



Supporting Change in the Development of Community Resilience in Cumbria 2012-2017

**Dr Terry McCormick, Business Development Manager,
ACTion with Communities in Cumbria
with contributions from
Kirstine Riding, Research Partnership Officer,
Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service**

**‘...A trusted source of information is the most important resilience
asset that any individual or group can have’.¹**

¹ Longstaff, P (2005) **Security, resilience, and communication in unpredictable environments such as terrorism, natural disasters, and complex technology** (Syracuse, New York)



ACT is the community development organisation and Rural Community Council for Cumbria

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At ACT we...

- ... encourage community led initiatives
- ... provide practical advice, support and training
- ... offer independent facilitation
- ... raise awareness of local needs to improve the relevance and responsiveness of services
- ... champion the interests of communities – locally, regionally and nationally
- ... assist communication between local people and the agencies and authorities that impact on their daily lives
- ... gather and use data to better understand and target our work
- ... assist national agencies and the private sector to deliver participative projects with communities.

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1. Executive Summary

Following the floods in Cumbria in 2009, Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) led a Big Lottery Funded Flood Recovery and Community Resilience Programme. At the end of this programme ACTion with Communities in Cumbria (ACT) undertook a research project to establish the scope and potential for developing community resilience in Cumbria between 2012 and 2017.

As a result of this work, Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service and ACTion with Communities in Cumbria have committed to work together through the Community Resilience sub Group, meeting at least three times a year to:

- Support at-risk communities to undertake community emergency planning using the ACT Community Emergency Planning Toolkit (www.cumbriaaction.org.uk).
- Support complex community recovery journeys.
- Budget, fundraise and gather resources to support and sustain hazard mitigation work with communities.
- Engage proactively with the lead local authority, district councils, the Lake District National Park Partnership, the Environment Agency, Natural England, National Trust and landowners, including United Utilities to undertake flood and water-management through a whole valley planning approach.
- Ensure that all learning is inter-connected; community to community; to third sector; to public services through web-services (e.g. Community Messaging) and task and finish groups.
- Work with the Cumbria Resilience Forum to undertake validation of community emergency plans.
- Deliver appropriate work on behalf of the Cumbria Resilience Forum.

The research has also highlighted two key ideas which merit further investigation and development:

Insurance (source: Caroline Langdon, Assistant Leader, Coniston Mountain Rescue Team)

Flood-affected households and communities often experience difficulties obtaining insurance cover. Further work is required to assess the feasibility of forming a mutual insurance company with eligibility and sensible premiums dependent upon validated community emergency plans. This would build in incentives for at-risk communities and would achieve consistency in premiums over the long term.



Bramblewood Cottage Guest House, Keswick, 2009

Risk-Mapping (source: Rod Mackay, Cumbria Local Resilience Forum Programme Board, Chief Inspector, Civil Contingencies Unit, Cumbria Constabulary)

Currently, the mapping of risk across Cumbria is under-developed. There is scope and potential for establishing a partnership with a university which brings skills and resources to undertake GIS mapping of the whole of Cumbria both for risk (especially catchment vulnerability and water flows) and for infrastructure. This should focus entirely on what really matters and not be overloaded with too much information; this is a regional priority that requires national attention.

2. Context, Aim and Objectives

Context

This report is based on experiences in Cumbria presented within a global and national context. The recently published Summary of the Key Findings from the UK Climate Change Risk Assessment 2012² is unequivocal:



Booths Car Park, Keswick, 2009

The UK is already vulnerable to extreme weather, including flooding and heatwaves. Continued action is needed to manage these risks even if additional pressure due to climate change are not taken into account...Annual damage to UK properties due to flooding from rivers and the sea currently totals around £1.3 billion. For England and Wales alone, the figure is projected to rise to between £2.1 billion and £12 billion by the 2080's, based on future population growth and if no adaptive action is taken. (p.4)

The National Adaptation Programme initiated by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) in 2012, squares up to this risk with a vision of a society 'which makes timely, far-sighted and well-informed decisions to address the risks and opportunities posed by a changing climate.'³

In the North West and Cumbria where there is a high proportion of rural communities, the challenges are to properties, agriculture and the natural environment:

147,000 properties in the Northwest are currently at risk from river and coastal flooding. This will increase with climate change, and the value of property potentially non-mortgageable and uninsurable by 2080 is the highest outside London...Increased rainfall will impact [agriculture] through water-logging...There will be increased pressures on our habitats and species from the opportunities climate change will bring to our agri-economy and visitor offer.⁴



Melbreak, 2009

This document recognises the value of community resilience in managing risks; 'There is a significant role for local communities in minimising the impacts of a changing climate, particularly in building capacity in relation to extreme events.' (p.9).

In western Europe and the United States, the partial economic meltdown of 2008 has reduced the scope for public interventions to directly support communities affected by these hazards and to respond to emergency events. In Cumbria, this plays out locally, particularly, in the upland valleys. Ezra Pound famously said that 'artists are the antennae of the race'.⁵ In what have been known as the UK's 'severely disadvantaged areas' (the uplands), communities, through their experience of extreme events, are acting as antennae for what is coming towards the rest of the country. Learning from these communities is valuable for the wider national community.

² Defra (2012) *UK Climate Change Risk Assessment* [Online] Available at: www.defra.gov.uk/environment/climate/government (accessed on 12/10/12)

³ Defra (2012) *Developing the National Adaptation Programme* [Online] Available at <http://engage.defra.gov.uk/nap> (accessed on 12/10/12)

⁴ Defra (2012) *A Summary of Climate Change Risks for North West England* [Online] p.4 Available at www.climatechangenorthwest.co.uk (accessed on 12/10/12)

⁵ Pound, Ezra. **ABC of Reading**. New York: New Directions, 1960. 73

As resources are directed at residential populations, rural communities are increasingly aware that they have to build new kinds of resilience which, in practical terms, means that flood mitigation, and emergency and recovery planning have to become imperative rather than optional. The contours of this awareness are shaped by direct experience or the lack of it. The models of sustainable community development mapped out and enacted in the last decades of the 20th century will now have to be re-shaped by adaptation to these new realities:



Damaged Bridge, 2009

Disaster-resilient communities, sustainable communities, are the product of the building blocks and tools that create resilience in relation to all economic, social and environmental concerns. Communities must...come to see sustainability as a critical part of planning and development and as requiring a linkage between hazard mitigation and policies on every aspect of community development. The question, given the many impediments that constrain the emergency management function, is what practical steps may be taken to promote this result.⁶

This report on work undertaken in Cumbria between 2010 and 2012 proposes such practical steps.

At the beginning, this journey will require steps to be made in specific localities where risk has been experienced and is well evidenced. There is some evidence that the flood risk map for Cumbria will need to be revised to take account of apparently random and surprise events in recent months in places in which there is no tradition of risk. These maps will be changing within other United Kingdom regions and other countries. If communities, third sector organisations, and public services do not recognise that this changing terrain of challenges is, in key respects, without precedent, then the innovative community approaches required will not be taken on, and vulnerability will increase and the challenges will be increasingly extreme. There is a consensus in this report that changes in how we all work together are essential. The report proposes a realignment between communities, the third sector, and public services to ensure that we are all doing the best we can with less and less resource. This consensus carries with it a sometimes sparky argument about which changes, and where and how. Standing back, and squinting at the national big picture, Cumbria, along with other distinctive regions in the UK, offers, without choice, an early-warning system for our national community, and is a crucible for new kinds of collaborative problem solving which may well need to be exported and shared more widely in the years and decades ahead.

