

Future Generation

**A Strategy for Sustainable Communities in
West Cumbria
2007-2027**

Final Draft August 2007

N.B. This document will be sent to a graphic design team to be redesigned prior to publication.

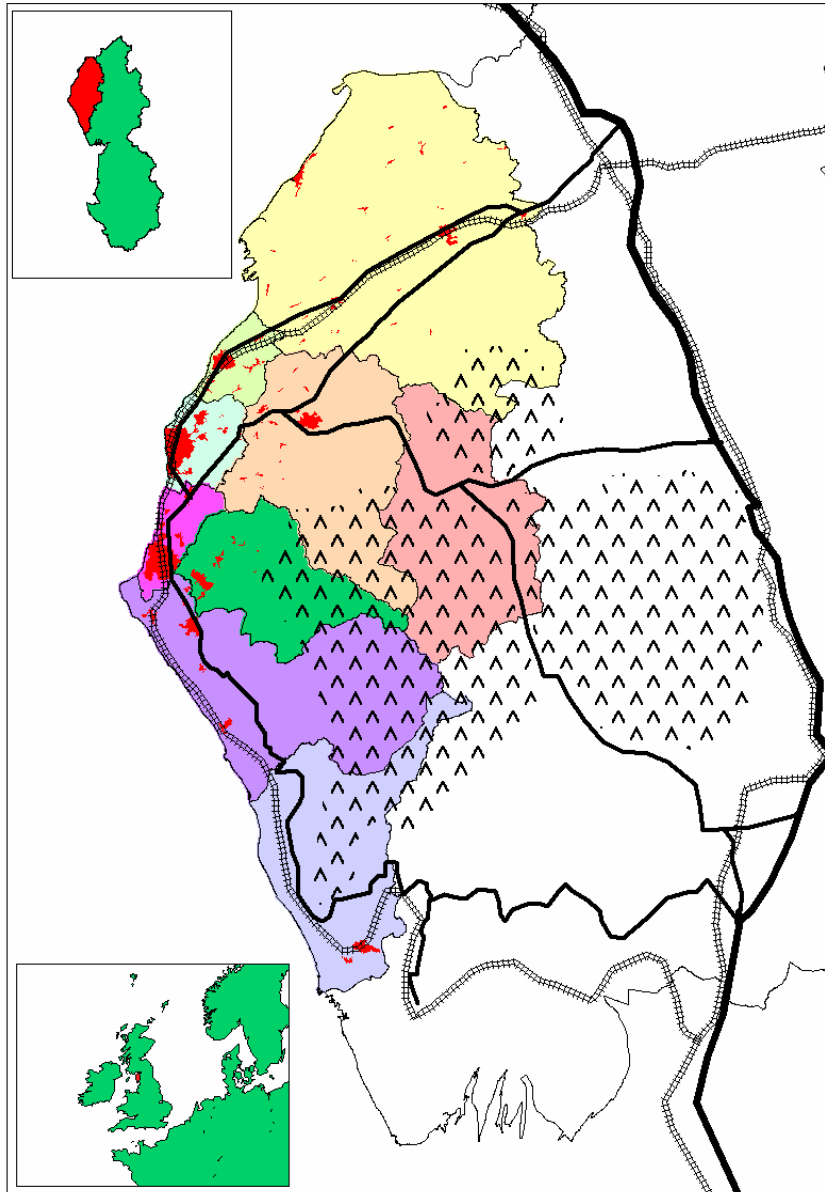
Contents

West Cumbria.....	4
Foreword	5
1 Introduction.....	6
1.1 What is a Sustainable Community?.....	6
1.2 What is a Strategy for Sustainable Communities?	7
1.3 Who is this Strategy for?	8
2 Vision	9
3 Our Overarching Aims	10
4 A Sense of Place.....	12
4.1 West Cumbria – the Place.....	12
4.2 West Cumbria – Prosperity.....	12
4.3 West Cumbria - People	13
5 Localities	15
6 Seizing the Opportunities – Transformational Strategies	20
6.1 Advantage through Knowledge and Managing Transition	21
6.2 Lifestyle Choice	23
6.3 Coastal Renaissance.....	26
6.4 Making Better Connections	28
6.5 Communities that Work	30
6.6 Networks and Leadership.....	32
6.7 Quality Public Services.....	34
6.8 Respect for Rights and Responsibilities.....	36
7 Implementing the Strategy	38
8 Monitoring, Evaluating and Reporting back to Our Communities	39
Appendix 1- Glossary.....	40
Appendix 2- Monitoring	41
Appendix 3- Process for Creating the Strategy.....	42

Appendix 4- List of reference documents.....	43
---	-----------

West Cumbria

N.B. This map is for illustration purposes only. The final version will show main towns, geographical features and main transport routes, with labels.



West Cumbria stretches from the Duddon Estuary in the south to the Solway Firth in the north, from the Irish Sea in the west to the Lake District in the east. It has over 70 miles of coastline and covers an area of over 800 square miles, half of which lies within the Lake District National Park. It encompasses the local authority areas of Allerdale and Copeland.

Foreword

Sustainable Communities in West Cumbria

Recognising the unique identity of West Cumbria, Allerdale and Copeland Borough Councils and Cumbria County Council agreed to produce a joint vision for creating sustainable communities in the area. It is a vision of how we will improve the well-being of the people of West Cumbria today, as well as what we want West Cumbria to be like in the future. This Strategy for Sustainable Communities reflects our commitment to delivering our goals. We cannot achieve this alone and we have worked with our partners, through West Cumbria Strategic Partnership, to develop a vision which can be shared by all.

The creation of this Strategy for Sustainable Communities is one step in an on-going process. We must now ensure that we deliver on the commitments made in it. We need all of our partners to work with us to make this happen.

Joe Milburn, Leader, Allerdale Borough Council
Elaine Woodburn, Leader, Copeland Borough Council
Tim Stoddard, Leader, Cumbria County Council

Developing the Strategy in Partnership

Representatives of all sections of West Cumbrian society have worked with the Councils to develop this vision. West Cumbria Strategic Partnership's Board has overseen that process, to make sure the vision has been developed with the involvement of a wide cross-section of the different interests and groups in West Cumbria.

The vision has not emerged overnight, but is the product of an evolutionary process which has involved more than just consulting people on a document. It has involved a significant level of community participation in identifying what the key issues and aspiration are for West Cumbria, which goes back to 2000 and beyond. The consistency between the themes and aspirations in the different versions of the Community Strategy which have been produced in West Cumbria over the years is a compliment to the strength and inclusivity of that process, and is again demonstrated by the list of consultees and respondents for this version (see Appendix 3). It is gratifying to report that, through the Partnership Board, participating policy-makers have listened, and learned.

What ultimately matters is the difference the process of creating this Strategy makes to our lives. The Strategy gives us a broadly shared vision and provides the basis for the preparation of a much more sharply focussed Implementation Plan. We will do our part in delivering the aspirations in the Strategy but we need your contribution too. If everyone works towards the shared vision, we will be able to create the sustainable communities we want and need for the future generations of West Cumbrians.

Willie Slavin, Chair, West Cumbria Strategic Partnership Board

1 Introduction

1.1 What is a Sustainable Community?

A 'sustainable' community is one which meets the diverse needs of its current residents, businesses and visitors, without compromising the quality of life which future generations can enjoy. For a community to be sustainable, it needs services which are accessible to all; decent, affordable homes; jobs; good transport and places for people to socialise and relax. It must have a strong economy, whilst also meeting people's social needs and protecting and enhancing the environment. People also need to be able to have their say on what happens in their area and different sections of the community should be able to live in harmony. By providing all of these things, the community will be sustainable because people living and working there can enjoy a good quality of life, now and in the future.

