	Local people, especially wealthy people and businesses, should give	** ◀ People who have gone to prison need a second chance and integrating	Support community-owned energy schemes and other utilities which	* ◀ Support the elderly in our community who are especially vulnerable and	Anti-social behaviour and youth disorder can have a detrimental	Improve networking between communities to share	Addressing Cumbria's transport and mobility challenges	Highlight Cumbria's best qualities by shining a light on all the	Create strategies that connect multiple local issues and			
		When natural disasters like flooding come, the communities in Cumbria are	* ◀ To address homelessness, poverty and disadvantage, we need more	Get more diverse people involved in creating solutions and	** Strengthen food security and reduce the need for food banks through access	Local arts, cultural institutions and venues is our past and	Create better services and infrastructure to better support	** Give local organisations and community groups more resources as				
			Address alcohol and drug abuse as it is a significant problem and	Provide more opportunities for local people to be active and	** The impacts of climate change create an urgent need for action to	** ▶ Get more and better science and data from experts about the issues	** ▶ The heritage of our local community is important to bring into the					
				** ◀ Reduce fuel poverty so people don't have to choose whether they	Give more power to local communities as their complex issues can only	* Provide hubs to support struggling families and children to						
				More entertainment and a diversity of things to do in Cumbria		** Cut waste and emissions, conserve natural resources, and						

Legend

- * Distinguishing statement at $P < 0.05$
- ** Distinguishing statement at $P < 0.01$
- ▶ Z-score for the statement is higher than in all other factors
- ◀ Z-score for the statement is lower than in all other factors

The Water Mill

Composite Sort

Composite Q Sort for Factor 4

-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Religious practices, sacred texts, and understanding	** ◀ Highlight Cumbria's best qualities by shining a light on all the	More entertainment and a diversity of things to do in Cumbria	Promote sports and other team-based activities to develop	** Creating new businesses is the key to improving our situation, so	** ◀ Encourage better collaboration between our leaders at the	** Attract investment that supports industries, companies or	** Provide hubs to support struggling families and children to	Cut waste and emissions, conserve natural resources, and	** ▶ Addressing Cumbria's transport and mobility challenges	Adequate and well-maintained public infrastructure, including roads	** ▶ The impacts of climate change create an urgent need for action to	** ▶ Strengthen food security and reduce the need for food banks through access
	Artificial Intelligence is a challenge and an opportunity--	Address disinformation and misinformation locally to	* The heritage of our local community is important to bring into the	* Planning should be led by local people to facilitate wide engagement with	Give more power to local communities as their complex issues can only	** ◀ Create strategies that connect multiple local issues and	Create better services and infrastructure to better support	** ▶ Support the elderly in our community who are especially vulnerable and	Improve education and skills training and open more places of	** ▶ Pollution, especially of our waterways, impacts everyone in	Reduce fuel poverty so people don't have to choose whether they	
		Local people, especially wealthy people and businesses, should give	Celebrate and collaborate around the opportunities connected to	Get more and better science and data from experts about the issues	Anti-social behaviour and youth disorder can have a detrimental	People who have gone to prison need a second chance and integrating	Address alcohol and drug abuse as it is a significant problem and	Provide ways for people to talk about and deal with mental health	** Highlight and address concerns of rural people in Cumbria in such	** Create and highlight better job opportunities for young		
			** ◀ Improve networking between communities to share	* We need to develop more local people and develop our own plans to	** Attract and deliver as much new economic investment and jobs as we can,	Get more diverse people involved in creating solutions and	Ensure that everyone in a community feels welcome, and so should reduce	** ▶ Support community-owned energy schemes and other utilities which	Protect Cumbria's natural assets and adopt greener farming			
				* ◀ Create more opportunities to volunteer locally, to better connect	** When natural disasters like flooding come, the communities in Cumbria are	** Build more affordable housing, even if it doesn't 'match' the	** ▶ Highlight the needs of disabled residents and provide more	To address homelessness, poverty and disadvantage, we need more				
					Local arts, cultural institutions and venues is our past and	Provide more opportunities for local people to be active and	Effective local governance, expertise, and leadership is needed to					
					** ◀ Central government should send more resources into Cumbria so		** ◀ Give local organisations and community groups more resources as					

Legend

- * Distinguishing statement at $P < 0.05$
- ** Distinguishing statement at $P < 0.01$
- ▶ Z-score for the statement is higher than in all other factors
- ◀ Z-score for the statement is lower than in all other factors

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To be benevolent is to have goodwill towards all people.

— **Charlotte Mason**

You better live your best and act your best and think your best today, for today is the sure preparation for tomorrow and all the other tomorrows that follow.

— **Harriet Martineau**

Up here ... you gain new perspectives; thoughts run in new strange channels; there are stirrings in your soul.

— **Alfred Wainwright**

There is no wealth but life.

— **John Ruskin**