



# Cumberland Council Plan

2023-2027

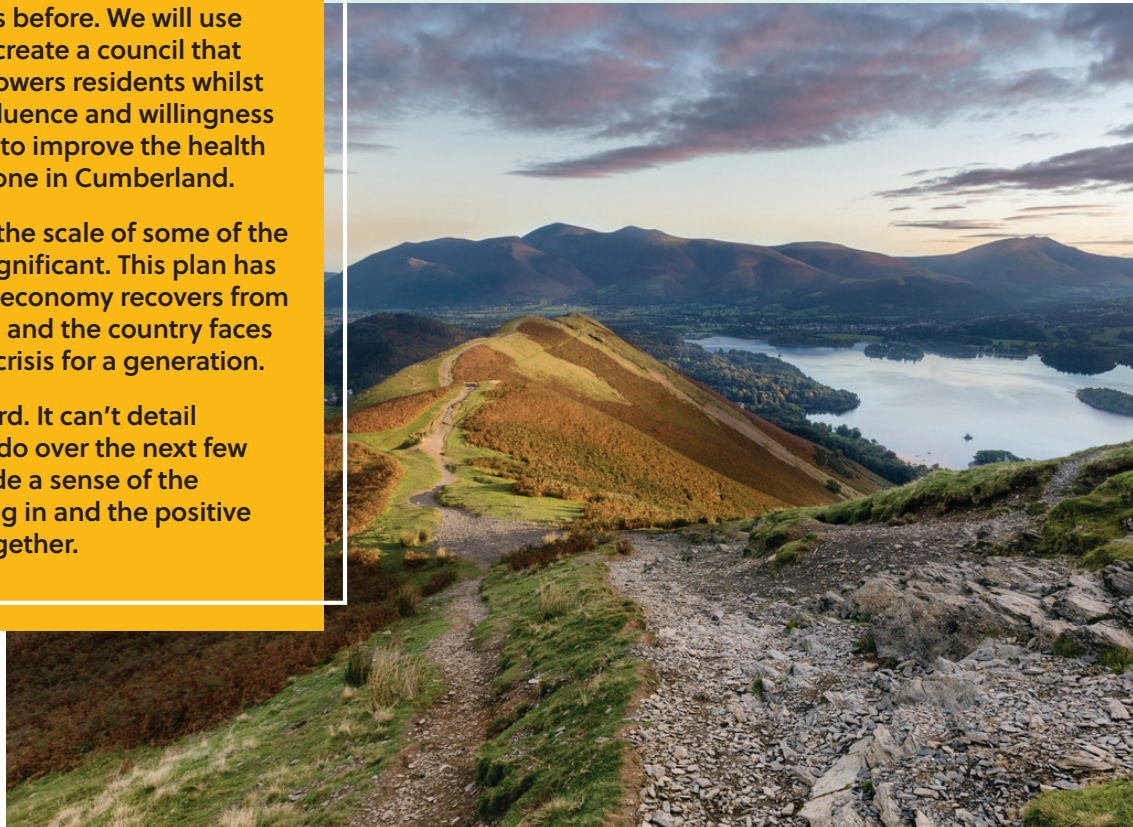
## This Council Plan

**This is our first Cumberland Council Plan and outlines what we want to focus on in our first four years. It also describes how we want our new council to work and what residents can expect from us.**

We are excited by the opportunity we have. As a unitary authority we can join-up services and deliver at a scale that has not been available to us before. We will use these opportunities to create a council that engages with and empowers residents whilst using our strengths, influence and willingness to do things differently to improve the health and wellbeing of everyone in Cumberland.

We are also aware that the scale of some of the challenges we face is significant. This plan has been developed as the economy recovers from the impacts of Covid-19 and the country faces the worst cost of living crisis for a generation.

This Plan is a way forward. It can't detail everything that we will do over the next few years, but it does provide a sense of the direction we are heading in and the positive impact we will make together.