The UK Government talks about a sustainable community being:

- **Thriving** – with a flourishing and diverse local economy;
- **Environmentally Sensitive** – providing places for people to live that are considerate of the environment;
- **Well Designed and Built** – featuring a quality built and natural environment;
- **Well Connected** – with good transport services and communications linking people to jobs, health, schools, and other services;
- **Active, Inclusive and Safe** – fair, tolerant and cohesive, with a strong local culture and shared community activities;
- **Well Run** – with effective and inclusive participation, representation, and leadership;
- **Well Served** – with public, private, community and voluntary services that are appropriate to people's needs and accessible to all;
- **Fair for Everyone** – including those in other communities, now and in the future.

Long-term planning in West Cumbria has repeatedly identified a number of key themes which sum up what we need to do to create a prosperous future for the area. For example, one important issue is creating a successful local economy which is not as dependent on a nuclear reprocessing as it is today. The key to expanding and diversifying the local economy away from this dependence on a single industry is taking advantage of local knowledge and specialisms to build up new businesses. This recurring theme is summed up as 'Advantage through Knowledge- Managing Transition'. It was one of several themes used in the last Community Strategy produced for West Cumbria and we have chosen to use those themes again because they are still relevant. The table below shows what those themes are, how they link to the characteristics of a sustainable community mentioned above and where that theme can be found in this Strategy.

West Cumbria Theme	Components of a	Chapter in this
--------------------	-----------------	-----------------

	sustainable community according to UK Government	Strategy
Advantage through Knowledge – Managing Transition	Thriving	6.1
Lifestyle Choice	Environmentally Sensitive	6.2
Coastal Renaissance	Well Designed and Built	6.3
Making Better Connections	Well Connected	6.4
Communities that Work	Active, Inclusive and Safe	6.5
Networks and Leadership	Well Run	6.6
Quality Public Services	Well Served	6.7
Respect for Rights and Responsibilities	Fair for Everyone	6.8

1.2 What is a Strategy for Sustainable Communities?

The Strategy for Sustainable Communities is about what we need to do to create sustainable communities in West Cumbria. It is the new name for what was called a 'Community Strategy'. It is also about how we tackle our three key tasks of the 21st century:

- Providing community and political leadership to face challenges and seize opportunities;
- Providing quality public services which meet the needs of our people; and
- Engaging with all our people, in their communities so that their voice is heard and so that this is their Strategy too.

Various local plans and strategies set out the priorities for areas in West Cumbria and how particular issues, such as the local economy or transport, will be addressed. These include parish and neighbourhood plans, as well as county-wide strategies, which draw on what local people have said is important and what evidence shows are the issues we need to address. This Strategy for Sustainable Communities draws together the priorities in those plans to create a shared vision for West Cumbria. It also takes into consideration regional, national and European strategies, as these also determine what development can take place in the area.

The Strategy is about what we need to do to achieve our aspirations for West Cumbria. This means that we highlight those actions which are most needed to ensure all of our communities enjoy an equal quality of life. The Strategy is not intended to cover all activity which is taking place in West Cumbria or provide a detailed action plan for the delivery of its goals. Details of the specific needs of individual groups or communities are also not covered; they will be addressed when we put the Strategy into action.

This Strategy has undergone a process known as a sustainability check to ensure that it integrates social, economic and environmental issues fully and can deliver the sustainable communities it commits to.

1.3 Who is this Strategy for?

This Strategy is about the well-being of everyone in West Cumbria: our residents, businesses and visitors, in all of our communities, whether large or small, rural or urban. It acts as a guide for anyone with an interest in the area, telling them about West Cumbria today, as well as what we want the area to be like in the future.

The Councils, as “Community Leaders”, have made a commitment to work with partners, through West Cumbria Strategic Partnership, to deliver the vision set out in this Strategy. West Cumbria Strategic Partnership brings together political leaders, representatives of private, community and voluntary sectors, community advocates, and the providers of public services, with the mission ‘to inspire people to transform West Cumbria’. Working together, partners will identify whether existing plans are able to create the sustainable communities envisaged in this Strategy. Where there are gaps, they will ensure that new strategies are created and additional activities are carried out to fill them.

Not only those organisations directly involved in the Partnership can help make this vision a reality: it needs the commitment of everyone working in West Cumbria. We need all organisations to use this Strategy as a guide in developing their plans and making decisions so that they too contribute to an enhanced quality of life in West Cumbria. At the same time, we recognise that we must work across geographical boundaries to find solutions to common problems and strengthen links with areas which provide business, skills and resources to West Cumbria.

2 Vision

We have developed a vision for sustainable communities in West Cumbria in the year 2027. We want you to join us in making it happen.

Our vision is:

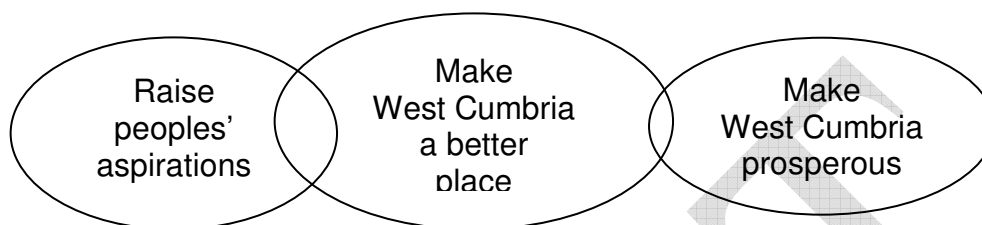
By 2027, West Cumbria will be a confident place that prides itself on its strong economy, providing opportunities for all and offering a lifestyle of choice.

It will:

- be globally recognised as a leading nuclear, energy, environment and related technology business cluster, building on its nuclear assets and its technology and research strengths;
- be a strong, diversified and well connected economy, with a growing, highly skilled population with high employment;
- protect and enhance its special natural environments and be recognised by all as an area of outstanding natural beauty and vibrant lifestyle, which attracts a diverse population and visitor profile;
- be home to a strong and healthy community which offers all of its people a high quality of life and enables them to play a full part in their community.

3 Our Overarching Aims

In responding to the challenges facing West Cumbria, we will seek to achieve our Vision by working towards three linked aims:



These three aims are broken down into a series of outcomes, which show exactly what we want to see within West Cumbria. These outcomes are shown in the table below under 'we want to see'. To know whether we have succeeded in making those things happen in West Cumbria, we will measure a number of aspects of those outcomes. For example, we will measure the quality of life and the fun and enjoyment of people in the area to determine whether their experience of living in West Cumbria has been enhanced. The things we have chosen to measure are shown in the table below and full details of how we will measure these indicators are given in appendix 2.

	WE WILL	WE WANT TO SEE	WE WILL MEASURE
PLACE	Make West Cumbria a better place for successive generations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> An enhanced experience of living in West Cumbria Easy access into, out of and within West Cumbria Distinctive local landscapes and biodiversity conserved and enhanced 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Quality of Life Fun and enjoyment Quality & location of services Communication links Access from the area Landscape, townscape, seascape and environment quality Biodiversity
PROSPERITY	Make West Cumbria prosperous	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dynamism, entrepreneurship and centres of excellence for developing technology Higher incomes Larger local economy High value services and products High basic and higher skills levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Reputation Technology Innovation Incomes Size of economy Diversity within the economy Added value Skills levels

PEOPLE	Raise peoples aspirations for themselves and for West Cumbria	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ People work together with a common purpose ▪ People believe that they can make a difference ▪ People believe that they can do better ▪ People believe that West Cumbria will become an even better place ▪ A healthy community ▪ Young people see a future for themselves in West Cumbria 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social capital ▪ Civic pride ▪ Belief and confidence ▪ Equality and diversity ▪ Community cohesion ▪ Demographic profile ▪ Health ▪ Education
--------	---	--	--

DRAFT

4 A Sense of Place

4.1 West Cumbria – the Place

West Cumbria is a maritime sub-region of contrast and diversity. Mountain and coastal scenery, with distinctive towns and villages and a diverse natural ecology help to make West Cumbria an attractive place. The coast is a particularly significant feature of West Cumbria due to the importance of major service centres and industrial activity located there. To the west, there is the Irish Sea, once the main transport corridor through which its primary industries were served. To the east, are the highest mountains and deepest lakes in England. Beyond this, lie the pathways to the rest of the North-West region, the North-East and Scotland.

