



**Westmorland
& Furness
Council**



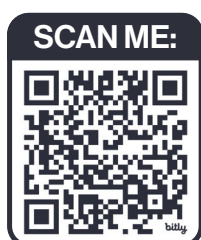
Our Place... Our **FUTURE**...

Join the conversation



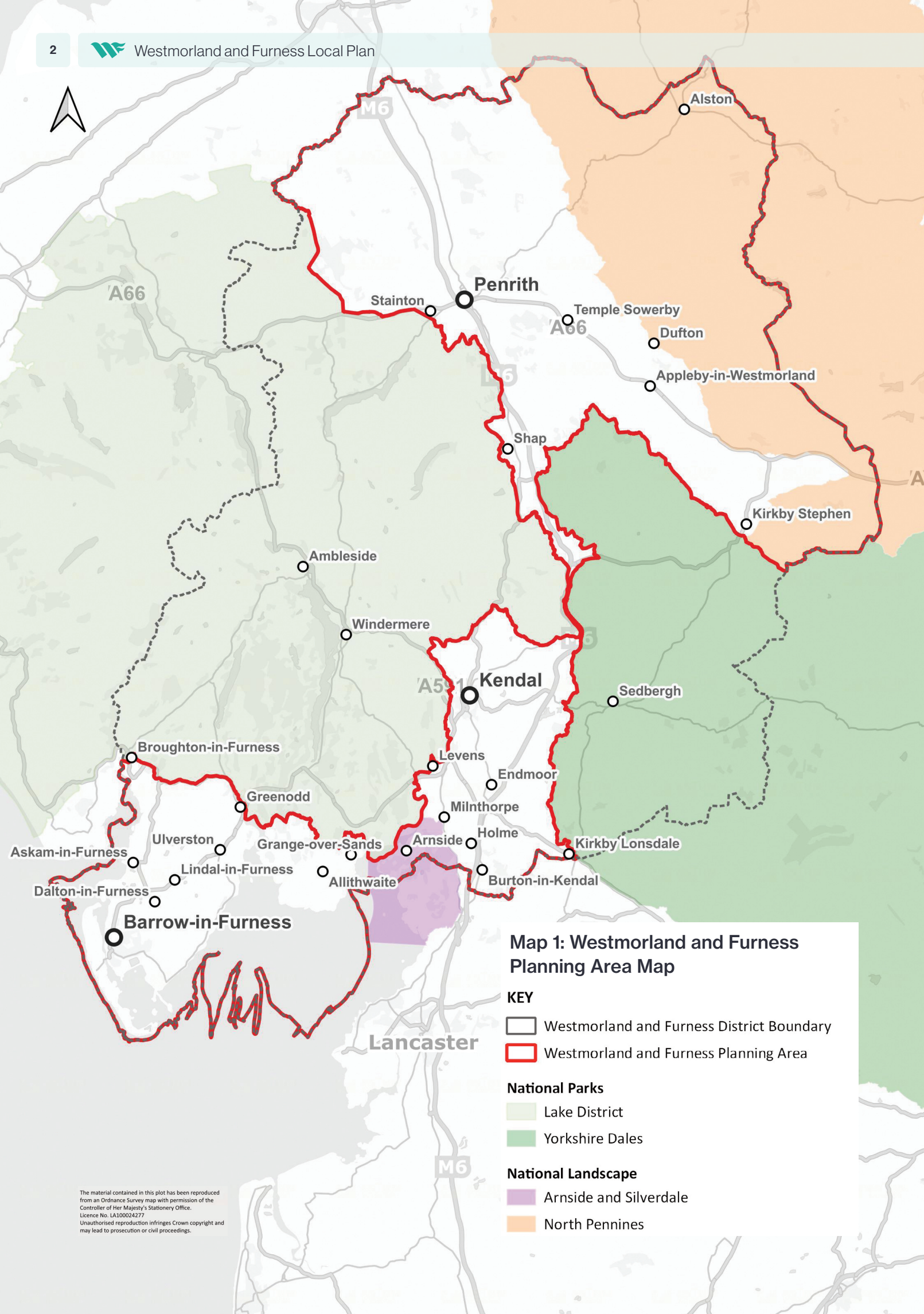
Westmorland and Furness Local Plan

8 July – 9 September 2024



For further details on how to get involved in the Local Plan early conversation please scan the QR code, or visit our website
www.westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk/localplan





Introduction

Think of planning and you might think of complicated rules and red tape, but planning is about the future and future generations, it's about people and communities and it's about all of us working together to make sure that the right building and development, of the right design and quality, happens in the right place, at the right time, and the impact of any new development is well managed.