Catbells

Carlisle





## Foreword

I've said from day one if you do what you've always done then you'll get what you've always got. There is a thirst, a drive, a passion from the newly elected Members and from our fantastic staff to embrace what Cumberland can be – what it will be. We don't have all the answers yet, we might get things wrong, but I can promise you that we are going into this with our eyes wide open. We WILL deliver better services, we WILL address the income gap and we WILL improve life for all.

Our people are our priority. That's it. It's that simple. We have this opportunity to change everything, to fix what isn't working, to look for new ways of delivering our services so they are the best they can be. We aren't afraid of a challenge. Local Government Reorganisation is hard, it won't be easy, but it is also a gift, the chance to bring equality to the lives of those living in Cumberland. We plan to grab that chance and run with it.

**Cllr Mark Fryer**  
Leader of the Shadow Authority  
for Cumberland Council



Plant and Food Fair, Carlisle

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Derwentwater



## How we will use this plan

This plan is just the starting point for the new Council. Over the next year we will be engaging with residents to understand the opportunities and challenges they face and working out how we can work together to bring about change.

We will review this document at regular intervals and we will amend or replace it if necessary. We will also use it as the basis to start a wider conversation on the development of a strategy for sustainable communities for Cumberland. That document will create a long term vision for our area in partnership with residents, businesses and the community sector.

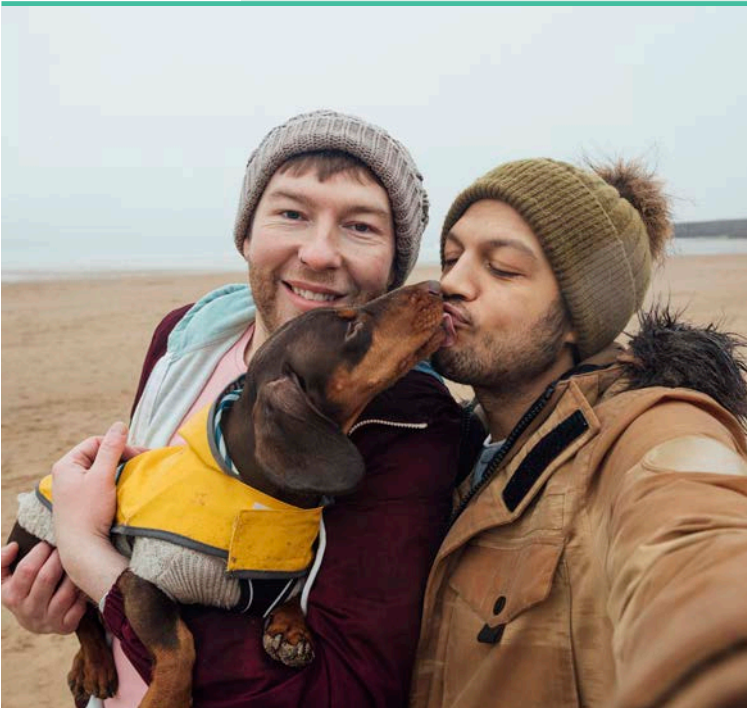
We will use this plan:

- As a starting point for more detailed service planning and strategy development.
- To start a much broader and deeper conversation with our residents about what you want from the council and how you would like to be involved.
- To enable our potential partners to understand our vision and priorities to enable further dialogue about areas of common interest.
- As a guide when we are making decisions about services or things that impact on our residents to ensure that we maintain our focus.





Keswick





Workington coastline



## About Cumberland

Cumberland inspires pride of place, but it is also an area of stark contrast. We are home to some of the world’s most stunning rural and coastal landscapes, but we also have areas in our city and towns in need of renewal.

Our economy contains strong agricultural and tourism sectors, but we are also a manufacturing economy that boasts some of the most famous brands in the world. We are an economy of small businesses, but we also host the largest nuclear site in Europe.

Household earnings in some areas are amongst the highest in the northwest, but we have pockets of real deprivation and have more households living in fuel poverty than the national average.

