

draft

Regeneration in West Cumbria

OSC EW060306

Disclaimer!: The following represents the most up-to-date information the report author is able to find in a rapidly changing environment:

North West Development Agency

The Government-funded quango responsible for delivering and funding the regional economic strategy for the North West, and funding associated regeneration programmes (eg Market Town Initiatives, Cumbria Tourist Board, West Lakes Renaissance and Rural Regeneration Cumbria).

Cumbria Vision

Still at an embryonic stage, the idea behind Cumbria Vision is that it will act as a single voice for Cumbria and bring regeneration partners in Cumbria under a single umbrella. This is likely to include Rural Regeneration Cumbria and West Lakes Renaissance. Cumbria Inward Investment Agency is set to merge with Cumbria County Council's regeneration service, who have had good results with bringing forward brownfield sites in the past. CIIA is set to provide the marketing arm of Cumbria Vision from 1st April 2006.

It is understood that existing funded programmes under West Lakes Renaissance (such as the West Cumbria and Furness Business Plan) and Rural Regeneration Cumbria will be safeguarded when Cumbria Vision is established.

Cumbria Vision will be answerable to Cumbria Strategic Partnership. I understand the Business Plan is now approved and that the 'company' will be set up in March.

West Cumbria Strategic Forum

Set up to address the specific challenges for West Cumbria, this Forum is chaired at Ministerial level (the Secretary of State chaired the last meeting) and will work in partnership with NWDA and Cumbria Vision. A masterplanning study is about to be commissioned to address some of those challenges such as transport infrastructure and the dependence on the nuclear industry. The results of this exercise and the associated funding required will be fed into central government comprehensive funding review. Any programme resulting is likely to be funded through NWDA and Cumbria Vision. There has been some concern in the past that the positive messages being received in this Forum are not being fed through to the NWDA at a North West level.

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West Cumbria Development Agency

West Cumbria Development Agency was established in 1988 to help regenerate the local economy with a central aim of helping to create jobs in Allerdale and Copeland. It helps new businesses start and grow, assists local companies to expand and facilitates inward investment into the area.

West Cumbria Development Agency is a local organisation, sponsored by the local, private and public sectors. It provides local start-up advice, helps companies access funding and property, and maintains offices at Westlakes Science Park and Lillyhall.

West Lakes Renaissance

The urban regeneration company responsible for delivery of the West Cumbria and Furness business plan, through which a good part of Government funding is currently channelled. This is likely to be enveloped by Cumbria Vision. West Lakes Renaissance is currently developing the Pow Beck Masterplan and the Sea Change programme for Whitehaven with other partners including the Council and Copeland Homes.

Rural Regeneration Cumbria

A rural regeneration company working across Cumbria which will form part of Cumbria Vision from April 2006. In Copeland, the RRC was providing funding for the Cleator Moor Business Centre project.

West Cumbria Development Fund

The West Cumbria Development Fund is an alliance of private and public sector organisations dedicated to the economic regeneration of the area. The aim of the fund is to help business start ups and sustain jobs.

Copeland Borough Council

Economic development has been the number one priority of the Council for a good number of years. Its role might best be described as one of lobbying, consultancy, enabler and partner. It provides advice and funding to local partnerships and supports them to access further funding and it helps support the tourism sector. It has an important lobbying role through the West Cumbria Strategic Forum, with the nuclear sector, with Cumbria Vision and with the NWDA. It fulfils an important role as 'accountable body' for many regeneration projects, which allows these projects to access external funding.

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The Council has recently established an Economic Development and Tourism section which is developing a range of business support initiatives. A web enabled property/enquiry handling service will be introduced in April 2006 to allow local businesses to access information on vacant sites and premises in the borough. The business grant schemes will be reviewed by 30th June to ensure that they are meeting the needs of Copeland businesses. The Council will be providing additional funding to the Western Lake District Tourism Partnership to allow better promotion of Copeland's visitor attractions to potential visitors to the borough.

A review of the Tourist Information Centres in Whitehaven and Millom will be undertaken to ensure that the centres continue to develop their range of services to visitors.

There is increasing joint working with Allerdale on regeneration projects.

Environment Agency

The Environment Agency is taking a lead role in the redevelopment of the Huntsman Rhodia site. (Contact: Ian Walker at Environment Agency 01768 215804). Last heard, there were plans to turn the site into a forest and leisure area. The Rhodia Site are part of a partnership approach to develop a coastal environment which will support recreational and leisure activities managed through the National Trust. Proposals are still being developed with a range of partners including the Land Restoration Trust.

English Partnerships

Is a national regeneration agency which concentrates its efforts in deprived wards, in coalfield areas; in urban regeneration company areas. It has a particular remit for the regeneration of brownfield sites. It is the lead agency involved in the regeneration plans for the Haig Colliery Site which includes Haig mining museum. The proposals are to create an improved environment, which will aid the coastal development in line with ecological and recreational development. English Partnerships have allocated in excess of £4,000,000 towards the Haig Colliery site and works to develop detailed proposals are ongoing on the basis of implementation in 2007/08.

Whitehaven Harbour Commissioners/W3M

The Whitehaven Development Company/W3M is to be wound up and responsibility for the businesses under their auspices and for a few remaining sites will transfer to the Whitehaven Harbour Commissioners.

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Whitehaven Town Centre Group

This is the business voice for the regeneration and promotion of Whitehaven. It received a small grant from the Council, but is not a formally constituted group.

Egremont and Area Regeneration Partnership

This is a local regeneration company, which has been heavily involved in the development of the the mini masterplan for Egremont under the Market Town Initiatives, in partnership with Copeland Borough Council. The masterplan has attracted £1m in funding from the NWDA up to 2008 and £2m from West Lakes Renaissance to deliver the masterplan.

Millom and Haverigg Economic Development Group

Local regeneration group, which has been heavily involved in the development of the mini masterplan for Millom and Haverigg under the Market Town Initiatives, in partnership with Copeland Borough Council. The masterplan has attracted £1m in funding from the NWDA up to 2008 and £1.5 m from West Lakes Renaissance.

Cleator Moor and Area Regeneration Partnership

In its infancy, this is a local group set up as a successor body to the SRB, to give a voice to regeneration plans for the area, particularly the £3m earmarked through the NWDA/West Lakes Renaissance. They are currently applying for funding for a project manager. They particularly want to use influence to achieve an improvement to the physical environment in the area. Copeland Borough Council has also produced a mini master plan for Cleator Moor and Area.

Distington and Howgate Partnership

Voluntary Association Cumbria Support
Housing Market Renewal

Copeland Homes