However, West Cumbria's geography presents some of its greatest challenges. The physical barrier of the mountains and lakes proves a major obstacle to land-based transport. West Cumbria is perceived by many as being remote and difficult to get to, providing the area with a set of barriers for investment and inward-migration. Its location on the periphery of the main markets and centres of population in the North-West, the North-East and Scotland mean that it needs to develop its own economy to fulfill local need. Improvements also need to be made to the infrastructure of the area in order to facilitate both inward investment and aid our businesses to expand and access regional, national and international markets.

Away from the main urban core of West Cumbria are some of the most deeply rural communities in the country, with very low population density and real problems in accessing services. Past decisions about the location of housing and services have also contributed to problems of accessibility, particularly in communities on the periphery of our towns. Relics of Victorian industry still scar the landscape and require considerable and ongoing maintenance. There is therefore a key role for policy makers in tackling these challenges and shaping the future of West Cumbria.

West Cumbria is home to over 60% of the country's nuclear waste, concentrated at Sellafield and Drigg. The long-term future disposal of this legacy is under debate nationally, following the Government's Committee on Radioactive Waste Management Report in 2006. Whatever is ultimately decided, the consequences for West Cumbria will be enormous and we face a considerable challenge in preparing for these changes.

4.2 West Cumbria – Prosperity

As well as having a diverse landscape, West Cumbria is full of economic contrasts. Communities with the highest and the lowest household income per capita in Cumbria lie side by side around the main urban centres. There are pockets of disadvantage in health, employment and income, and access to housing and other services, and some communities are amongst the most disadvantaged in the country. 'Hidden' unemployment is a problem in the area with high numbers claiming incapacity benefits. In other areas, local residents face the challenge of a lack of affordable housing, which has been exacerbated by a buoyant housing market.

West Cumbria has a history of leading the way in developing new industries. At the forefront of the agrarian and then the industrial revolutions, West Cumbria led the way into the nuclear age and still has an economy with a greater manufacturing, technology, and engineering base than the North West regional average. The area contains the North West region's largest single employment site at Sellafield, which is the focus of the area's largest industry: nuclear reprocessing. Activity is also focussed around its associated supply chain and research activity. Several of the region's biggest industrial electricity users are located around Workington. The tourism economy provides significant employment, particularly in the Lake District National Park, but growth will not be sufficient to counter the decline in traditional industries. The Solway Plain remains a largely farming economy – balanced by some world-class manufacturing. These industries have also faced challenges in recent years and are having to adapt to changing markets and lifestyles.

The decline of the area's industry has been gradual. However, our main industry today, nuclear reprocessing based at Sellafield, is being decommissioned over the next ten years, creating an entirely different scale of impact. It is projected that this will lead to a loss of around 8,000 highly-paid jobs from the facility over the next twenty years, delivering a devastating blow to the local workforce, supply chain and the wider West Cumbrian economy.

4.3 West Cumbria - People

Although West Cumbria covers an area bigger than Cheshire, it has a relatively small population of 160,000 people. More than half (88,000) of these live in the single urban area formed by Cleator Moor, Maryport, Whitehaven and Workington – the most populous regional centre between Lancaster and Motherwell.

West Cumbria has a history of attracting people from other parts of Europe: German miners who built the Moot Hall in Keswick in the 16th century; Irish, Scots and Welsh in the coal and steel era, when the urban population multiplied six-fold in 30 years. Now scientists and technologists from all over the world come to serve the nuclear and high-tech industry and other highly qualified people are attracted by the quality of life.

The steady decline in traditional heavy manufacturing in the area is reflected in the threatened loss of many of the traditional skills associated with these industries. People in West Cumbria tend to accept decline as inevitable and despite ability, people's aspirations are low. With the changes at Sellafield on the horizon, this problem will be heightened as those in the nuclear industry are required to re-skill in order to move into a decommissioning phase or seek alternative employment.

West Cumbria's prosperity relies on the skills of its people, with high levels of craft and technical skills, and a tradition of innovation. The area still has one of the highest proportions of people employed in knowledge-based industry in the country but no major higher education facility to sustain it.

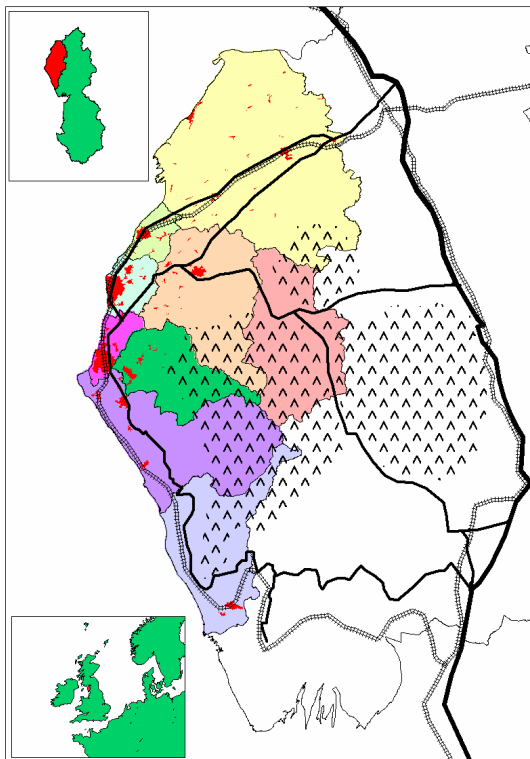
The area also has an ageing population with a higher than average out-migration of young people. This has contributed to a low proportion of workers qualified to level 4 (degree level) and a 'brain drain' of our talented young people, who do not see a future here. Encouraging young people to stay or move to the area is essential to make our communities sustainable in the long term.

DRAFT

5 Localities

West Cumbria has nine natural ‘places’, identified as ‘localities’ in the Strategy. The term locality is used here to mean the centres identified below with their surrounding communities.. This Strategy is about all of those nine localities so when we talk about ‘West Cumbria’, these are the areas we mean. Each of the localities has a strong and distinctive local identity and has its own needs. Whilst this Strategy is about how we create sustainable communities across West Cumbria, it recognises that individual communities will have a role in finding their own ways of developing sustainably.

Each of these localities has, or is in the process of developing its own locality plan, which will align with this Strategy and operates through the locality’s own local partnership arrangements. Parish, neighbourhood management and Market Towns Initiative plans are all examples of this. These arrangements do not yet cover all of our communities. We recognise these gaps and section 6.6 of this Strategy describes our intention to fill them.



This is not the final map which will be used- it is for illustration purposes

5.1 Cockermouth

The Place:

Cockermouth has a mix of high fell country and low lying farmland along the Derwent and Cocker valleys, with the market town of Cockermouth where the rivers meet.

Prosperity:

The range of local services and independent retailers are vulnerable to changes affecting jobs in the nuclear industry. Future prosperity depends on appropriate economic diversification – modernising, building on strengths in high-value tourism, specialist retailing, creative enterprise and enhancing the arts and cultural offering. Challenges include providing accessible work and housing opportunities for young people and maintaining local environmental quality. Some interesting projects are emerging spanning these issues and addressing the sustainability agenda.

People:

The town attracts professional and managerial staff from industries on the west coast due to its environment, quality schools and good road links to those employment areas. As such, the local economy is effectively subsidised by the large proportion of high-earning resident commuters. High and rising local house prices contribute to inaccessibility and a lack of opportunities to young people, resulting in a shifting, imbalanced demographic.