We do this by preparing a Local Plan, which will cover the next 20 years to the year 2045. It carefully considers how many new homes and workplaces that our area needs to continue to thrive, while also protecting our local and historic character and special landscapes, green spaces and environment. The Local Plan doesn't just set out rules – it seeks to make our area better, and is a key tool in helping us to identify and address the challenges for people and wildlife arising from climate change.

The Local Plan:

- allocates sites for housing and other developments, such as new employment sites and minerals and waste sites (e.g. quarries and recycling centres)
- ensures a steady and adequate supply of aggregates (minerals) to deliver the amount of development and infrastructure being planned for
- contains the policies that we use to guide and decide whether to grant planning permissions for new development and
- responds to changes in the area such as changes in population as people are born and grow, new people come in, people leave and people get older and changes in national and global environment and economy

Westmorland and Furness Local Plan Area – Where is it?

Westmorland and Furness Council must produce a Local Plan for the district outside the National Parks (the national park authorities produce their own Local Plans).

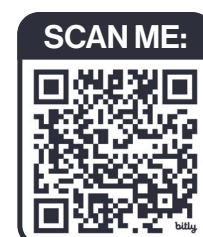
Early Conversation

We are at a very early stage in preparing the Local Plan. Before we put pen to paper on the new plan, we are starting with a conversation with you about the places you live, work and visit across the Local Plan area. We would like your thoughts on a range of topics about our places.

Your views will help shape the vision for the Local Plan, the issues that it needs to address and how these will be tackled. It's important that we listen to as many people as possible to understand their point of view. We want you to think about not just the here and now, but what is best for the future of the area – the things that your family will want from future development.

This document includes information on six broad themes followed by a short number of questions.

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Map 1 shows the boundary of the Westmorland and Furness Local Planning Area.

Other consultations taking place now to support the Westmorland and Furness Local Plan

As well as needing your views about the Westmorland and Furness Local Plan, we are also undertaking separate consultation on the following, all of which will feed into the preparation of the Local Plan. For further details on how to provide feedback on these please see the website:

- A **Design Code** which will guide and shape how new development is designed.
- A **'Call for Sites'** for land or sites that are available for **housing, employment and**
- **mixed-use sites** to be considered for potential allocation in the Local Plan (excluding sites in the Arnsdale and Silverdale National Landscape). These will be assessed initially through a **Strategic Housing and Employment Land Availability Assessment (SHELAA)** and then assessed in more detail for potential allocation in the Local Plan. As part of the Call for Sites we are also seeking comments on the draft SHELAA methodology.
- A **'Call for Sites'** for land or sites that are available for **minerals or waste development** to be considered for potential allocation in the Local Plan.