As the Climate Ready Challenge is taken on by Defra and the Environment Agency through its Co-Creation approach during 2012 and 2013, this report, from Cumbria, offers a set of advance steps in community resilience (hazard mitigation and adaptation, emergency and recovery planning), based on community experience on-the-ground and in-the-water. In turn, the national approach can provide an invaluable means for ensuring a lively exchange of practice, innovation, and ideas which will ensure that regional perspectives will not become parochial.



Braithwaite Bridge, 2009

⁶ Schneider, Robert, 'Hazard mitigation and sustainable community development', **Disaster Prevention and Management**, II.2 (2002) 141-147

A principle of community resilience has been championed by the Carnegie UK Trust's **Exploring Community Resilience in Times of Rapid Change**: 'We collaborate with other communities near and far – we know no place can go it alone.'⁷ This is a principle that should and must unite us all, as we think globally and work and collaborate locally.

This local research is an inquiry into the options for sustaining Community Resilience (for definitions see below) in Cumbria over the next five years; 2012-2017. The research is necessarily retrospective. It is a review of a two year partnership project, funded by the Big Lottery; Cumbria Flood Recovery and Community Resilience Programme. The project was coordinated by Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) with ACTION with Communities in Cumbria (ACT) leading on community emergency planning. This research has been funded by the Big Lottery as part of their 'Supporting Change' programme which is intended to help the third sector and communities achieve sustainability of the work undertaken between 2010-2012.

Aim

Through consultation with stakeholders to provide organisational and community perspectives on the scope and potential of supporting growth in the development of community resilience in Cumbria.

Objectives

- To consult with all partners and stakeholders associated with the project to assess the commitment to and the feasibility of integrating community resilience development with the planned structures of the Cumbria Resilience Forum.
- To link this learning with the concurrent commitments and directions of the Cumbria Resilience Forum and the Lake District National Park Partnership Plan (2010-2015).
- To review and assess the learning gained from the post 2009 floods community resilience planning undertaken by ACTION with Communities in Cumbria and partners 2010-2012, with the support of the Big Lottery (see Appendix 2).



Recovery Meeting, Keswick

⁷ Wilding, Nick, 2011. 4

3. Definitions

This summary of definitions and terms is indebted to:

Norris, Stevens, Pfefferbaum, Wyche, Pfefferbaum, **Community Resilience as a Metaphor, Theory, Set of Capacities and Strategy for Disaster Readiness**, published online 22 December 2007 and

Wilding, Nick, Carnegie UK Trust, **Exploring Community Resilience in Times of Rapid Change**, Fiery Spirits Community of Practice, 2011

Community Resilience as a Cultural Development

Cumbria has a remarkable tradition in social capital (sense of community, place and participation) and has demonstrated, over the centuries, flexible resources and adaptability when confronted with extreme weather events or livestock disease or government policies hostile to rural life and work in the uplands. The story of the remarkable persistence of Cumbrian hill farming over at least a thousand years is a story of family and community resilience across generations.

Community Resilience is a metaphor; it has taken the term 'resilience' and transferred its meaning into a process, a journey as distinct from an outcome. It is distinguished by its transformational character and in order to be dynamic and beneficial, it requires the following:

- Social Capital (sense of community and place, participation).
- Flexible resources (robust, rapid, and creative; diversity=strength).
- Adaptability rather than stability.
- Active inclusive networking.
- A credo; a clear goal and directions with creative thinking about pathways between these:
 - Inclusive, creative culture
 - Cross-community links
 - Localised economy within ecological limits
 - Healthy, engaged people

*...community resilience has extraordinary value as a strategy for disaster readiness. Unlike many stressors, disasters happen to entire communities. Members are exposed together and must recover together. At minimum, if their aim is to build collective resilience, communities must develop economic resources, reduce risk and resource inequities, and attend conscientiously to their areas of greatest social vulnerability. They must engage local people in every step of the mitigation process, create organisational linkages and relationships in advance of disasters, and boost and protect naturally occurring social supports. They must plan - but also plan for not having a plan, which means that community organisations must appreciate flexibility, develop decision-making skills, and cultivate trusted sources of information. In a nutshell, disaster readiness is about social change.*⁸

Community resilience is shaped then, by contemporary circumstances, and in our own region, the twinned challenges of climate change and economic collapse; climate related events are happening unpredictably, and the financial resources are not available to deal with these.

⁸ Norris, Stevens, Pfefferbaum, Wyche, Pfefferbaum, **Community Resilience as a Metaphor, Theory, Set of Capacities and Strategy for Disaster Readiness**, published online 22 December 2007

Community resilience as a cultural phenomenon comes to the foreground as an asset when communities are confronted with the unknown unknowns; when they need to be planning for situations where there is no plan; and then when they engage with the complex, profound, and time-varied requirements of recovery.

Community Resilience as Hazard Mitigation, Emergency and Recovery

The main focus of this Big Lottery project (post floods of 2009) has been emergency and recovery planning, and this entailed concentrating diminishing resources on foreseeable events and 'at-risk' communities.

For the future, the requirement will always need to be: how do we create and support a readiness which will allow expensive institutional emergency services to go where the need is greatest in terms of risk and population? In Cumbria, this does mean that the remotest communities, often in the valleys and uplands, will need to take on the resilience challenge.

Communities of Practice

Since the beginning of time, human beings have shared cultural practices reflecting their collective learning: from a tribe around a cave fire, to a medieval guild, to a group of nurses in a ward, to a street gang, to a community of engineers interested in brake design. Participating in these 'communities of practice' is essential to our learning. It is the very core of what makes us human beings capable of meaningful knowing.⁹

In Cumbria, the Cumbria Resilience Forum, and the Communities Resilience sub Group are communities of practice and third sector organisations like ACTion with Communities in Cumbria and Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service devote time and resources to coordinating communities of practice with communities of place.

Communities of Place

In Cumbria, communities with shared geographical boundaries, histories and futures are typical and widespread. These are, unless otherwise stated, the communities referred to in this report.



Wall Marker, Keswick



Fine sediment into Derwentwater

⁹ Wenger, **Communities of Practice and Social Learning Systems**, Sage Publications, 2000

4. Summary of Survey Findings

The primary research in this report is the result of a consultation with partners and stakeholders associated with the project. This was undertaken through face-to-face interviews and telephone conversations, and a workshop with the CRF Communities Resilience Sub Group which included Valerie Ayre, Chris Bagshaw, Chris Briggs, Terry McCormick, Fiona McCredie, Kirstine Riding, David Sheard, and Maria Ulyart. The detailed results of these interviews are in Appendix 1.

The questions were based on a shared understanding within the Communities Resilience sub Group of the outstanding issues and challenges for Cumbria in the period 2012-2017.

1. Are the current draft Terms of Reference for the Communities Sub Group for the CRF 'fit for purpose'?

It was agreed by all the interviewees that the current Terms of Reference were not satisfactory and that they should reflect the outcomes of the research.

2. Should community resilience (emergency and recovery planning) be integrated with the work of the Cumbria Resilience Forum?

3. Should the Communities Resilience Sub Group be formally included within the current Cumbria Resilience Forum 'family'?

YES but:

- It should be community and voluntary sector focussed.
- It should be aligned and networked with the Cumbria Resilience Forum.

Responses highlighted the need to include communities effectively while avoiding duplication. The need to balance a flexible approach with clarity of purpose was also identified.

4. Should community-led flood mitigation and water management planning be included as a strategic aim within the Lake District National Park Partnership (LDNPP) Plan?

YES, as long as this is genuinely embedded with all local authorities

5. Should recovery planning be given equal status to emergency planning and be resourced accordingly?

YES, and...

- The leadership and resourcing of this needs clarification.
- Recovery should be linked into inclusive community resilience.
- This should be actively networked and analysed.