5.2 Egremont

The Place:

Egremont is the historic capital of the county of Copeland with the remains of a Norman Castle dominating the town and a market charter and 'Crab Fair' dating back to 1267. More recently, it has been the centre for iron ore mining and limestone quarrying and has a fine main street and market place.

Prosperity:

Trading in the town has been difficult in the last ten or fifteen years, a situation made worse by the ending of construction work at Sellafield and the building of the by-pass. With half of the workforce currently employed at the Sellafield site, the town faces a challenging time as decommissioning progresses, but also has opportunities arising from this work. Egremont's position between the coast and the lakes gives it the potential to develop the tourism market and it will be important to develop the physical townscape to make the most of its cultural assets.

People:

Equipping the workforce for future opportunities and to develop the town to meet these will be part of the challenge in coming years.

5.3 Keswick

The Place:

Keswick, situated in its spectacular landscape within the Lake District National Park, is a busy market town surrounded by rural parishes of low population density.

Prosperity:

The tourism industry dominates the local economy which encourages a range of retail and entertainment facilities beyond that expected in a town of this size. However, the apparent prosperity brings problems, such as the lack of diversity in employment and the low wages of the service economy.

People:

Whilst many residents benefit from the area's prosperity, there is a lack of affordable housing and some people face challenges in accessing services, particularly amongst Keswick's ageing population and rural communities.

5.4 Maryport

The Place:

Maryport is a planned Georgian port on the Solway Firth, with a hinterland of former coal mining villages, with Flimby and Broughton Moor to the south, Dearham in the east and Birkby, Crosby, Crosscanonby, and Crosby Villa to the north.

Prosperity:

Most industrial employment in the area has gone and Maryport spent most of the 20th century in decline. Reducing unemployment and addressing related issues of wealth retention remain a challenge. The role of tourism in the town is growing, with Maryport harbour becoming a visitor destination and improvements in its built environment are contributing to the physical regeneration of the town centre.

People:

The old town centre is an increasingly attractive place to live but residents of areas around the large social housing estates and former pit villages continue to suffer disadvantage. Local residents have identified anti-social behaviour, and increasing activities and facilities for young people in the town centre of Maryport as their key priorities for action. Improving the health of the local population is equally important.

5.5 Millom

The Place:

Millom is the most southerly part of West Cumbria, encompassing coastal areas and fell country. It is served by the town of Millom, which had an economy based on iron, and was devastated when the works closed in 1968. Millom town is an important service centre for the area, providing employment and services for residents and visitors.

Prosperity:

The key issues for the area are economic decline, the area's isolated position, poor transport infrastructure and decline in the built environment. The challenge is to support business, increase investment in the area and improve infrastructure, to support the local economy and improve the quality of life of local people.

People:

The important role of the service centre for local people means that the development of retail, commercial and community facilities are important for the area. Due to its rather isolated and rural nature, there is also a need to continue to improve existing transport services and develop complementary transport provision to, from and within the Millom area.

5.6 North Allerdale (Aspatria, Silloth and Wigton)

The Place:

North Allerdale describes a predominantly rural locality with small villages and three principal market towns of Wigton, Aspatria, and Silloth. Wigton is the largest of the three and has a pre-medieval street plan that can still be traced today, and a largely unspoiled Georgian centre. The town is the headquarters for a major manufacturer of plastic film. Aspatria was historically a centre of agricultural excellence. Silloth is a purpose-built Victorian seaside resort and is unique to the area as it features wide, tree-lined cobbled streets, a harbour and an attractive Victorian green and promenade.

Prosperity:

In recent years, all three towns and their surrounding areas have suffered a decline in their services and facilities, resulting in a downturn in their general prosperity. The key challenges for the area are to create a more sustainable economy and develop its tourism offer. Wigton has a strong housing market and two high performing schools. Whilst local shops have a reputation for quality, particularly for food products, steps still need to be taken to ensure the town thrives. Silloth's tourism market has declined in recent decades but there are proposals to address that decline, including a major refurbishment of the Silloth Green. Whilst Aspatria has had some economic success through the two manufacturing companies based there, pockets of deprivation remain.

People:

Key issues for local people are accessing jobs and education. Some have difficulties in accessing services and local transport.

5.7 North East Copeland (Cleator Moor)

The Place:

North-East Copeland includes Cleator Moor and the surrounding parishes of Arlecdon & Frizington, Ennerdale & Kinniside, Lamplugh and Weddicar. The area encompasses the remote, wild valleys of Ennerdale and the historic service centre of one of West Cumbria's main industrial towns.

Prosperity:

North-East Copeland is locally the locality most reliant on the nuclear industry, with 51% of local employment attached to Sellafield, alongside pockets of high unemployment and worklessness. Key local employment sites include the Leconfield Industrial Estate, Phoenix Enterprise Centre and the Kangol site at Cleator. A key issue is to maintain local services, both in the town and rural villages, to sustain the communities. Work is also ongoing to improve the built environment and image of the area, to encourage business investment and tourism.

People:

There are 12,000 people in NE Copeland – 7,000 of which live in Cleator Moor. Both Frizington and Cleator Moor have areas of high deprivation, and the challenges are to improve education, broaden the area's economic base and to deal with rural isolation and inequalities.

5.8 Whitehaven

The Place:

At the heart of the Whitehaven locality is the historic planned Georgian port town, once the busiest in Britain, with the communities of Mirehouse, Woodhouse & Greenbank, Kells, Hensingham, Distington, Lowca, Parton, and Moresby on the outskirts of the town.

Prosperity:

The harbour is now a major leisure marina, and the town's major employment sectors now are retail, with tourism of growing importance. Whitehaven was once a manufacturing and mining town with a strong industrial base, but following closure of most major industry, the area's communities contain some of the worst deprivation in the country. Significant regeneration activity is now taking place within the town and along the coast to develop thriving and sustainable residential communities, as well as employment and investment opportunities.

People:

Varying levels of prosperity in Whitehaven present challenges and opportunities for the locality. Multiple problems of deprivation are experienced by residents in some disadvantaged neighbourhoods, including poor health, unemployment and worklessness. These neighbourhoods suffer relatively poor quality housing and living environments as well as higher than average levels of crime.

5.9 Workington

The Place:

Workington has a rich industrial past in coal and steel, dating back to the 18th century. The commercial port continues to link Workington to mainland Europe, Ireland and North Africa, and gives Workington a more cosmopolitan flavour, reflected in the prominence of music and entertainment in its night time economy.

Prosperity:

World-class manufacturing continues in the area, although this has been in decline since the second half of the twentieth century. A mixed economy is developing with a strengthened service sector and development in the town has made Workington a major commercial centre in West Cumbria. Problems of deprivation in the social housing estates which surround the town continue, and the solid Victorian "new town" of the late nineteenth century needs to be renewed sympathetically before irreversible decline sets in.

People:

The changing economy in Workington calls on the community to adapt and develop different skill sets. Whilst these changes have benefited some, residents in some of Workington's neighbourhoods continue to suffer disadvantage. There, life expectancy is lower than average and there are problems of poor health, which prevents some from accessing employment. Low educational attainment and aspiration is also a barrier to employment in some communities.

6 Seizing the Opportunities – Transformational Strategies

Our challenge is to secure the economic future of the area by actively managing the transition from nuclear re-processing to decommissioning and building up a diverse, high tech, innovative economy, which avoids dependence on a single industry. At the same time, we must enhance our environment and society as a whole, to create a better experience of living in West Cumbria.

Even before the challenge of change at Sellafield, we need to be addressing the shortfalls of the recent past to develop the transport, higher education, cultural, recreational, business and public services infrastructure which many areas of the country see as the norm. This means listening to local communities' needs, developing new ways of working and building local capacity to deliver them. This is what we mean by the term 'transformational change'.