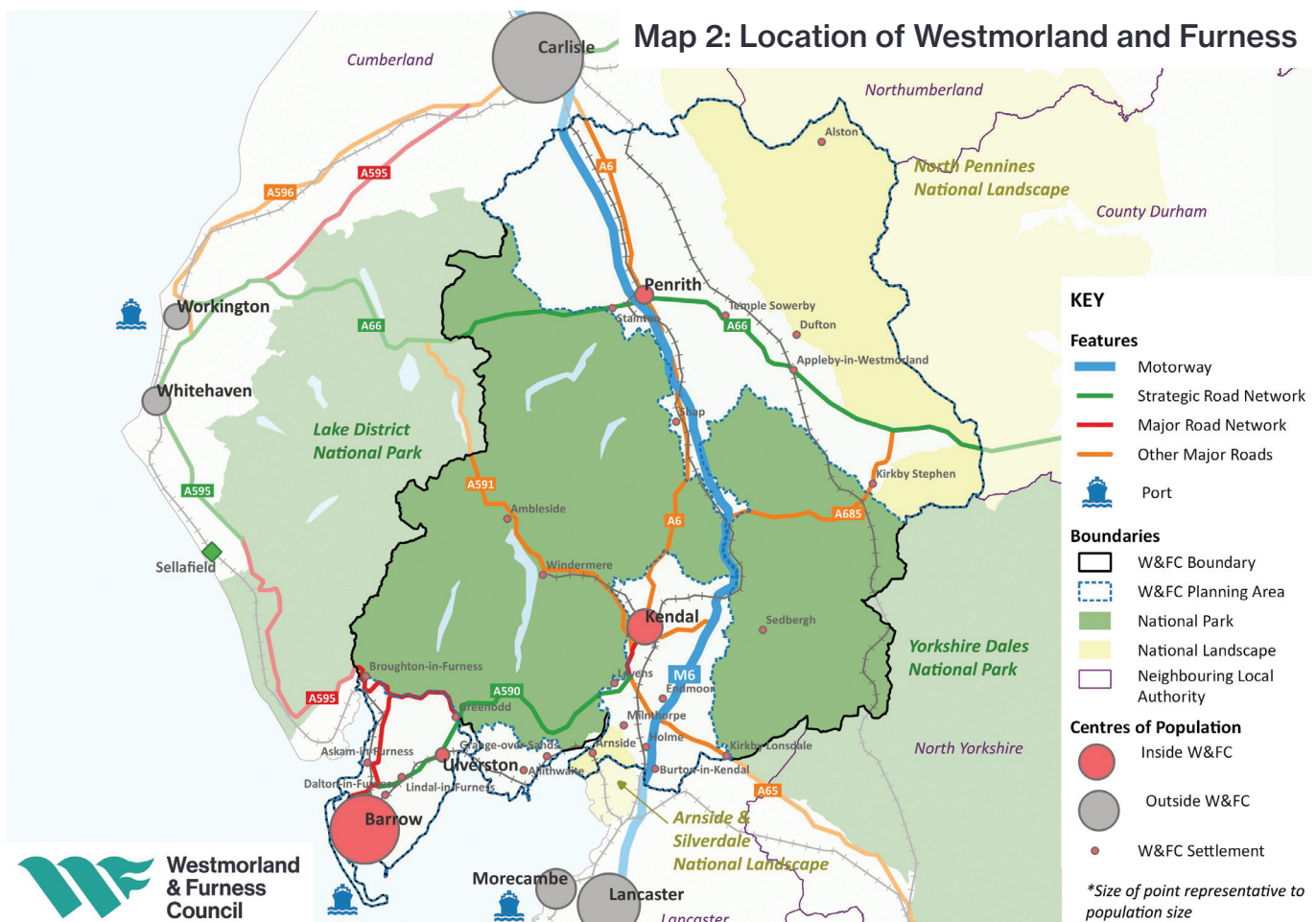


People and Places

Westmorland and Furness – Our places and area

Westmorland and Furness is large and diverse. At more than 3,700 sq. km, it is England's third largest unitary authority by area after North Yorkshire and Northumberland.

Map 2 below shows the location of Westmorland and Furness Local Plan area including the main towns and villages within and around it and transport networks to neighbouring Local Planning Authorities.



DID YOU KNOW?

Population

225,000 is the population of Westmorland and Furness area.

45% Only around 45% of our population live in urban areas.

55,800 Barrow **15,000** Penrith

29,000 Kendal **11,000** Ulverston

It contains some of the least populated areas of England and some of its most isolated settlements, but it also includes the densely populated urban area of Barrow.

Around half of the council's area is in national parks, the area comprises 55 per cent of the Lake District National Park and World Heritage site and 28 per cent of the Yorkshire Dales National Park.

Our Local Plan area includes large parts of the North Pennines and Arnside and Silverdale National Landscapes designated for their distinctive character and beauty, and it also includes some of England's most beautiful coast in Morecambe Bay and the Duddon Estuary.

Westmorland and Furness has importance far beyond its boundaries. Its defence industries help to maintain global security. Its water resource supplies much of the North West. Offshore wind energy is a key element of the national power supply. The vast land area of the district supplies food, timber and quarried minerals to the nation whilst also delivering benefits such as biodiversity, internationally important landscape and countryside recreation, flood risk management and carbon offsetting.