Responses highlighted the complexity of the journey from emergency to recovery and the time scales involved. 'When does emergency stop and recovery begin?'

6. How should community and emergency and recovery plans be validated?

- This should be based on the Ten Step Community Emergency Planning Toolkit.
- Validation should be delivered in close collaboration with the Cumbria Resilience Forum.
- Rigorous cost analysis should be undertaken.

Responses highlighted capacity and resource challenges as well as the developmental nature of the emergency planning process.

7. How should community emergency and recovery plans be made accessible to emergency and recovery services?

- Through an appropriate website with access for the Cumbria Resilience Forum and all in the network.
- District councils must be involved with the work of the Community Resilience Sub Group.

Responses highlighted the challenges of balancing open access with confidentiality and of ensuring that all those involved in responding to emergencies are aware of local plans.

8. How can the Community Risk Register become more 'owned' by communities?

- Communities need their own local risk maps.
- 'Thinking with the Community' (David Sheard) needs to be done on this.
- The insurance implications of having risks highlighted needs to be taken on.

Responses showed the need for the inclusion of local knowledge in the development of the Register.

9. How can training and mentoring be provided for community emergency and recovery coordinators?

10. Is it appropriate or feasible for community representatives to take part in training and exercises delivered through the CRF?

- Training should take place with the Cumbria Resilience Forum.
- Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service should focus on providing training for third sector organisations.
- 'To crack this would be wonderful' (Judi Evans); it must be holistic.
- Yes, important but how is it to be funded?

Responses confirmed the importance of experiential learning and sharing practices to empower communities.

11. Should all third sector organisations have their own emergency plans?

- There was a consensus that this should be envisaged as 'Business Continuity Planning' which local authorities have a duty to provide through their Emergency Planning Officers. Third sector organisations should approach this as a business would.

12. Funding is required to deliver some of these activities. Where should/can this money come from?

- The priority should always be with communities at risk.

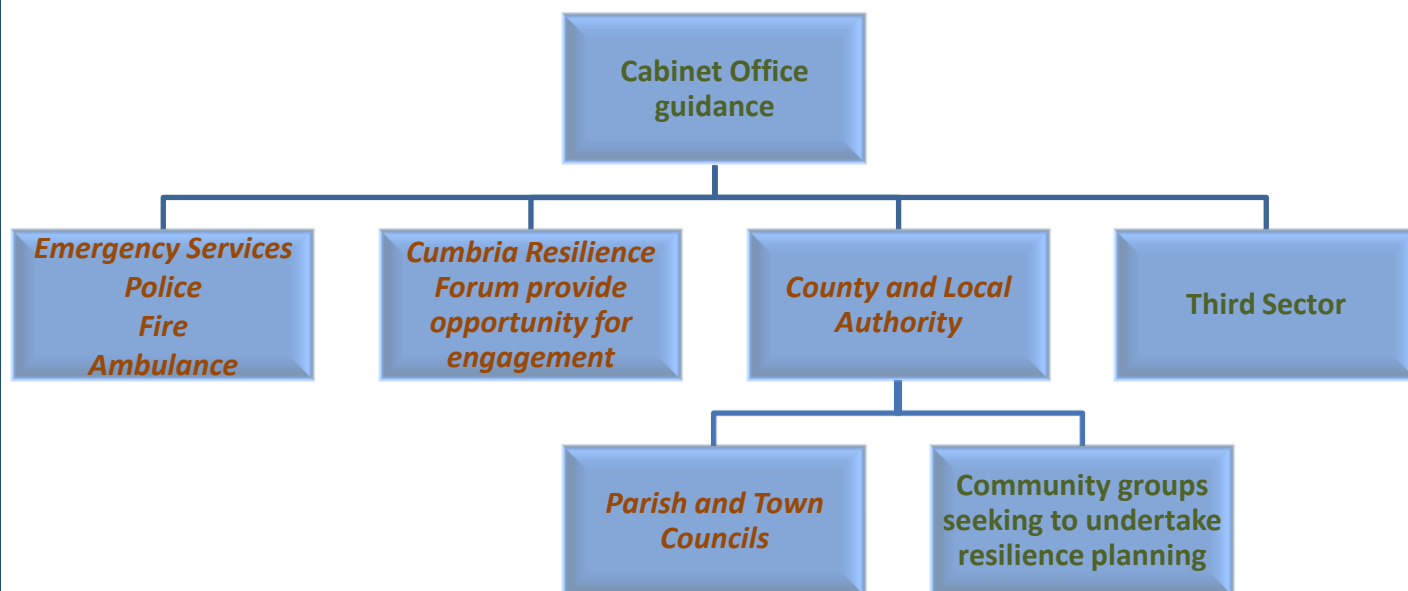
This question encouraged a free-flow discussion around the feasibility of funding options. Central government funding was discounted as was the Cumbria Resilience Forum which literally does not have a budget and is a collaboration of 'in-kind' contributions. The Lake District National Park Partnership may be a source of funding through its 'Vibrant Communities' commitment with an 'Investing in Communities Fund' already supporting community-led flood mitigation work in Borrowdale.

Responses indicated the need for modest funding for local groups and for fundraisers who are 'on-the-ball' and able to follow up opportunities.

5. Supporting Change in the Development of Community Resilience in Cumbria, 2012-2017

A collation and synthesis of the interview results gathered in July and August 2012 has produced a set of commitments to actions which will ensure that, in Cumbria, there can be progress from the current situation towards where the majority of stakeholders and professionals consulted would wish to be.

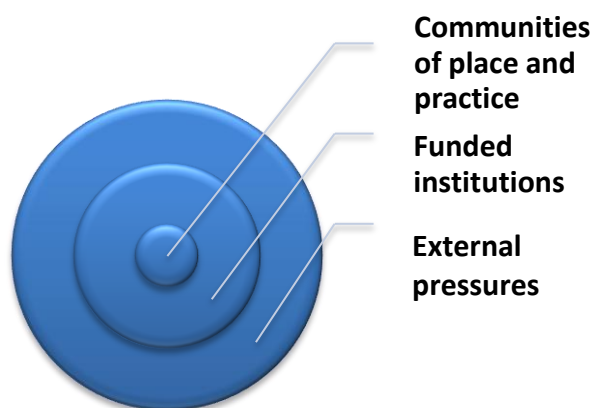
The current situation can be summarised in this diagram:



Green = 'good-to-go' with flexibility and potential to be realised; direct links between Cabinet Office, Third Sector, and Community Groups.

Amber = intentions are in place but engagement is constrained by barriers of funding and capability which could worsen during 2012-17.

The aspiration is for all institutions involved in community resilience to move beyond the current resource and capability barriers to community engagement. For this to become feasible, there will need to be a transformation of the current hierarchical custom-and-practice into a circular support system. In the centre of the hub are communities of place and practice collaborating and building resilience. This can only be feasible if funded institutions are gathered around this hub, protecting communities from the external pressures of climate change and economic recession impacts.



Taken together, then, these commitments to action will require community creativity, courage from public services under threat, and pragmatic step by step building of pathways and bridges between institutional services and community needs.

Community and Third Sector Actions

The following actions have been identified as those which should be undertaken by communities and the third sector organisations with the support of the Community Resilience Sub Group over the next three-five years:

- Work with the Community Emergency Planning Toolkit and prepare community emergency plans for at-risk communities.
- Actively network and undertake gap analysis so that complex recovery journeys can be sensitively supported and resourced.
- Budget, fundraise and gather resources to support and sustain hazard mitigation, community emergency and recovery planning.
- Engage proactively with the lead local authority, district councils, the Lake District National Park Partnership, the Environment Agency, Natural England, National Trust and landowners, including United Utilities to undertake flood and water-management through a whole valley planning approach.
- Ensure that all learning is inter-connected; community to community; to third sector; to public services through web-services (e.g. Community Messaging) and task and finish groups.