There are two further challenges and opportunities which we must address. First, many of the key opportunities identified in this Strategy have appeared in strategies before in West Cumbria but there has not been the capacity to take full advantage of them. We need to develop the local capacity to deliver our aspirations, with support from partners through the West Cumbria Strategic Partnership. Secondly, if we are going to meet the challenges of this transformation, we are going to have to think and work together better through our partnership arrangements. The urgency to develop these new ways of working is compelling.

We cannot tackle this necessary transformation alone. The scale of the challenge means we need the support and commitment of partners in Cumbria, in the North West region and, most significantly, from central Government. The Government has already established the West Cumbria Strategic Forum, a Whitehall-led body, which demonstrates its commitment to the area. We will work with the Forum to develop those transformational opportunities which can only be delivered with continued Government support. We will also proactively engage with policy making at a county-wide and regional level, to ensure that the needs of West Cumbria are well-represented. At the same time, we recognise that West Cumbria is not an island and that we must work across geographical boundaries to find solutions to common problems and strengthen links with areas which provide business, skills and resources to West Cumbria.

The following chapters detail how we will tackle these challenges and create the 'transformational change' we need. Each chapter is interlinked and cannot be delivered in isolation.

6.1 Advantage through Knowledge and Managing Transition

Over the next twenty years, changes in markets and customers, as well as regulatory and environmental drivers, will have substantial impacts on the area's major employers. The most significant is the transition from nuclear re-processing to decommissioning at the Sellafield site, which currently accounts for some 40% of West Cumbria's economic added value. A key challenge for West Cumbria is to manage this transition and to diversify its economy away from dependence on a small number of industries, to ensure it is sustainable in the long term.

Some elements of the potential knowledge and employment loss can be replaced by new inward investment, though this will be an increasingly tough remit to fulfill. The challenge of retaining knowledge and technology within the area will ultimately demand a new, strategic, approach to working actively with existing major industries and their suppliers. We also recognize the growth potential of public, voluntary and community sector employment alongside that of the private sector.

Sustainable and innovative businesses add value and provide significant opportunities for stimulating jobs that people actually want to do, even though some recent initiatives to spin-out technology and promote knowledge transfer have had mixed results. In an increasingly energy-dependent and resource-intensive world, West Cumbria's existing research and business specialisms, particularly in the nuclear industry, mean it is particularly well-placed to address the future challenges of energy production and nuclear decommissioning.. It can develop new businesses, business clusters and national and regional centres of excellence, in partnership with industry, which will commercialise expertise in new energy and environmental technologies, and in particular in nuclear energy and decommissioning and build up a global reputation for excellence. Indeed, West Cumbria is already beginning to grow into a centre for skills development and research in some of these specialist sectors. The concentration of expertise in West Cumbria, coupled with its coastal location, provides good opportunities for energy generation in the area, including renewable energy.

Wealth creation and competitiveness through knowledge and creativity is founded on educational attainment and basic and higher level skills. There is a need to develop the whole skills base in West Cumbria from the very basics through to more advanced skills and forms of knowledge. The development of a higher education campus specialising in science, engineering and technology and of further education facilities locally should look to create integrated relationships with the private sector in the area, in order to understand both the needs of, and the opportunities within, the local business base. National centres of excellence should be created around sectoral skill specialisms.

Our culture will value learning and acquisition of knowledge locally - via schools, new methods of community-based learning and high quality further/higher education provision, which will be available locally. Efforts to develop community-based learning will focus on extolling the benefits of learning locally, integrating learning with other forms of life (leisure, work, home) and improving accessibility by making use of technological advances.

Building up sustainable infrastructures in the creative and sporting industries will make culture central to the regeneration of West Cumbria and an important sector for job creation, skill development, education and life-long learning. There is also the opportunity to develop areas and attractions that people want to visit and increase the economic benefit to West Cumbria of this tourism.

Economic development in the area will be supported by the wider regeneration and development of our communities, to create places that people want to work and do business. Businesses play an important part in developing sustainable communities so we need their commitment to protecting and enhancing the local environment and delivering social well-being.

Related outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business Reputation ▪ Technology Reputation ▪ Incomes ▪ Size of economy ▪ Diversity within the economy ▪ Added value ▪ Skills levels
Related strategies which give more detail	West Cumbria Spatial Masterplan
Links to other Sustainable Community Strategy themes	<p>Lifestyle Choice: Using local expertise in energy and environmental technologies to help us to find new ways of living a sustainable, environmentally clean lifestyle; ensuring any development to support and expand the local economy minimises negative environmental impacts.</p> <p>Making Better Connections: Supporting and enabling economic development by improving transport and communications infrastructure.</p>
Potential frictions with other Sustainable Community Strategy themes	<p>Lifestyle Choice: The materials and land required to expand business and industry could potentially have a negative environmental impact and make it difficult to fulfil our aspiration of minimising resource use and having high air, water and land quality.</p> <p>Making Better Connections: Businesses' needs for better infrastructure may present a challenge to our desire to minimise use of road transport.</p>

6.2 Lifestyle Choice

Climate change is the global challenge of the 21st century and we have an opportunity in West Cumbria to make the lifestyle choice that is our local response to that global challenge. West Cumbria's setting and strong natural assets contribute to the quality of life enjoyed by us all in our homes, localities, at work and at leisure. We can create a truly sustainable, environmentally clean and healthy lifestyle, at one with our environment, where West Cumbria works well as a natural entity and can continue to do so in the future. We can meet the needs of existing and future generations and also respect the needs of other communities, in the wider region or internationally, to make their communities sustainable.

Developing sustainable methods of energy production, reducing carbon emissions, nuclear decommissioning and managing radioactive waste are global challenges which need to be overcome to create sustainable communities. These challenges, and emerging policies to address them at a national, EU and global level, present an opportunity for West Cumbria to demonstrate its commitment and capability to contribute to global sustainability. Building on its expertise in energy and environmental technologies, West Cumbria can make a valuable contribution to developing environmental technologies and safe and viable alternatives to fossil fuels, both from renewables and nuclear. On issues such as radioactive waste disposal, our communities need to decide what contribution they want to make.

We will actively manage the changes leading to the emergence of a low-carbon use society which make more efficient use of finite resources. This will involve taking full account of the environmental consequences of social and economic policies and respecting biodiversity on land, in air, and in water. We will also prepare for the impact of future environmental changes, including the effects of climate change. We will monitor changes in environmental indicators to inform our decisions and we will adapt our ways of working to reduce the impact which climate change and associated environmental changes, such as increased flood risk, have on our natural and built environments. By doing this, we can contribute to national and global sustainability and help to meet UK and global policy objectives.

Knowledge and creativity are the key to developing the environmentally sustainable vision for the future of West Cumbria. Founded on educational attainment and basic and higher level skills, we will work to develop our capacity to use technology to improve the environment, as well as the economy. We will make clear, jargon-free information on environmental issues available to people and groups to enable them to make the most environmentally benign decisions and we need to create facilities, structures and incentives which help them to do so.

The demands of development and industry must respect the natural environment and minimise impact on climate change. We must endeavour to prevent pollution and deal with any pollution that occurs. Our economy should be organised so as to minimise the need for personal travel or transport of goods, encourage home working, reduce energy use, encourage renewable energy, and minimise waste. Where waste is unavoidable, waste infrastructure should be integrated into developments. We need to develop innovative ways of delivering services, particularly in our smaller and remote communities, to balance reducing the need to travel with value for money and meeting users' needs. We will support local action

and local solutions to these challenges.