We are one of the best places to visit, boasting two world heritage sites, an area of outstanding natural beauty and world class attractions that draw in millions of visitors. We are one of the safest places to live, but our increasingly diverse population is aging and declining. We have some of the lowest cost housing in the country, but we have issues with affordability and the availability of houses built for social rent.

Some of our residents can expect to live some of the longest lives in the country, but other parts of Cumberland are below the national average for life expectancy. Inequalities can be extreme, and they have real day to day impacts on people’s lives and livelihoods.

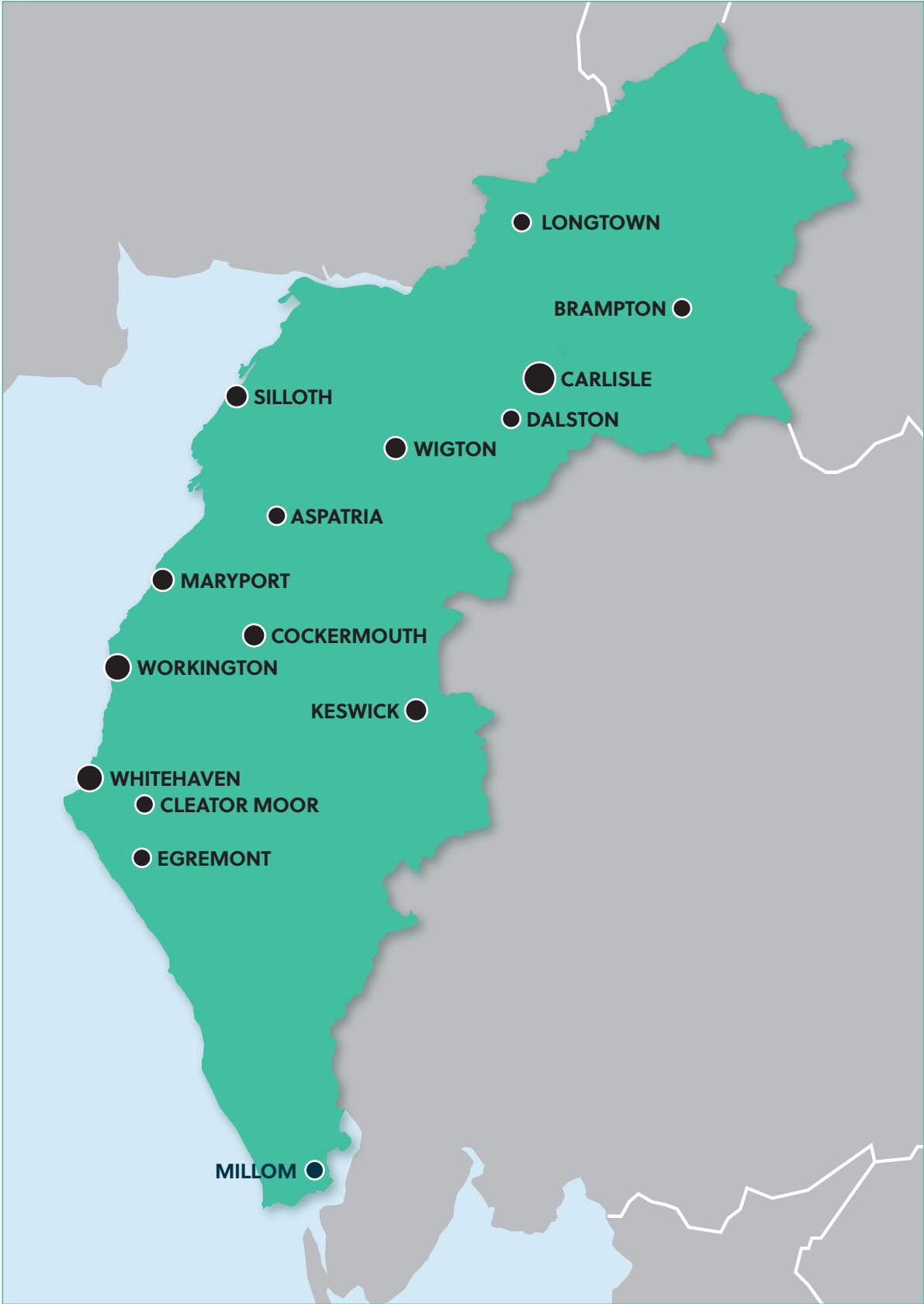
We are already seeing the impact of the climate emergency, responding to and recovering from the devastating effects on our communities from severe weather and unprecedented flooding. The cost of living crisis and the Covid-19 recovery is affecting everyone, but there are opportunities created by our people, our environment and our businesses to make our area work to the benefit of everyone.