Resilience Forum Actions

The following actions have been identified as those which should be undertaken by the Cumbria Resilience Forum (the regional network of first responders) with communities and third sector organisations.

- Directly support the validation of community emergency and recovery plans.
- Include access to these plans within the Cumbria Resilience Forum web resources.
- Support the active representation of district councils on the Communities Resilience Sub Group.
- Use the Communities Resilience sub Group to deliver appropriate work on behalf of the Cumbria Resilience Forum.
- Endorse funding applications made by the Communities Resilience Sub Group.
- Include a representative from the Community Resilience Sub Group within the Cumbria Resilience Forum.

Amended Terms of Reference

In order to reflect these commitments, the **Terms of Reference of the Communities Resilience Sub Group** should reflect the following objectives:

1. To encourage and support communities to undertake resilience (hazard mitigation, emergency and recovery) planning.
2. To represent directly, promote, support, and coordinate all community endeavour in resilience (hazard mitigation, emergency and recovery) planning.
3. To ensure that pathways of communication between communities and all statutory agencies are clear, well-informed, and active.

Objective 1 Actions

- Promote the Community Emergency Planning Toolkit and help communities prepare their emergency plans.
- Fundraise and gather resources to support and sustain hazard mitigation, emergency and recovery planning.
- Work with the CRF to deliver validation of community emergency and recovery plans.
- Work with the CRF to Include access to these plans within the CRF web resources.

Objective 2 Actions

- Engage proactively with all local authorities, including the Lake District National Park Partnership, the Environment Agency, Natural England and landowners to undertake flood mitigation and water-management.
- Actively network and undertake gap analysis so that complex recovery journeys can be sensitively supported and resourced.
- Deliver appropriate work on behalf of the CRF.
- Seek endorsement and support from CRF for funding applications.

Objective 3 Actions

- Ensure that all learning is inter-connected; community to community; to third sector; to public services.
- Ensure, with the support of the CRF, active representation of district councils on the Communities Resilience Sub Group.
- Include a representative from the Communities Resilience sub Group within the CRF.

Membership of the Community Resilience sub Group includes statutory and third sector partners; ACT; Cumbria CVS; Cumbria Association of Local Councils; Cumbria County Council; Cumbria Resilience Unit; Cumbria Constabulary; Cumbria Fire & Rescue; Environment Agency; NHS Cumbria; North West Ambulance Service

Meetings:

Three formal meetings a year, with a provisional agenda for the next meeting agreed, and dates to be published annually. Task and Finish groups to work concurrently.

Secretariat:

To be provided by Cumbria County Council Resilience Unit.

Threats to Sustaining Commitments

The majority of interviewees expressed concern about resources. In particular, the current 'protect and survive' reflex in the public services could reduce the scope for active networking, task-based partnerships, and creative collaborations, just as they are needed the most.

6. Commitment from ACTion with Communities in Cumbria

As a result of the work undertaken, ACTion with Communities in Cumbria has made a commitment to work with Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service through the Community Resilience Sub Group, meeting at least three times a year to:

- Support at-risk communities to undertake community emergency planning using the ACT Community Emergency Planning Toolkit (www.cumbriaaction.org.uk).
- Support complex community recovery journeys.
- Budget, fundraise and gather resources to support and sustain hazard mitigation work with communities.
- Engage proactively with the lead local authority, district councils, the Lake District National Park Partnership, the Environment Agency, Natural England, National Trust and landowners, including United Utilities to undertake flood and water-management through a whole valley planning approach.
- Ensure that all learning is inter-connected; community to community; to third sector; to public services through web-services (e.g. Community Messaging) and task and finish groups.
- Work with the Cumbria Resilience Forum to undertake validation of community emergency plans.
- Deliver appropriate, resourced work on behalf of the Cumbria Resilience Forum.

ACTion with communities in cumbria champions community and rural issues



APPENDIX 1 Questionnaire Responses

1.1. Interviewees

Val Ayre, Programme Officer, Volunteers, Fire and Rescue Service

Chris Bagshaw, Assistant Chief Officer, Cumbria Association of Local Councils

Andy Baines, Safer & Stronger Communities Manager, Cumbria Constabulary

Chris Briggs, Emergency Planning/Resilience Officer, Cumbria County Resilience Unit

Karen Bowen, Chief Executive, Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service

Richard Cox, Community Resilience Policy Manager, Civil Contingencies Secretariat, Cabinet Office

Hugh Deeming, Technical Officer (Science), Building Resilience Amongst Communities in Europe, emBRACE Project, University of Northumbria

Judi Evans, Operations Director, North East & Cumbria, British Red Cross

Caroline Langdon, Assistant Leader, Coniston Mountain Rescue Team

Fiona McCredie, Resilience and Public Health Protection Manager, NHS Cumbria

Rod MacKay, Cumbria LRF Programme Board, Chief Inspector, Civil Contingencies Unit, Cumbria Constabulary

Penny Poole, Coordinator, The Melbreak Communities

Kirstine Riding, Research Partnership Officer, Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service

Nicola Reynolds, Churches Together in Cumbria Emergency Response Team Coordinator

David Sheard, Area Support Manager North, Chief Executive's Office, Cumbria County Council

Graham & Carol Thompson, Volunteer Lead, Keswick Flood & Recovery Group

Maria Ulliyart, Incident Management Officer, Environment Agency

Julia Wilson, Project Team Manager, ACTion with Communities in Cumbria

1.2. Responses

Some of the questions were not appropriate for some of the interviewees and were not answered.

1. Are the current draft Terms of Reference for the Communities Sub Group for the CRF 'fit for purpose'?

It was agreed by all the interviewees that the current Terms of Reference were not satisfactory and that they should reflect the outcomes of the research.

2. Should community resilience (emergency and recovery planning) be integrated with the work of the Cumbria Resilience Forum?

3. Should the Communities Resilience Sub Group be formally included within the current Cumbria Resilience Forum 'family'?

YES but, and

- It should stay community focussed and based on local response (G&CT)
- If yes, should be rooted in community resilience (DS)
- Question limited by Cabinet Office definition of resilience; go for more inclusive approach to community resilience and capacity building with reference to precedents in the Fire and Rescue Services Act, 2004 (HD)
- The role of the voluntary sector needs to be represented more effectively as the statutory sector comes under more budget pressure (JE)
- The needs of communities must be at the foreground and ways of knowing these must be close to the work of the voluntary sector (JE)
- Up to the Communities Resilience Sub Group (CRSG) to define role in the emerging flexible structure of the Cumbria Resilience Forum (CRF); the work-plan for the CRSG will guide this. Cornwall and Gloucestershire demonstrate a much fuller engagement with their Local Resilience Forum (CRSG)
- There is a representation issue within the 'command and control' hierarchy of the CRF (CRSG)
- There needs to be a linking/bridging between the CRF and communities; there is a clear opportunity for CRF to 'support and encourage' through a number of practical ways e.g. validation of community emergency plans for those communities most at risk; implementation of the 10 Step Community Emergency Plan(KB)
- Too much fluidity and general networking can allow important matters to drift (KB)
- Need to be vigilant to ensure no overlap and duplication (especially with Cumbria Voluntary Agencies Committee) (KB, RM)
- The needs of communities should be a standing item on the agenda for CRF meetings (KB)
- This is very much up to each LRF; there are good examples of community resilience being embedded in other regions; in Essex through a 'warning and informing' group and in North Yorkshire through a 'task and finish' group (RC)
- It should be aligned and holistic within a commitment to adapting good practice (RM)
- The CRF needs to stay close to emergency and recovery planning, commissioning and delivering key work streams as appropriate (RM)
- The linkages should be a 'dotted line'; flexibility in lines of communication should be a priority; the architecture of the CRF should not be weakened; there should be a clarity of what needs

to be done and where the capability is for doing it; cost is always a strategic consideration (RM)

- The current time is more dangerous for this because of the retreat of public services into a fortress mentality as funding cuts deepen (AB)
- Communities need to offer solutions not problems (ways of saving money), and this does entail having a real clarity of role and purpose (AB)
- The on-line community messaging service has much scope and potential to assist with this (AB)
- CRF would be too detached if communities were not a part of it, but the CRF mustn't become too unwieldy; a networked approach is best (CL)
- CRF cannot function separately, there must be some integration, but it would be difficult for Cumbria Voluntary Agencies Committee to have a single person representation as it is so diverse in its interests; one way around this would be to ensure that CRF is represented on the communities sub group (NR)

NO because...