Our coastal environment has the potential to become as high quality as that of the hinterland. West Cumbria is a maritime region, and our coastal environment is important for economic activities, contributes significantly to our social well-being and has high quality landscapes, seascapes and biodiversity. We must maintain and enhance our natural environment so that it has the highest possible air, water and land quality. We want West Cumbria to be a place where people take pride in and responsibility for where they live, the local landscape and in local wildlife and are able to access and enjoy the local countryside. We need to protect areas that are home to rare species; wild, undamaged and quiet areas; areas of high landscape value and unusual geographical and geological features.

Related outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quality of Life ▪ Landscape, townscape, seascape and environment quality; biodiversity ▪ Business Reputation ▪ Technology Reputation
Related strategies which give more detail	<p>Cumbria Climate Change Strategy (currently under development)</p> <p>Cumbria Biodiversity Action Plan</p>
Links to other Sustainable Community Strategy themes	<p>Advantage through Knowledge: Using local expertise in energy and environmental technologies to help us to find new ways of living a sustainable, environmentally clean lifestyle; ensuring any development to support and expand the local economy minimises negative environmental impacts.</p> <p>Coastal Renaissance: Promoting development which cuts down the need to travel, using materials whose production is least damaging for the environment and making buildings energy efficient.</p> <p>Making better connections: Improving public transport and enabling cycling and walking to reduce pollution.</p>
Potential frictions with other Sustainable Community Strategy themes	<p>Advantage through Knowledge: The materials and land required to expand business and industry could make it difficult to achieve these aims of a sustainable, environmentally clean society.</p>

	Making better connections: Expanding transport infrastructure could result in the destruction of habitats; as access improves, greater use of road vehicles may increase emissions, contributing to climate change and reducing air quality.
--	---

DRAFT

6.3 Coastal Renaissance

The coast is a defining feature of West Cumbria.. The dependence of communities in the area on the service centres and industry along the length of its coast and the recent decline of industry there mean that regenerating those areas is key to building a sustainable future for our towns and villages. We must also strengthen the role of our coastline in our communities to make full use of the benefits of being a coastal sub-region.

Our coastal towns provide facilities to meet the leisure, work and social needs of our people. Further development for business, leisure and residential use is vital in supporting our aspirations for the West Cumbrian economy and the environmental and social well-being of our communities. This needs to be sustainable and appropriate to local people's and businesses' needs so we will welcome development, refurbishment and new approaches to how we manage our town centres which will help us to create attractive, sustainable places to live, visit and invest.

We will work to establish more sustainable patterns of development by encouraging mixing of uses which cut down the need to travel and higher densities which make better use of sites. We will also aim to develop in locations which avoid flood risk. We will focus development on existing service centres and the reuse of existing buildings. We will ensure that new development and essential infrastructure is integrated, of the right scale and with design, landscaping and choice of materials of a high quality and that respect the character and setting of its location.

We will ensure that all the buildings and building groups which contribute to the distinctive heritage of West Cumbria are preserved and enhanced, along with important areas of open space. We will promote the use of materials which create the least damage to the environment where refurbishment is undertaken and locally produced materials and state-of-the-art environmental technologies in new build.

We will endeavour to clear post-industrial dereliction, ensuring that historic and industrial contaminated land is made safe and suitable for its planned use, recognizing that some sites will need restoration in a way which respects the natural habitats which may have evolved there.

A decent and energy-efficient home and healthy, safe housing environments will ensure that our communities are safe places to live. They will include affordable housing and an appropriate mix of housing types to promote mixed communities and satisfy the aspirations of all people living or seeking to invest in the area.

Related outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quality of Life ▪ Quality & location of services ▪ Landscape, townscape, seascape and environment quality ▪ Demographic profile
------------------	--

<p>Related strategies which give more detail</p>	<p>Sub-regional Spatial Strategy; Allerdale Local Development Framework Core Strategy; Copeland Local Development Framework Core Strategy; Lake District National Park Local Development Framework Core Strategy; Cumbria Minerals and Waste Development Framework Core Strategy; Regional Spatial Strategy</p>
<p>Links to other Sustainable Community Strategy themes</p>	<p>Advantage through Knowledge: Any development resulting from diversifying and expanding business and industry will form part of the mixed, high quality developments we aspire to here.</p> <p>Lifestyle Choice: Promoting development which cuts down the need to travel, using materials whose production is least damaging for the environment and making buildings energy efficient.</p> <p>Communities that Work: Creating sustainable communities which have a mix of housing types and where services are accessible.</p>
<p>Potential frictions with other Sustainable Community Strategy themes</p>	<p>Lifestyle choice: Development could result in the destruction of habitats and have harmful effects on the environment as the materials required to build are extracted and manufactured.</p>

6.4 Making Better Connections

Our lifestyle choice and telecoms infrastructure will minimise the need to travel and we will encourage travel by foot, bicycle and public transport, instead of by car, whenever possible. We will provide foot and cycle paths, cycle parks, safe routes to schools and workplace travel plans. Our public transport network plans will fully integrate rail, bus, cycling and walking. We will work to provide affordable and accessible transport which will ease journeys to work, learning and recreation, promoting inclusion and minimising dependence on private cars. This will only be possible with the commitment of West Cumbrian residents and businesses to using more sustainable forms of transport. Communities will be encouraged to accommodate the location of homes, workplaces, services, facilities and amenities close to each other since this will minimise travel and is vital to ensuring their communities are sustainable.

Our coastal transport infrastructure, currently underdeveloped, has the potential for movement of people by rail, road, cycle and foot along the coast. West Cumbria has the potential to attract greater inward investment and more people to the area but this will rely on it developing the level of transport infrastructure which many areas see as the norm. West Cumbria is characterised by disparate service centres and small rural communities, making the use of the road network essential for the transport of goods and access to jobs and services by our residents. This infrastructure needs to be developed to support economic development and attract new residents and visitors to the area. This will focus on key transport corridors which link our service centres and main commercial sites to each other and to the rest of the country. The development a commercial airport within North Cumbria itself would provide further opportunities to access new markets and, in the future, improve the speed of travel to major UK cities for West Cumbrians.

Improvements to the Cumbrian Coast rail link would reduce the need for road travel and would not only allow better use to be made of the railway to transport good but would also improve access to and from the area for tourism, business and local people. A developed local rail network will use the full potential of the coastal railway to link directly to Barrow, the main centres of the North West and the international air travel hub at Manchester.

The ports link us to the oceans, for movement of goods, and have the potential to rediscover their original role as the gateway to our coastal towns and the surrounding area. Our ports have the potential to play a bigger role in the economy. First, we need to improve transport connections to them and build up their role in the transport of goods into and out of the UK. We must also explore the potential of sea connections for bringing visitors to the area.

We are committed to developing and encouraging people to use new technologies which will reduce the environmental impact of our transport use. By promoting the use of public transport, cycling and walking we can achieve the necessary balance between the need to protect the environment and to develop our infrastructure to support the local economy.

We will have an enhanced telecommunications infrastructure, including digital networks. We will work to ensure that this infrastructure is available to all of our communities and will enable and encourage its use to access information and services.

Related outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Access from the area ▪ Communication links
Related strategies which give more detail	Local Transport Plan for Cumbria (Section 2) West Cumbria Spatial Masterplan Sub-Regional Spatial Strategy
Links to other Sustainable Community Strategy themes	<p>Advantage through Knowledge: Supporting and enabling economic development by improving transport and communications infrastructure.</p> <p>Lifestyle choice: Promoting the use of alternatives to the car to reduce emissions.</p> <p>Communities that work: Enabling access to services and facilities locally by improving transport.</p>
Potential frictions with other Sustainable Community Strategy themes	<p>Advantage through Knowledge: Improving access to and from West Cumbria could attract new businesses which may be in competition with local business.</p> <p>Lifestyle Choice: Expanding transport infrastructure could result in the destruction of habitats; as access improves, greater use of road vehicles may increase emissions, contributing to climate change and reducing air quality.</p> <p>Communities that Work: Improved transport links from West Cumbria could encourage a greater number of second homes and people commuting to work outside of the area, which will work against our desire to retain skilled people in the area.</p>

6.5 Communities that Work

Our communities each have a strong local and cultural identity. They retain a level of traditional networking, community spirit and willingness to work together which has much to offer in maintaining tolerant, supportive and strong communities.