Carlisle Old Town Hall and Tourist Information Centre



# Map of Cumberland Council area



# Cumberland in Numbers



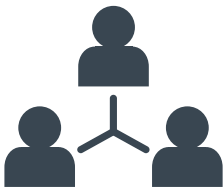
5.6% of all children come from an ethnic minority background according to the school census (2021).



67 languages are spoken by children in Cumberland schools.



Total crime rate per 1,000 population is 68.3 which is below the national average.



14 community areas in Cumberland fall within the 10% most deprived of areas in England, but 10 are amongst the least deprived.

10,799 children were reported as living in relative poverty by End Child Poverty in the summer of 2022.



16.1% of children live in Relatively Low Income Families, this figure is much higher in some parts of Cumberland.



Median household income is £28,794, lower than the national average.



There are 125,500 households in Cumberland.





We know our population is 274,000. But we also know that this is due to fall by 0.3% by 2028.

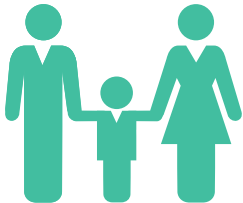
Our population is getting older. The number of people over 65 is due to increase from 64,000 to 82,100 by 2040.



The median house price is below the national average at £155,630.



20% of people in Cumberland report that their daily activities are limited because of an illness or disability. This is higher than the national average.



Children looked after rate of 88 per 10,000 is significantly above the national average of 67 per 10,000.

We are home to 11,565 businesses. 90% of those businesses are micro businesses.



Only 31.5% of the working age population have qualifications to NVQ4+, this is worse than the national average.



4.7% of the working age population have no qualifications, this is better than the national average of 7.5%.



## Our focus

### Our vision

Cumberland Council takes a fresh approach to the delivery of inclusive services that are shaped by our residents and communities.

By enabling positive outcomes for health and wellbeing, prosperity and the environment we will fulfil the potential of our people and our area.

### Our aim

Our aim is to improve the health and wellbeing of our residents. It is at the heart of everything that we do. We want them to be happy, healthy and safe throughout their lives. We will promote independence, but also make sure we provide help early when needed. When people are vulnerable, our services will support them to live well.

Our central aim of improving the health and wellbeing of our residents is supported by a focus in four key areas. By prioritising addressing inequalities, local economies that work for local people, environmental resilience and the climate emergency and delivering excellent public services, we can make an impact on the factors that improve health and wellbeing.

Our work in these areas is underpinned by consistency in service delivery that is defined by the Cumberland Approach. By ensuring we:

- Provide accessible and trusted services that listen, involve and engage;
- Are driving change, learning and improving;
- We demonstrate leadership whilst working collaboratively;
- Think local first and sustainably;
- Focus on prevention and early intervention.





## What we will do

Health and wellbeing is affected by a number of factors. We believe that there are four key areas where we can make the biggest impact to improve the health and well being of our residents.



The local economy can have a significant impact on the health and wellbeing of individuals. We want to enable the move to an economy that builds wealth locally and offers opportunities for everyone and people have the skills to take them. We want to achieve greater social value in public sector procurements, exploring more ways of retaining wealth within our community. We will seek to utilise our assets as a catalyst for economic activity, generating opportunities for residents, businesses, social enterprises and the community and voluntary sector alike.