Large areas of the district are underlain by mineral resources of local and national importance and around 18 quarries produce aggregates which provide the raw materials for the infrastructure, buildings and goods that society needs.

Question 1: Thinking about our places / where you live...

A. What do you like about it?

B. What do you think needs to change?

C. What do you think needs to be protected?

Design

How development is designed affects how our towns, villages and countryside look and feel and has a strong influence on their character and qualities. Good design is important to create development which enhances our places and respects our heritage and character.

We are preparing a Design Code for our area. The Design Code will set out more detailed guidance to make sure the design policies in our existing Local Plans are put into practice as fully as possible. It will also highlight areas where design policies can be improved further in the new Local Plan for Westmorland and Furness.

The Local Plan can support good design by:

- Promoting good design principles in new development
- Supporting good design that enhances the district's best qualities and characteristics.

Question 2: How can the plan support high quality design in new development?

If you would like to share your views more fully on what makes your local area special and how the design of new places could be improved, please view the Local Plan website for details on how to engage in and respond to the Design Code.



Climate and Nature

Climate Change

Westmorland and Furness has had direct experience of the consequences of climate change, including Storm Desmond in 2015 which saw 2,762 residential properties and 522 business properties flooded.

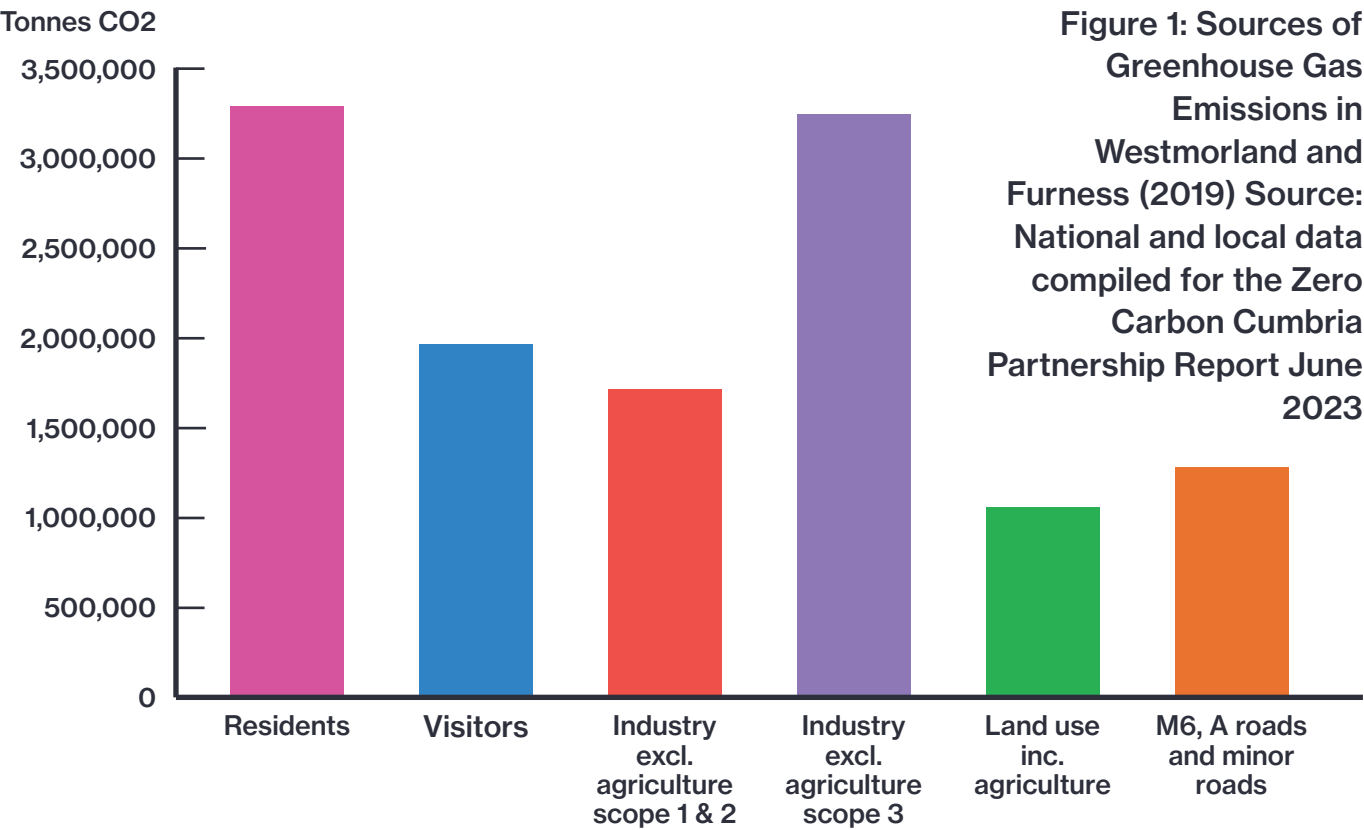
The council can address climate change by promoting the low carbon economy, reducing carbon emissions and promoting renewable energy, adapting to flood risk, promoting carbon storage and biodiversity through sustainable land-use and land management and promoting zero-carbon energy generation.