- CRF is defined by 'life and limb' priorities, and there is an emerging role for a more structured multi-agency which requires more investment in public services, and this approach could diffuse this priority (DS)

4. Should community-led flood mitigation and water management planning be included as a strategic aim within the Lake District National Park Partnership (LDNPP) Plan?

- Yes, because like all local authorities, the regulations for the Flood and Water Management Act 2010 (www.defra.gov.uk/environment/flooding/legislation) will be established during the autumn; this will influence flood mitigation work in the valleys and will require a response to flood events (DS)
- Yes, LDNPP will need to be strategic about this because of the prevailing threat and the associated legislation (RM)
- Yes, they should (HD, KB) and this could be a new source of funding for local, community work (AB)
- Ideally, yes as long as this is genuinely embedded, has continuity and coherence, and is not subject to fashion (CL)

5. Should recovery planning be given equal status to emergency planning and be resourced accordingly?

YES, and...

- Because the timescale in the valleys is variable and long (PP)
- There needs to be finance for this – recovery is still underway in Keswick following 2009 – the employment of Emily Thompson in Keswick was a very good model; the building of flood defences is part of recovery, and the role of the EA is key (G&CT)
- This is mainly a networking function; expectations of all partners need to be clear ('responders' and others); contingency should be planned based on 'gap analysis'; 'It makes sense for people to have shaken hands before an event' (HD)
- The cabinet office guidance on this is good and recovery has to be managed and, therefore planned; there are huge variables on costs (CRSG)
- Recovery should be linked to community resilience as a perennial process towards the ideal of

the Carnegie UK compass [inclusive, creative culture/cross-community links/localised economy within ecological limits/healthy, engaged people] (CRSG)

- 'Equal status' not quite the right wording; 'when does emergency stop and recovery begin?' it is an holistic process in which both are part of the same journey (KB)
- But, 'where does the money come from?' This is the 'too hard box but it must be in your terms of reference' (JE)
- 'There is no budget for recovery and who leads it?'; 'there are so many complex and different answers to this'; in the Carlisle floods of 2005, there were three days of emergency and 9 months of a long complex recovery; the 'feel' for the community is very important (AB)
- The awareness of recovery is so much greater now following the Pitt Review, which most local authorities have taken on board; always an issue of demarcation from emergency and who takes on the leadership (RC)
- 'Very much so...' and the leadership of this complex and difficult issue lies with the local authorities; but this is daunting; should it be county-wide? can the districts deal with it alone? There was always a negotiating and coordinating role at a regional level, and this is now, arguably, more difficult with the altered route to central government (RM)
- Recovery should be given more resource than emergency planning because more time is needed (though recovery is quicker if emergency planning is in place) (CL, NR)
- Research into recovery from trauma is demonstrating that there is a complex process with milestones in terms of safety and mental health, for example; this needs resourcing; there can be flash points 20, 30, 40 years later (NR)
- NO, because...
- This is too complex and variable to plan and resource; and so many different character types emerge during recovery; it needs to be sourced back to community led planning and inclusive community resilience (DS)

6. How should community and emergency and recovery plans be validated?

- Contacts with the emergency services should be part of the planning process (G&CT)
- 'Adopted' may be a better term than 'validated'; how can it be made as cost-effective as possible? 'There is a clear role for the CRSG here'; must work with high risk communities first; there could be a four star approach (e.g. full scenario testing as at Coniston) and a more routine 'table-top' approach; the Ten Step Community Emergency Plan should make this much easier (KB)
- Scenario testing is the best way to do this, but it is expensive; there should a real cost analysis of such an exercise before a decision is made on this (JE)
- There is a capacity and resource challenge here; the Ten Step Plan and the involvement of all the stakeholders in the CRSG should make this more viable (AB)
- The Coniston Model [a scenario testing which took place in Coniston in February 2012] is good (CRSG)
- This is expensive but it is the only way to go (HD)
- 'Validation is an impossible ambition in terms of resources'; it depends on the statutory agencies being very close to communities (DS)
- 'Some communities will engage fully with this, and others will need support; there is a balance to be struck between local authority involvement and community motivation, but testing plans

really will tease out issues' (RC)

- 'This is something that the CRF really does want to be involved with and we will do what we can to help and directly support validation'; this can also be aligned with the community risk register (RM)
- People do need to feel that they have achieved and reached a standard that is acceptable externally; that plans can be signed off and then re-validated at fixed times, say every one or two years; the scenario testing we did at Coniston (28th February) felt more like a developmental validation, and so we are not there yet (CL)
- 'Validate' is too strong a word perhaps; the important thing is to talk to as many people as possible about the plan and showing how the community can engage with the plan; lots of communication and get as broad an involvement as possible (NR)

7. How should community emergency and recovery plans be made accessible to emergency and recovery services?

- The CRF should have access to the plans through appropriate websites (PP)
- Website; there should be a protected confidential version for emergency services, and an open access version for the wider community (DS)
- This requires an extra element of training for incident control staff but also through Community Unit initiatives (HD)
- These should be held by the district councils as they have a statutory responsibility, and each district should have a representative on the CRSG (CRSG, KB)
- The emergency services would welcome this (JE)
- This needs to be carefully linked to the 'blue light' hierarchy which has a 'ton of process'; must be clear that the strategic emergency plan has precedence; there is a possible role here for community messaging (AB)
- Links to local responders are crucial; Yorkshire is a very good model for this (RC)
- We must be as open-access as possible; the 'Preparing for Emergencies' website run by the county council is the best place for these plans; the more confidential details can be kept in an appendix (RM)
- This is very important; it needs to be available for any organisation which needs it (e.g. Fire, Mountain Rescue; our plan is available on-line and in the library, and there are five copies each with leaders in the emergency planning group; somebody is needed to police the plan to ensure continuity (CL)
- Websites, yes, but only if they are read; emergency services do not read them; there is some training needed here for first responders to make sure they know where plans are, that they are not forgotten. It is sad when people at the top the emergency services do not refer to them (NR)

8. How can the Community Risk Register become more 'owned' by communities?

- Communities need local maps of risk; flood and ice-prone locations; vulnerable residents (PP and G&CT)
- The availability of the register is fairly recent nationwide and community ownership is in its infancy; 'thinking with the community' needs to be done on this; a good opportunity for an open day/community conference; the impact of some extreme events (blackout; terrorism; reservoir inundation) is so massive that a 'grown-up conversation is essential (DS, CRSG)

- There is an unofficial and official register and this is all handled 'top-down'; there should be wider discussions; all community perceived risks should be fed into a matrix and worked through (HD)
- This is a clear opportunity to use and test local knowledge and expertise to strengthen prevention; parts of the current community risk register are a bit unreal for rural Cumbria (KB)
- This needs to be tackled; there is so much at stake here; but it is complex; e.g. the insurance implications of having certain risks highlighted has to be taken on (JE)
- This is a strong element for communities as there is so much self interest involved; but it should be modest (AB)
- A mixed picture on the use of risk registers nationally; there is a definite need for local inputs for a local register, especially on every-year weather events involving snow, ice and high winds; there can then be report-backs to local responders (RC)
- This is a strong area for development; cabinet office initiatives need to be regionally, and ideally, nationally adapted; academia should be able to bring their skills and resources, for example, and do GIS mapping of the whole of Cumbria both for risk (especially catchment vulnerability and water flows) and for infrastructure; this should focus entirely on what really matters and not be overloaded with too much information; this needs attention as a regional or national project (RM)
- This is not an issue for us; we have our own informal risk register, not all of it written down; there is a lot of shared knowledge on this (CL)

9. How can training and mentoring be provided for community emergency and recovery coordinators?

10. Is it appropriate or feasible for community representatives to take part in training and exercises delivered through the CRF?