We want our communities to be places where everyone has access to the services they need and is able to become involved in activities in their community. Masked by the high quality of the local environment, there remain communities and individuals who suffer disadvantage. We will ensure good life chances for all by creating inclusive communities and continuing to look for new ways to narrow the gap between their experience and the best.

We commit to local facilities run by local people – social enterprise, commerce, manufacturing and financial services which retain wealth in our communities – and providing access to services such as health care for all, which will enable people to work, shop and enjoy their leisure time locally.

Our communities can be enterprising and able but too often, these attributes are not used to their full potential. We will value life-long learning and creativity, for its own sake and for its role in empowering people to exercise greater control over their lives and to engage with others with respect and tolerance. We will create opportunities to study at the highest levels locally and to take up other appropriate learning by all sections of the community which enable all local people to fulfill their potential. We will also increase peoples' understanding of what makes communities work so that they can make the right decisions for a sustainable community.

We also recognise the value of supporting and developing the local cultural and leisure opportunities available to residents and visitors. We need leisure, cultural and sporting facilities that will engage the imagination and make our communities places that people want to live. We must face the challenge of creating a society which will retain and attract young people. That means being prepared to be challenged on conventional norms in areas such as housing, relaxation and lifestyle. We commit to innovative and 'access to all' solutions.

We will develop the role of schools as drivers of sustainable neighbourhoods, alongside the community-based networks and resources of the voluntary and community sector..

We recognize that, with the area's lifestyle, culture and leisure opportunities, we will attract new migrants. We will value the skills of living together in harmony and recognise the importance of ensuring that these skills are nurtured and enhanced throughout life.

Recognising the value of unpaid and voluntary work, we will promote volunteering as an opportunity for work experience, skills development and social well-being. Through these and more formal preparation for employment, we will ensure there are varied 'routes to work' so that there is equal access to jobs which value the skills and worth of people.

West Cumbria is a safe place. However, we must do more to reassure the public, especially those at risk of harm so that they feel safe and put the law at the service of the people. In particular, we will ensure that children in our care or in need remain safe and well and will strengthen protection for children at risk of abuse.

Related outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social capital ▪ Civic pride ▪ Belief and confidence ▪ Community cohesion ▪ Demographic profile ▪ Fun and enjoyment
Related strategies which give more detail	
Links to other Sustainable Community Strategy themes	<p>Networks and leadership- Our leaders will play an important role in supporting and enabling people to take an active role in their community.</p> <p>Quality Public Services– Providing services locally to support communities.</p> <p>Fair for everyone- Ensuring that everyone has access to the services they need and is able to be involved in their community.</p>
Potential frictions with other Sustainable Community Strategy themes	

6.6 Networks and Leadership

West Cumbria needs strong, well-informed and effective leadership at all levels and our councillors, as the elected representatives of the people of West Cumbria, need to take on this role. They will focus on making the legitimate expectations of the people a reality. We need leaders who fully recognise their obligation to listen to local community aspirations, and serve their interests. They must be prepared to take difficult decisions which may not be immediately popular but are in the long-term interests of their communities. Strong, visionary, collaborative leadership which responds to change in a dynamic, positive way, will position West Cumbria in the region, nationally, and in Europe. Visionary leadership will develop sustainable joint strategies, policies and plans covering economic, social and environmental well-being for all our communities, which secure a future for our young people and the generations to come.

In parallel, we will put structures in place which will give elected representatives of our localities the power to make decisions about things which affect their area. This will enable communities to work together to implement that vision. Communities will, become socially and economically more integrated with each other, inter-dependent and more sustainable.

We will do more to engage everyone in our communities, including those that tend to be under-represented, in thinking, working and making decisions for a better community. Leaders will be accountable to local people for the decisions which they have been involved in making and will ensure that they receive feedback on progress in delivering what was agreed. Leadership also means supporting and empowering individuals and groups to take an active role in their community, recognising the valuable contribution they can make. We also value education for its empowering role, as it enables individuals to exercise greater control over their own lives, in harmony with others.

Public, private, voluntary and community organisations can all act as a voice for West Cumbria, through their regional, national and European networks.. This will include participation in regional governance organisations, with Government through the Memorandum of Agreement and the Government's West Cumbria Strategic Forum; and with our European partner regions and localities through our European links programmes.

Partnership working will be crucial in supporting and steering this leadership so that it reflects local aspirations and interests. Development of the West Cumbria Strategic Partnership will bring together community, businesses and voluntary bodies to work together effectively as the Councils' framework for commissioning and monitoring the actions which will deliver our vision and shared priorities. We recognise the value of inter-agency working at local, regional, national and international levels, and engage with those businesses, government agencies and all service providers and support organisations whose activities or budgets can affect the lives of people in West Cumbria. We want every one of our localities to have its own partnership, which finds solutions to and speaks up for the needs of its area, and a community plan which reflects these. Every community should also be represented by a parish or town council which has a community plan itself.

Related outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Belief and confidence
Related strategies which give more detail	
Links to other Sustainable Community Strategy themes	<p>Communities that work: Our leaders will play an important role in supporting and enabling people to take an active role in their community</p> <p>Quality Public Services: Involving citizens in decisions that affect them about the services they receive.</p>
Potential frictions with other Sustainable Community Strategy themes	

6.7 Quality Public Services

In the future, West Cumbria will be challenged by demographic changes, greater need for and expectation of receiving social care, advances in healthcare, changes in employment and the expectation that individuals will have, as a minimum, a nationally comparable standard of provision and of opportunities. We need to understand and prepare for these changes.

We aim for more responsive and flexible public services which address residents', businesses', partners and visitors' key issues and needs. We will offer diverse social, leisure, cultural and work opportunities for all and sustained support for those in need. We will tackle the challenges faced by some of our rural and peripheral communities by promoting access to services for all.

Our aim is to constantly improve those services by confirming our priorities for action through regular consultation and to involve our service users in developing them. We will monitor, evaluate and review what we do to ensure it is of the highest quality, is delivered efficiently and provides value for money, irrespective of the institutional provider or organisational context. This will require us to use a range of approaches to tackle issues effectively. Many of our aims cannot be delivered by one organisation. We need to work with partners to improve the way public service deliverers operate and to ensure that services are delivered by the most appropriate organisation, be that the voluntary, community, private or public sector.

We will promote healthier communities and narrow health inequalities by targeting key local services to match need, and the encouragement of healthy lifestyles. The promotion of a healthy lifestyle will be complemented by the provision of quality medical services within the community, wherever possible, including an acute hospital within West Cumbria. We will strive for better integration of services to tackle the barriers to good health like poor housing, poor quality environments, joblessness, low educational attainment and lack of access to fresh, affordable food.

We will provide high quality services to children and young people, to improve their life chances and well-being. Across our schools, we will raise standards by helping them to match the excellence of the best, sustaining improvement in primary schools, transforming secondary schools and ensuring that the school workforce has the capacity to support this. We will also seek to retain educated people within the area by helping to make West Cumbria a place where people are able to and want to live and work.

We will endeavour to address the needs and aspirations of adults, including the growing population of older people, in relation to work, leisure and their living environment. We will ensure that vulnerable people receive appropriate services and enable those in need of support to live as independently as possible in their community

We will continue to work to transform West Cumbria to ensure a prosperous future. We will know we have succeeded when we have a strong and varied local economy, good quality of life, equality of opportunity and narrowed the gap between the best and worst quality of life in the area. We will work to make our communities sustainable, with good quality housing,

transport which meets local needs and safe and quality living environments, where the local environment and biodiversity is protected. We will also improve waste management and work to minimise waste. To improve well-being in our communities, we will also need to lead the way in tackling key issues for the area, such as road safety.