The Local Plan can influence the way we:

- live, work and travel
- produce energy
- protect nature
- use land and natural resources.

Figure 1 below shows the range of sources of greenhouse gas emissions in Westmorland and Furness (2019 base data). Residents and industry contribute significantly, alongside visitors, transportation and land uses such as agriculture.

Question 3: How can the plan reduce our carbon emissions?



Nature

Westmorland and Furness, like the rest of the UK, is losing significant numbers of plants and animals. Whilst it is home to a wide range of wildlife and often appears as a lush, green landscape, sadly our natural habitats and wildlife populations and how diverse they are (its biodiversity) remains under threat from habitat loss, changing land-use, invasive species, pollution and climate change.

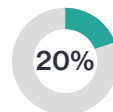
DID YOU KNOW?



Wildlife



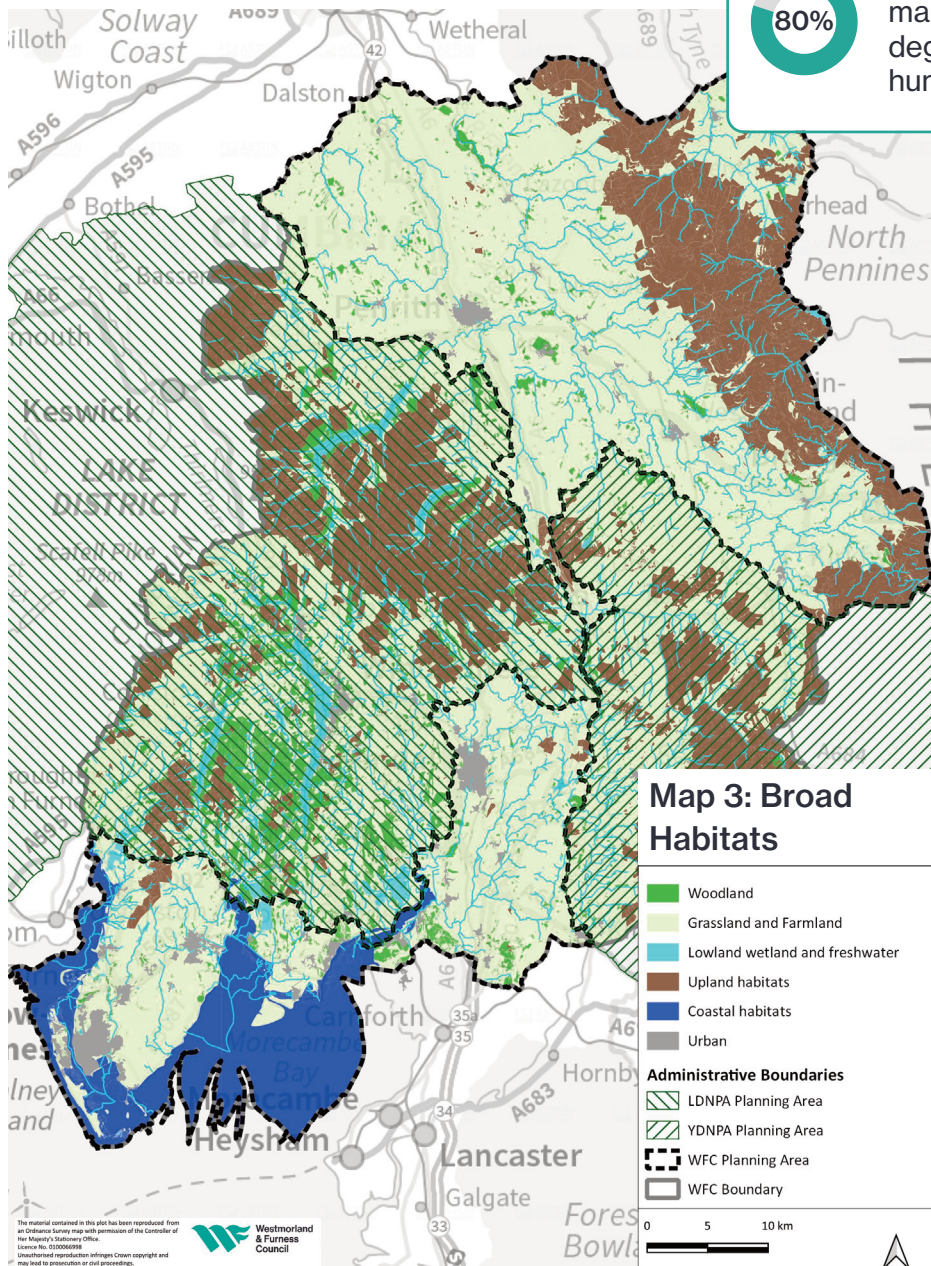
Only 15% of Westmorland and Furness is currently managed uniquely for wildlife.