- It would be good if training could take place with CRF (PP)
- We have done this, and it is very worthwhile – 'Category 1 people are human!'; but a lot of self teaching has taken place in Keswick with the help of Environment Agency and Chris Briggs; there is a lot to be said for informal 'on-the-job' learning in which the whole community can be inducted into a new level of awareness, say through 'reassurance emails' based on met office reports (G&CT)
- Communities should be left to develop their own capacity through a 'soft-touch' approach from the statutory agencies; if it becomes too formalised there will be disempowerment; there is a highly evolved awareness and expertise about emergencies in Cumbria and there should be more sharing of this with communities through the CRF (DS)
- This should be done through the CRF because 'statutory officers will learn from local experts' (HD)
- The CVS training programmes could pick up some of this; there should be some careful linking with existing programmes; the CRSG should hold and publicise a calendar of events; this is also a mainstream health and safety responsibility of local authorities (CRSG)
- CVS can have a particular focus on working with other organisations; emergency and recovery planning should be in the foreground for all organisations; we could investigate the application of the Ten Step Community Emergency Planning guidance to third sector organisations; regular training and mentoring is needed to stop 'drift' (KB)
- 'To crack this would be wonderful'; but how do we do it? It must be holistic in its approach, recognising that there are as many different needs as there are different events;

Neighbourhood Watch may be a good model here; to do this with CRF would be beneficial for the statutory agencies (JE)

- 'Who will fund this and who will take responsibility?'; the exercises run by CRF do not have enough participation; there are cultural and logistical issues here; there needs to be some 'challenge and change' in how all this is done (AB)
- There is some important work to be done here; 'myth-busting'; checklists; having communities involved is really critical; this is the way to build up the interconnections between networks across the country, ensuring that good practice is on the web, so that all can benefit easily and cost-effectively (RC)
- There are no formal training programmes for "community reps" currently, though some elected members have received training; the learning that would be gained through broadly inclusive validation programmes would be invaluable; the CRF needs to focus particularly on people who offer "democratic validity" (RM)
- The county does up to three sessions a year for voluntary and statutory agencies (these do need to be signed up for) and CVAC is included in the big training programmes; recovery does get pushed out of these though and there should be more focus on this (NR)
- Yes, important but how is it to be funded? The validation process is good for building confidence; our scenario testing in February allowed a lot of different people to listen in and learn; we have taken part in a silver command county-wide event and there was lots of valuable two-way learning in that (CL)

11. Should all third sector organisations have their own emergency plans?

- There was a consensus that this should be envisaged as 'Business Continuity Planning' which local authorities have a duty to provide through their Emergency Planning Officers. Third sector organisations should approach this as a business would.
- Third sector organisations should ensure their links with local authorities on this are clear (RC)
- CVS has drafted an emergency plan for the organisation which supports a probable coordinating role in a serious emergency (KB)
- If this is not integrated, there is a danger of duplication (AB, CL)
- No hard and fast rules on this one; the fewer strategies and plans in place the better; much of this is tactical/operational stuff and depends on drills and procedures; situational awareness is key and often quite difficult to get if there are not good contacts on the ground; we need to keep this as simple as possible, & ensure that *all* responders understand the big picture; stay with 'life and limb' priorities and the critical services that need to be protected (RM)
- Most of the CVAC voluntary organisations (e.g. Mountain Rescue, Neighbourhood Watch, Red Cross, WVS) already do have plans; ours [Churches Together in Cumbria] is on both our website and CRF's and is updated (NR)

12. Funding is required to deliver some of these activities. Where should/can this money come from? For example:

Contributions from members of the Cumbria Resilience Forum and the LDNP Partnership.

Central government allocations for the Third Sector.

Grants and project-based funding.

Private sector: flood emergency companies; insurance companies; businesses at risk from flooding (accommodation providers); 'Business in the Community' members.

- This question encouraged a free-flow discussion around the feasibility of funding options. Central government funding was discounted as was the CRF which literally does not have a budget and is a collaboration of 'in-kind' contributions. The LDNP Partnership may be a source of funding through its 'Vibrant Communities' commitment with an 'Investing in Communities Fund' already supporting community-led flood mitigation work in Borrowdale.
- Our volunteer efforts in emergency planning in Melbreak Communities do now need some modest support, especially for our community website which is the 'jewel in our crown' and which will be so important in most emergencies (PP)
- Money is important for local work; there are always training costs and kit requirements (2 Way Radios; high visibility jackets; torches, maps) (G&CT)
- There should be opportunities in the new flexible CRF structure if the CRSG is very clear and precise on priorities and outcomes; the CRSG could be involved in delivering commissioned work on behalf of the CRF (DS & three other respondents); there are always parish council precepts; there will always be grant opportunities; it would be worth developing a cluster of businesses which would be interested in linking up to community resilience; innovative EPO's should be thinking of involving the private sector (DS)
- In order to save duplication, it would be worth considering developing 'banks' of resources for each district; the role and expertise of Cumbria Community Foundation is critical here; a pledge approach (from supermarkets) operates in the North East and should be rolled out in Cumbria; but there is a gap in strategic funding (KB)
- The priority should always be with communities at risk; the CRF could endorse and support funding applications; there must be some scope with insurance businesses along the lines of: 'if you are in a community with an emergency plan, then you are less of a liability and cost less for insurers; Neighbourhood Watch sign-ups get 10% reductions in premiums (JE)
- The Environment Agency does have some funds for training; Emergency Planning Officers should have a role in this; there are good examples in Cornwall and Great Yarmouth of innovative private sector links; there are also strong fundraising achievements in the third sector e.g. Red Cross; the Cabinet Office will be producing a funding topic sheet as part of our guidance (RC)
- What is needed here are 'on-the-ball' fundraisers to chase all the opportunities in the UK and Europe; there is funding out there; the CRF would be happy to endorse and support applications; always a clear cost analysis is needed so that the savings achieved by mutual aid are clearly identified; venue costs, subsistence and expenses can be met for the voluntary sector for example through validation exercises; and so much good work can be done cheaply and cheerfully; there should be scope with insurance businesses and some of the bigger businesses in Cumbria; Mountain Rescue and Northern Air Ambulance are good examples of successful voluntary sector fundraising in related areas of work (RM)
- This is difficult for 'Churches Together' as we are self-funded and this is what we would normally do as clergy and we cannot be double-funded; we did receive funding for Christ Church in Cockermouth as there were so many extra costs incurred through 24/7 usage; and we are often a channel for funding; but other agencies do need direct funding e.g. The Red Cross (NR)
- Central government is too difficult and it will red-tape communities; LDNP Partnership should be in a position to support communities; grants and project based funding cannot be relied upon and is subject to fashion; what happens if it stops raining? The argument should be made that community efforts save money (e.g. Mountain Rescue takes the pressure off the police); Environment Agency does fund some training; and there are some strong sources of

community funding for Mountain Rescue (CL)

- An idea on the insurance problem: raise money to form a mutual insurance company with eligibility and sensible premiums dependent upon validated emergency plans; this would build in incentives for at-risk communities and would achieve consistency in premiums over the long term (CL)

Appendix 2 Context

Cumbria Community Resilience; November 2009 - August 2012

2.1. Community Resilience and Community Led Planning in 2009

ACTion with Communities in Cumbria (ACT) has been supporting communities since 1948, helping them to:

- Plan their futures
- Develop projects
- Work with others
- Influence and change policy.