The environment in which our people live has a huge impact on health and wellbeing. The climate and environmental emergency demands our attention, our leadership and our action. The repercussions of inaction will be significant for our local economy and our services. We want to support the growth of a low carbon economy by working with others to identify opportunities, help businesses and residents manage resources better and ensure appropriate training opportunities are in place. We want to help the most vulnerable with issues such as fuel poverty and the impacts of extreme weather.



We want Cumberland to be a high performing council. Our services have a direct and indirect impact on our residents health and wellbeing. We want our residents to benefit from excellent, efficient and enterprising public services. We will deliver what they need, when they need it with a focus on collaboration, dialogue and delivering strategic impact at a local level.



We are committed to addressing systemic inequalities such as racism, and making Cumberland a fairer place. We will take a proactive approach to delivering the public sector equality duty. We want our residents to access opportunities that will empower them to achieve their goals. Inequality continues to hold people back from reaching their true potential and we will work with residents and partners to challenge entrenched issues in areas such as health, education, life expectancy and deprivation. We have a key focus on food security and the food system. We believe that each resident has a "Right to Food". This means that food should be adequate, available and accessible.

## How we will do this

The Cumberland Approach identifies fundamental principles that shape our approach to service delivery, working with partners and engaging residents. By working in this way we will ensure that we deliver the right services in the right way.

# The Cumberland Approach

Cumberland Council is a new council and residents not only want to know “what” we are going to do but “how” we are going to do it. We have identified some fundamental principles that shape our approach and give a sense of what residents can expect from us.

## Accessible and trusted services

We aim to deliver excellent services for our residents. Key to this is enabling residents to access what they need, when they need it, in a way that works for them. We recognise that not everyone is the same and will have different requirements from us. We will think about accessibility right at the start of everything we do to ensure that no one is excluded. Once accessed, our services will be easy to use and easy to navigate.

So, whilst we will utilise technology to its full potential, our services will remain seamless, focused and respectful of the needs of the individual. We want to deliver services that are trusted by users. This happens when people get what they need, as easily as possible. Interactions with us should be positive and give people the confidence to contact us again in the future. It is also important that we are honest in what we can do and what we can't.

## Listening, involving and engaging

Our communities are best placed to determine their needs and aspirations. For us engagement isn't just listening, it is doing things together. We value their views and ideas and so we will work alongside residents to jointly create and design services that impact on their lives. We want our residents to be involved and feel understood at every opportunity.

We will work hard to remove as many barriers, differences and inequalities as possible to ensure that everyone in our community can engage with us. We also recognise that when we do ask people to engage with us, it has to be meaningful.

## Learning and improving

We strive to make everything we do the best it can be. This means that we will proactively learn from others to develop an understanding of what works best for our residents and for us. We are prepared to be broad in our thinking and try new ways of working where appropriate. We accept that in doing this we won't get everything right all the time and there may be complaints and criticism, but we will learn our lessons quickly and effectively.



Hawker Festival, Carlisle

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## Prevention and early intervention

Many factors shape our wellbeing: our health and wealth, education and work, the places we live, the environment and our social connections. We recognise that not everyone has equal access to the resources that can help them to maximise their potential and as a result, people can face challenges. In our rural and coastal communities for example, people can experience health inequalities because of social exclusion and isolation, differences in access to services, fuel poverty and housing issues.

The most effective way to improve outcomes for residents is to work with them to prevent poor health and intervene early to stop issues from reaching crisis-point. In many cases this will mean putting people before processes and providing people with the right information and advice, but in other cases it will mean providing direct support for longer.

## Collaborative working (One council approach)

Our approach to delivering outstanding services will be collaborative. We will work with residents, communities and local and national partners to ensure that they can play a part in meeting our common objectives for the area. We know that many of the issues we need to address cannot be tackled in isolation and require a joined-up approach. We will be an active partner and seek to create effective partnerships with others.