Only 20% of this remains in good condition.



The remaining 80% of land managed for wildlife has been degraded in some way by human activity.



Map 3 shows the different types of habitats across the Westmorland and Furness area.

The Local Plan can help nature by:

- Ensuring new development has a positive impact on nature and more and better habitat is created than is lost
- Helping wildlife to move and spread on new and existing green space networks
- Improving air and water quality
- Safeguarding important nature conservation sites, protected species, protected trees and ancient woodland.

Question 4: How can the plan conserve and enhance our wildlife and nature?

Question 5: How easy is it for you to regularly enjoy natural space?

Flooding

Many areas in Westmorland and Furness have been flooded or are at risk of flooding. This is more likely to happen as the climate changes and we have more extreme rainfall and sea levels rise. Flooding can happen from many sources including rivers, the sea, lakes, canals, reservoirs, groundwater, and drainage and infrastructure systems.

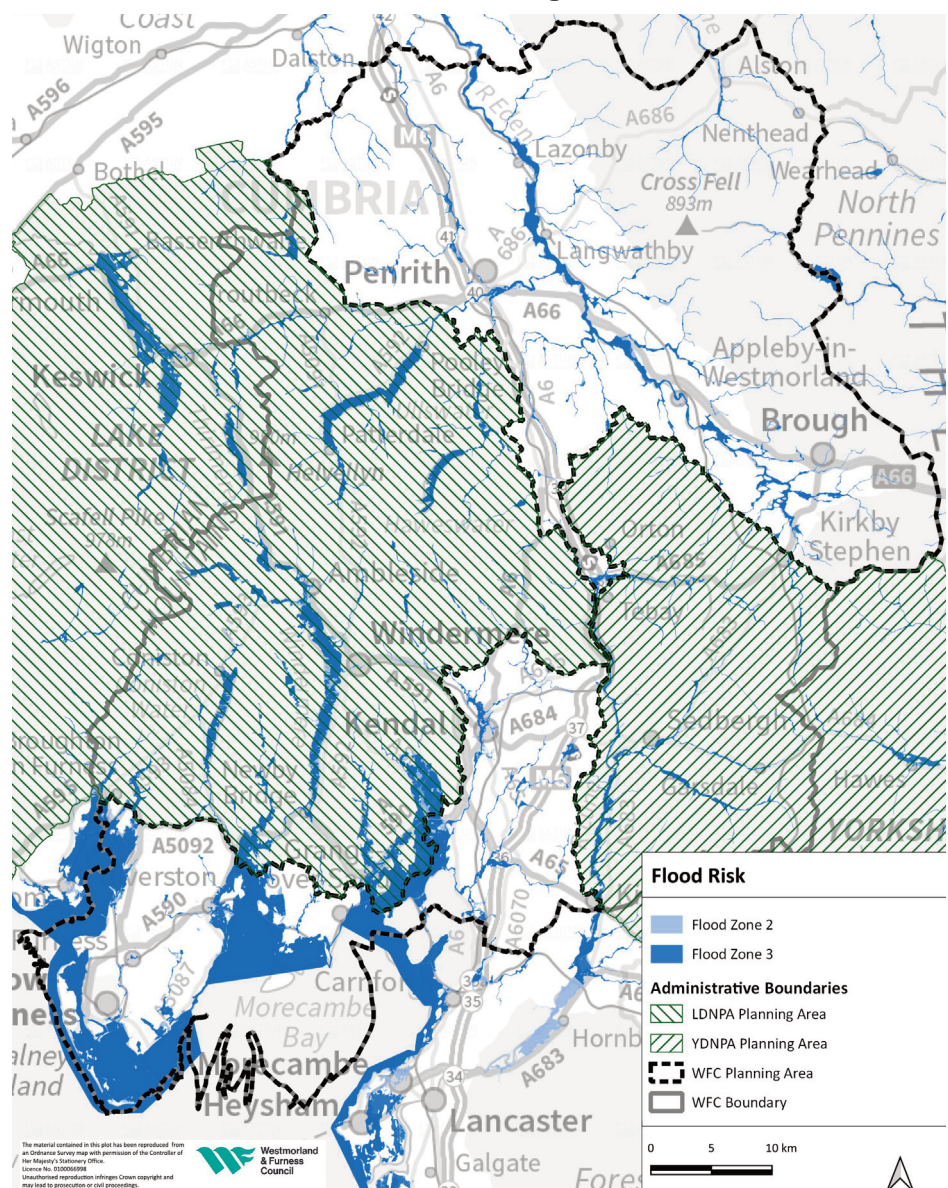
The Local Plan can help prevent flooding by:

- Ensuring new development happens in the areas least likely to flood
- Ensuring new development is sustainably designed to reduce flooding

Map 4 shows the areas of Westmorland and Furness planning area at medium and high risk (Zones 2 and 3) of flooding from rivers and the sea using latest sources of data available from the Environment Agency.

Question 6: How can the plan address flood risk?

Map 4: Flood Risk (Zones 2 and 3) areas in the Westmorland and Furness Planning Area





Housing