One important strand of this work, supported by central government, has been community led planning, and between 2007 and 2009, there were 22 community led plans in Cumbria, a county of 282 civil parishes:

Ainstable Parish Plan 2007 Update

Allonby Parish Plan 2008

Arnsdale Parish Plan Review 2008

Beetham Parish Plan 2008

Crosthwaite and Lyth 2007

Cummersdale Community Plan 2009-2014

Dentdale Parish Plan 2008

Drigg and Carleton Parish Plan 2008

Great Salkeld Parish Plan 2008

Heart of Eden Community Plan 2009

Hutton Parish and Motherby Community Plan 2008

Levens Village Plan 2008

Lindale, High Newton and Low Newton Community Plan 2009

Lyvennet Valley Community Plan 2009

Muncaster Parish Plan 2007

Skelsmergh and Scalthwaiterigg Community Plan 2009

Stanwix Rural Parish Plan 2007

Underskiddaw 2007

Upper Eden Community Plan 2008

Walton Parish Plan 2007

Westward & Rosley Community Plan 2007

Windermere, Bowness and Troutbeck Bridge This is our Community Plan 2009

This tradition, relatively strong when compared with other UK regions, provides a cultural environment which is conducive to community resilience (emergency and recovery) planning. But, in 2009, community resilience planning was in its infancy. As Chris Briggs of the Cumbria's County Resilience Unit put it in 2010:

...Although there are many agencies carrying out excellent work in communities throughout the county, little or no resource is directed towards resilience purposes and there is certainly no level of coordination to facilitate or direct this. With growing demand and the likely introduction of appropriate legislation, the Environment Agency and the County Council Resilience Unit are simply not equipped or resourced to carry on this work in isolation. (internal memo; 13th May 2010)

ACT was already working with a number of community groups which had been affected by the impact of the floods in 2009, and further still by the prolonged cold weather that followed. There are two groups representing communities that had been particularly badly hit:

- Derwent 7 – representing the seven parishes of Keswick; St John's, Castlerigg & Wythburn; Borrowdale; Above Derwent; Bassenthwaite; Under Skiddaw and Threlkeld
- Melbreak Communities – representing the four parishes of Lorton; Buttermere; Blindboothel; and Loweswater.

Some of this work had been funded through a partnership project with the Lake District National Park Authority (LDNPA) and Cumbria Rural Housing Trust (CRHT), through its Investing in Communities programme.

ACT also had Development Officers working throughout Cumbria, and has the capacity to deliver additional support to other communities who will be reconsidering their priorities as a result of the floods, and was in a position to offer:

- Support with community consultation to ensure that all issues are identified
- Facilitation of the development of local action programmes through the production of Revised Community Plans and/or Emergency Plans
- Signposting to expert help and advice, and brokering of meetings with key personnel in agencies and the public sector
- Advice and support in developing funding proposals and applications, including Governance arrangements and Business Planning
- Specialist support for community asset management

2.2. The Number of Emergency and Recovery Plans in Cumbria in 2012

| Community |
|--|
| Above Derwent FAG |
| Appleby |
| Burneside |
| Cleator FAG |
| Cockermouth FAG |
| Coniston FAG |
| Dalton-in-Furness (Goose Green) |
| Eamont Bridge |
| Egremont FAG |
| Finsthwaite & Lakeside FAG |
| Galava Flood Prevention/Ambleside |
| Grange-Over-Sands, Windermere Rd |
| Grasmere FAG |
| Keswick FAG |
| Kirkby Ireleth Parish FAG |
| Lorton, Loweswater, Blindboethel & Buttermere FAG (The Melbreak) |
| Low Crosby |
| Lyth & Winster Land Drainage Group |
| Meadow Beck Residents FAG (Bowness-On-Windermere) |
| Northern Flood Group |
| Pooley Bridge Flood Group |
| Rickerby Action 4 Flood Defence |
| Sandside (Kirkby-In-Furness) |
| South Ulverston FAG |
| Troutbeck Bridge FAG |
| Willowholme FAG |
| Windermere FAG |
| Workington FAG |

Source: Maria Ulliyart, Environment Agency, North West, 23 October 2012

2.3. Case Study 1: Cumbria Resilience Forum Community Resilience Sub Group 2010-2012

Background

The Carlisle floods of 2005 enforced new thinking about the role of communities in the building of resilience. The Resilience Unit of Cumbria County Council began to encourage the formation of community resilience groups and community emergency plans.

From 2006-2009, there was a gradual take-up of this approach in Cumbria with 13 communities undertaking emergency planning. Significant planning work was undertaken in Keswick and Appleby which made a positive difference for these communities during the extreme flood events of 2009. After 2009, there was an understandable surge in interest with 25 communities actively involved and the Environment Agency reporting another 42 expressing interest.

Concurrently, national government, was actively promoting community resilience and undertaking national consultations.

In May 2010, Chris Briggs of the Cumbria County Council summarised the situation in Cumbria and made a proposal:

‘...Although there are many agencies carrying out excellent work in communities throughout the county, little or no resource is directed towards resilience purposes and there is certainly no level of coordination to facilitate or direct this. With growing demand and the likely introduction of appropriate legislation, the Environment Agency and the County Council Resilience Unit are simply not equipped or resourced to carry on this work in isolation.

It is thus recommended that a formal sub group be established under Cumbria Local Resilience Forum to take up this work.’ (internal memo; 13th May 2010)

Cumbria Flood Recovery and Community Resilience Programme funded by Big Lottery

Following the 2009 floods, Cumbria Council for Voluntary Service (Cumbria CVS) brought partners together and coordinated an application to the Big Lottery to fund a programme of recovery, research, and community resilience development. ACTion with Communities in Cumbria (ACT) made commitments to:

- Support flood-affected communities to make effective emergency plans
- Develop an easy-to-use community emergency planning toolkit
- Enable, where appropriate, community-led flood mitigation work
- Establish a working group which could inform and coordinate all community resilience activity, but with a special focus on emergency and recovery planning

This final commitment coincided with the proposal made by Chris Briggs in May 2010, and in July, ACT, and the Cumbria Association of Local Councils (CALC) met and agreed the formation of a Cumbria Resilience Forum Communities Sub Group.

Community Resilience Sub Group

This group met every six weeks throughout the Big Lottery project and became the coordinating group for ACT's work with partners and communities.

- The membership of the group included Cumbria County Council; Cumbria Resilience Unit; Cumbria CVS; CALC; Cumbria Constabulary; Cumbria Fire & Rescue; Environment Agency; NHS Cumbria; North West Ambulance Service
- During the first six months, the group drafted Terms of Reference as follows:

Communities Sub Group Aims

- To encourage and support communities to undertake resilience planning
- To represent directly, promote, support, and coordinate all community endeavour in resilience planning
- To ensure that pathways of communication between communities and all statutory agencies are clear, well-informed, and active.