We will also ensure that we do not operate in silos, either internally or externally. Our operating model will drive a whole council approach to delivering against our priorities for the benefit of residents. We will continually seek to understand and refine the contribution that all services and departments can make in improving outcomes for our residents.

Through our involvement in Integrated care systems and place-based partnerships, we will work with the NHS and others to improve how health and care services work together, improve population health and tackle health inequalities.

### Leadership

We will be a passionate advocate for Cumberland. We will provide strategic leadership where it is needed and work hard to ensure that the area has a national profile that can unlock additional investment to strengthen our communities.

Our approach to leadership is to empower others both internally and externally. We want to create a culture where challenge is seen as healthy and where we are not afraid to do things differently. To do this we need to remove barriers to empowerment and ensure that we provide the right training and support.

### Local first

We want to meet local needs and have services shaped by local people. To do this effectively we need to work closely with our communities. We want to be a council with a presence throughout Cumberland. Where services can be delivered locally that will be our default. We will use our assets to act as bases for a range of council and partner services. We will seek to devolve decision making to the appropriate level.

### Driving Change

We want to drive change in our area by utilising the strengths that a move to a unitary authority unlocks. Utilising our assets and resources we can stimulate the local economy to create additional community wealth. This will mean developing local supply chains for example.

By using a more entrepreneurial and commercially-minded approach to planning and delivering services we can maximise resources retained in the local area.

### Sustainability

Sustainability and resilience will be key challenges for Cumberland and the Council. We will always approach these challenges with the long term in mind. We will not make short term decisions or undertake activity that impacts on our ability or the ability of the area to meet its future needs.

We will manage our finances sustainably and deliver value for money for our residents as we continue to operate in a challenging budget context. Our decisions will be the result of robust processes and have long term benefits whilst improving our financial health.

The climate and environmental emergency will be at the forefront of our decision making and policy development. We will encourage others to do the same and set an example in using resources sustainably, looking for low carbon or carbon neutral alternatives in what we buy and how we work. Making a fair and just transition to a more sustainable Council and Cumberland.



Wastewater



# Our values

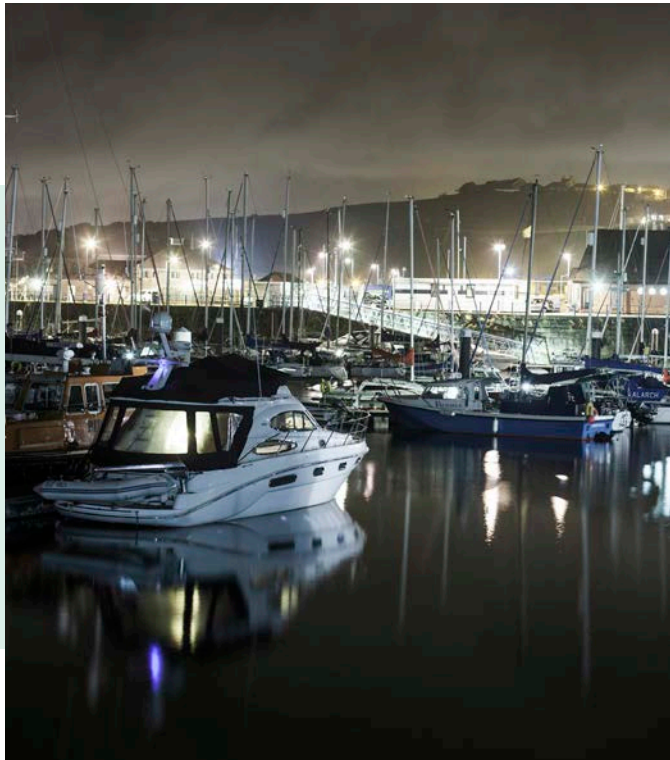
In everything we do we aim to:



We believe passionately in the delivery of excellent public services. To do that we need to be clear about the values and behaviours that we need to drive change and achieve our high standards.



Whitehaven Harbour







Workington Leisure Centre



Queen's Jubilee event, Bitts Park, Carlisle

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