The Local Plan will set a target for new house building and we need to decide how many homes, and what types of homes to plan for.

We do this by looking at:

- population change in terms of overall numbers and births, deaths and migration from outside the area
- numbers of people in different age-groups
- future economic growth and jobs
- availability of quality and affordable housing stock
- suitability and availability of land in sustainable locations.

Housing inequality in terms of price, quality and choice is a major issue across Westmorland and Furness and varies across the area, affecting people's ability to find suitable housing.

Other things to consider include:

- Impact of second homes and holiday lets
- Energy efficiency of existing and new housing
- Fuel poverty and health
- Ensuring homes are suitable for all ages / needs.

The Local Plan can support the delivery of the right housing by:

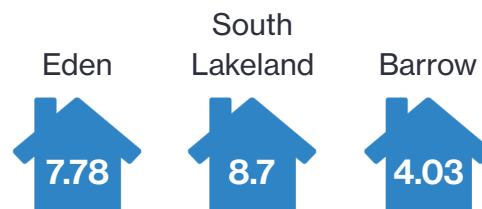
- Enabling the provision of a range of housing types including affordable housing
- Allocating sites for new housing development in the most sustainable locations.
- Delivering housing suitable for everyone's needs and for all ages



DID YOU KNOW?

House prices

In South Lakeland average house prices are some of the least affordable in the north of England at 8.7 times average workplace income.



Question 7: Where should new housing be built?

Question 8: What types of homes do we need?

If you have specific site suggestions for where new houses could be built, please view the Local Plan website for how to put forward site suggestions as part of the 'Call for Sites'.





Economy

What makes up the Westmorland and Furness economy?