Communities Sub Group Objectives

- To identify resources to deliver community resilience planning
- To be available to communities for all enquiries and efforts in community resilience planning
- To provide a forum for cross community links and information sharing in community resilience planning
- To strengthen and maintain the role of the Third Sector and Parish & Town Councils as mediators in community resilience planning
- To validate community resilience plans with communities

Communities Sub Group Culture

- Action-based with an expectation of commitment to results by all.
- A learning group which matches the dedication and creativity of the communities it serves.
- Active task and finish working groups to be supported by community representatives where appropriate

To reflect these Terms of Reference it was decided there should be a joint chairmanship drawn from the statutory and third sectors

The communities sub group proved its value through the delivery of:

- The Ten Step Community Emergency Planning Toolkit
- Nine communities undertaking community emergency planning (see Case Study 2)
- The 'Power for Change' conference on community emergency planning

The Future

All partners agree that the work of this group should be sustained beyond the duration of the Big Lottery project and, at the time of writing ACT is consulting with partners to seek a broad consensus on how the work of the group should be supported.

2.4. Case Study 2: The Melbreak Communities Emergency Planning

2009

The four rural valley parishes of Lorton, Blindboethel, Buttermere and Loweswater came together in 2009 to form The Melbreak Communities. Each parish has a tradition of independence but each recognises that they share similar challenges; remoteness; isolation; an elderly population; a high number of holiday homes; a farming sector under threat. Elected representatives of the parishes felt that collaborative working should be given a chance through undertaking a community led plan. The Lake District National Park's 'Investing in Communities' programme offered support and ACTion with Communities in Cumbria (ACT) provided officer guidance from the outset.

A local coordinator – Penny Poole – was appointed to keep community led planning on track, and for a period of 18 months there was a multi-faceted consultation which produced, in 2011, a set of priority actions. There is a general awareness of potential threats associated with nuclear energy production and radioactive waste management at the Sellafield complex.

In November 2009, seven months into the consultation, the Valley was hit by floods and then endured two extreme winters. Emergency Planning was high on the list of priority actions within the community led plan, and ACT was invited to help initiate the emergency planning process.

2011

During 2010, as part of its work with the Cumbria Community Resilience and Flood Recovery Project, ACT had drafted a Ten Step Community Emergency Planning Toolkit. In March 2011, an open meeting was held in Loweswater; this was step 1 in the emergency planning journey. This meeting included Environment Agency officers. Two members of the local community, already with significant experience, volunteered to lead emergency planning for The Melbreak Communities.

2011-2012

Using the ten step structure, emergency planning has been included in all regular Melbreak meetings and progress has been reported in the monthly Parish Magazine – **The Link** – and on the message board of the community website. Named representatives have been identified for each of the four parishes, and a working document (currently in its third draft) has been produced. Further meetings were held during late summer and autumn, with a further consultation at the Loweswater Show in September. A scenario testing of The Melbreak Communities Emergency Plan is planned for early 2013.

Outstanding Issues

- Work still remains to be done to attract and retain the involvement of the police.
- Some finance is needed to fund the maintenance of the community website which provides invaluable communication and reduces the isolation that is so dangerous when there is an emergency. This is described by Penny Poole (The Melbreak Communities Coordinator) as 'fundamental to our existence'.
- The Melbreak Communities has completed a Community Led Plan; is two-thirds of the way to completing an emergency plan, and it is maintaining proactive engagement on river/flood mitigation with the Environment Agency. Some modest year on year finance is required to offset costs; to have a source of money for emergency planning 'kit' and to relieve some of the stress on particular individuals: 'Big Society cannot run on empty' (Penny Poole).

<http://melbreakcommunities.wordpress.com>

www.cumbriaaction.org.uk

2.5. The 'Power for Change' Conference

Below is the first page of a Cumbria Rural Form Briefing on 'The Power of Change' Community Emergency Planning Conference held in May 2012. For the full briefing, please see: http://www.cumbriaaction.org.uk/images/uploads/emergency_planning_may_2012.pdf

ACTION with Communities in Cumbria

Briefing

May 2012



ACTION with Communities in Cumbria – Briefing

In May 2012, ACTION with Communities in Cumbria, in collaboration with Cumbria County Council, Cumbria CVS and the Environment Agency, hosted a conference under the title The Power for Change: Emergency and Recovery Planning for Communities.

The purpose of the event was to encourage more communities to become involved in the preparation of emergency and recovery plans for their areas, complementing the key role played by the Emergency Service organisations. The event also saw the launch of a new "10 Step" process that has been developed by ACT and its partners to provide communities with a simple and accessible tool to help in the preparation of community emergency plans.

The Power for Change

Dr. Terry McCormick (ACT) opened the conference, explaining that the day's topic drew heavily from on-going work with a small number of pilot communities. Affected by flooding in 2009, these communities had begun to prepare plans so that they could better manage future emergencies whether the result of flooding or other causes.

Terry highlighted key aspects of the work, such as the development of a toolkit for communities, and "bridging" between communities and statutory agencies. He reported that planning is underway to outline a five year programme to roll this activity out to other communities.

National Context

David Sheard, Cumbria County Council, set out the statutory context for emergency planning. This derives from the Civil Contingencies Act 2004 which defines an emergency as "an event or situation which threatens serious damage to human welfare" a broad definition recognising the very diverse potential causes which include, major traffic or industrial accidents, natural disasters.

The Act establishes a structure for responding to an emergency by statutory services and agencies but David highlighted its failure to consider the key place of communities and community resilience (emergency and recovery) planning, especially in helping speedy recovery after an emergency. This gap has been recognised and the Cabinet Office is currently part way through a programme of work to strengthen guidance for

communities. The Cumbrian activity complements this programme. In closing, David highlighted three key points:

- Are communities well informed about the risks that might affect them?
- Do communities feel confident about their ability to cope in an emergency?
- Are communities in dialogue with emergency services and voluntary sector providers who can help provide an effective emergency response?

Cumbrian Experience

Steve Johnson, Chief Superintendent, Cumbria Constabulary talked about his varied experience of working in emergency situations across Cumbria.

He went on to describe the formal structures in place to help in effective emergency management. These are based upon the Local resilience Forum which comprises "Category 1" responders such as the emergency services, local authorities and NHS trusts, supported by "Category 2" responders, the Health and Safety executive, transport and utility companies. The Forum's key responsibilities are to:

- Assess risks
- Develop and embed plans to manage these
- Inform and advise the public during emergencies
- Coordinate the action of responders
- Advise businesses and communities

A key tool that had been developed is the Community Risk register which had particular value in informing communities that are developing emergency plans. Steve stressed that most risks that result in

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2.6. Useful Links

The Emergency Planning Toolkit and Video Case Study

http://www.cumbriaaction.org.uk/resources/resources_for_communities

http://www.cumbriaaction.org.uk/resources/case_studies

The floods of November 2009 and their impact

In March 2010, the Cumbria Intelligence Observatory, published **Cumbria Floods November 2009: An Impact Assessment**

(<http://www.cumbriaobservatory.org.uk/elibrary/Content/Internet/536/671/4674/4026717419.pdf>)

2012-2015 European Context and Directions for community resilience ('Embrace' project)

<http://embrace-eu.org/index.htm>

The Cumbria Resilience Forum Planned Structure (2012)

For current information and strategic plan of Cumbria Resilience Forum, please see:

<http://www.cumbria.gov.uk/emergency/cumbrialocalresilience/cumbriaresilience.asp>

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Damaged Bridge: Penny Poole, The Melbreak Communities

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Voluntary Action Cumbria

Offices O-Q

Skirsgill Business Park

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CA11 0FA

Tel: 01228 817224

Email: info@cumbriaaction.org.uk

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