We will support the provision of local services and facilities, run locally where possible - shops, pubs, community centres, schools, health facilities, and so on, and the use of local suppliers to support our industries and public services.

Related outcomes	All
Related strategies which give more detail	The Council Plans of Allerdale and Copeland Boroughs, and Cumbria County Council
Links to other Sustainable Community Strategy themes	All themes - Councils must drive forward improvement in the place they represent, to ensure that this vision becomes a reality.
Potential frictions with other Sustainable Community Strategy themes	

6.8 Respect for Rights and Responsibilities

Our challenge is to make sure everyone in West Cumbria has a good quality of life, regardless of where they live or who they are. We will make this happen by leading the way in joining up strategies and plans to sustain communities which are fair for everyone.

Respect for the rights and responsibilities of all our citizens means tackling the disadvantages faced by the most vulnerable individuals. This is not just about countering discrimination, important though this is. It is about respecting and accommodating the needs of all our citizens, including minority groups; celebrating diversity and encouraging the highest standards of integration, openness and tolerance. It also means giving all our people access to the services, facilities and opportunities that are recognised as a basic entitlement and enabling them to participate in decisions which affect them, allowing them to play a full part in our society. This includes access to jobs and learning; decent, affordable housing; places to socialise and enjoy their leisure time; clean and safe natural and living environments and support services when in need.

We also recognise the collective rights and responsibilities of people as part of their community. Past decisions have left some communities to face multiple problems of low housing demand, social exclusion, relative poverty, poor health and well-being, low educational attainment, crime and anti-social behaviour and a poor environment. To narrow the gap between these communities and other areas we need to tackle the root causes of disadvantage, not just these symptoms. This is about changing the impact of organisations' mainstream policies and resources to ensure that no-one is disadvantaged by where they live. Sustainable communities are places where people want to live. We will therefore know that we are on the way to making our disadvantaged communities sustainable when the gap in house prices and social housing demand, and the availability of decent affordable housing, narrows significantly between localities.

West Cumbria is a diverse place with a mixture of urban and rural areas. Transport and access to services, for example, will be experienced very differently by rural and urban communities. When developing any plans and strategies we will consider the impact they will have on both and will make the necessary adjustments. In doing this, we should avoid categorising issues or communities as rural or urban and engage with communities on their own terms, recognising that there is as much variation in people's life experiences within places as between them.

West Cumbria has traditionally been an economy and society with a global outlook. Making it a better place is dependent on those other places which provide customers, suppliers and partners, as well as sharing the same global environment. We respect and support the right of other communities to be sustainable and will ensure that we take account of this in what we do. We expect other communities, including this country as a whole, to have the same respect for our needs and rights.

The vision we have set out in this Strategy is a long-term commitment to making West Cumbria a better place. If the area is to remain a place where people enjoy a good quality of life, we must carefully consider the future impact of decisions we take now. This will ensure that we are fair to future generations by giving them the opportunity to live sustainably.

We recognise loss of local shops and services, deprivation in urban areas,, suburbanisation of the countryside, and wasteful and inequitable transport and distribution systems are part of the same challenge to global and local sustainability. They threaten the well-being of disadvantaged individuals and communities, now and in the future. Our strategies and plans must take a co-ordinated approach which integrates economic, social and spatial plans and policies to tackle those challenges. Only by doing this will we be able to create a sustainable community which is fair for everyone.

Related outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quality of Life ▪ Equality and diversity
Related strategies which give more detail	
Links to other Sustainable Community Strategy themes	<p>Communities that work: Ensuring our communities are places where everyone has access to the services they need and is able to become involved in activities in their community</p> <p>Quality Public Services: Targeting disadvantaged communities to narrow the gap between their quality of life and others'; ensuring that the needs of different communities are met, including rural and minority communities.</p>
Potential frictions with other Sustainable Community Strategy themes	

7 Implementing the Strategy

In this Strategy, we have set out a vision for West Cumbria in 2027 and identified the overarching aims of partners. We have also considered what the main issues are for the area, now and in the future, and how we will tackle them. Our challenge now is to deliver the transformation we have committed to. To make it happen, we need public, private, voluntary and community sector organisations to work together to drive the necessary changes forward.

The key to achieving the aspirations set out in this Strategy is to influence the priorities of public service providers and how mainstream funding is spent, particularly given the small and diminishing size of national and European-funded special initiatives. Some actions set out in this Strategy will need to be delivered through other approaches, such as championing the case for higher education provision in West Cumbria. We may need to challenge the local, regional and national constraints, develop new thinking and policy approaches and use our influence to create change. That could be by lobbying or working with Government, national and regional bodies, for example. It could also mean working better together as communities and engaging private and voluntary sector bodies, community groups and citizens to achieve our aims through joint working.

An implementation plan will show how this Strategy will be delivered. It will set out what outcomes need to be achieved and allocate lead responsibility to an agency, which will be tasked with ensuring that that outcome is delivered. All partners will be involved in drawing up this implementation plan and we will involve wider stakeholders, to make sure that the process we are following is right. Delivering shared priorities will require joined-up planning of services and the involvement of those who will provide and use the services in that planning.

The Councils, in their community and political leadership role, will guide and monitor the delivery of the Strategy. Accountability for the implementation of the overall Strategy lies ultimately with them, although individual partners, in signing up to this Strategy, have a duty to cooperate in delivering it. Members of the Council therefore have an important role in scrutinising the effectiveness of partners and the Councils in delivering it.

The sustainability of any plans to deliver priorities in the Strategy will be undergo a 'sustainability appraisal' to ensure that they:

- balance and integrate the social, economic and environmental components of our Strategy;
- meet the needs of existing and future generations;
- respect the needs of other communities in the wider region or internationally to make their communities sustainable.

This will bring together a group of people which has not been involved in creating a particular plan to assess how well the plan meets the above criteria and recommending ways to address any gaps or conflicting commitments. It will also check that those plans align with the Strategy for Sustainable Communities. In this way, we will be able to ensure that our commitment to create sustainable communities is delivered in practice. This Strategy itself will also be taken through the process of sustainability appraisal to check that it integrates social,

economic and environmental issues fully and can deliver the sustainable communities it commits to.

8 Monitoring, Evaluating and Reporting back to Our Communities

We will monitor the overarching aims we set out in Section 3 of this Strategy.

WE WILL MEASURE INDICATORS OF:		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Quality of Life ▪ Fun and enjoyment ▪ Quality & location of services ▪ Communication links ▪ Access from the area ▪ Landscape, townscape, seascape and environment quality ▪ Biodiversity 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Business Reputation ▪ Technology Innovation ▪ Incomes ▪ Size of economy ▪ Diversity within the economy ▪ Added value ▪ Skills levels 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Social capital ▪ Civic pride ▪ Belief and confidence ▪ Equality and diversity ▪ Community cohesion ▪ Demographic profile ▪ Health ▪ Education

Appendix 2 gives details of what those indicators are.

We will evaluate what works and why so that we can build on successes and learn from mistakes. We will publish an Annual Report which contains the results of our monitoring and evaluation, as well as our plans to learn from those results.

Appendix 1- Glossary

This page will be completed before the final draft is presented to the Councils.

DRAFT

Appendix 2- Monitoring

This page will be completed before the final draft is presented to the Councils.

DRAFT

Appendix 3- Process for Creating the Strategy

This Strategy has been developed over X and with the involvement of a wide range groups to ensure that it reflects...

DRAFT

Appendix 4- List of reference documents

This page will be completed before the final draft is presented to the Councils.

DRAFT