Westmorland and Furness has a thriving, diverse and growing economy. The 11,500 businesses in Westmorland and Furness provide 114,000 jobs.

These add £5.7 billion of gross value to the national economy every year. Major contributors are manufacturing, the rural economy, real estate, retail, health and food and accommodation.

Westmorland and Furness is a centre of world-class advanced manufacturing. The biggest component is BAE Systems in Barrow, where a new generation of submarines is being built. The Furness area contains an advanced manufacturing and marine technology cluster including undersea lighting and electronics and offshore energy, as well as a thriving port. Despite this growth, there is a need for a greater variety of (and more highly skilled/higher paying) employment opportunities in this part of the area, as there remains a significant reliance on BAE Systems. There is also a shortage of skilled employees to support growth both here and in Westmorland and Furness as a whole.

Westmorland and Furness is predominantly rural. Its rural areas have an entrepreneurial, self-reliant, locally based economy. Twenty per cent of businesses (2,400 businesses), employing 9,000 people are within agriculture, forestry and fishing and it has a large part of England's dairy and sheep herds. Although focused on the National Parks, the visitor economy is important to the whole of Westmorland and Furness.

Westmorland and Furness is tuned into the opportunities of the green economy and has a vibrant cultural sector. Its towns and countryside offer some of the UK's best quality of life.

DID YOU KNOW?



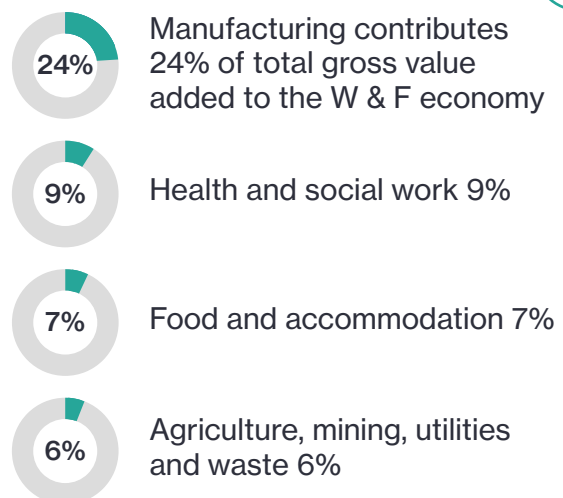
Workforce



The **11,500** businesses in Westmorland and Furness provide **114,000** jobs.

These add **£5.7 billion** of gross value to the national economy every year.

Economy





The Local Plan can support the right economic conditions by:

- Enabling new appropriate employment development to happen in the most sustainable locations
- Allocating sites for new employment development in the most sustainable locations.

Question 9: What should be done to create and keep wealth here?

Question 10: Where should new employment development be built?

If you have specific site suggestions for where new employment could be built, please view the local plan website for how to put forward site suggestions as part of the 'Call for Sites'.

Our Town Centres

Town centres are a large part of the community and make a place what it is and are the strongest expression of its character, pride and identity. Town centres are under pressure from changing living, working and shopping habits and they need to adapt. The variety of places, spaces and interactions allow them to repurpose themselves over time. The plan needs to allow town centres the flexibility to change and adapt whilst ensuring that they retain their roles at the heart of the communities they serve.

The Local Plan can support town centres by:

- Making best use of previously used land and buildings
- Promoting new and diversified town centre uses
- Regenerating sites or areas
- Supporting funding bids for regeneration projects

Question 11: What would make you visit our town centres more often?





Travel and Infrastructure

Travel

Parts of Westmorland and Furness are very well connected to national transport networks through the M6 and West Coast Main Line. The A66 (for which major improvements are planned) provides a strong link between the northern part of the area and the north east and North Yorkshire. The area also contains the main routes into the Lake District National Park (the A66 (west) the A591 and the Lakes Line).

Elsewhere, connections are not so good. Both the A590 and the Furness line (which are the main routes to and from Barrow) are subject to journey delays and poor reliability and the A590 currently cuts Ulverston in two. Connections to remote parts of the area such as Alston are even worse. Journeys between Furness and Cumberland will be enhanced by the completion of the Grizebeck bypass.

Buses are a sustainable means of transport to work, education and for tourism and leisure, as well as being important to the visitor economy. Bus services in Westmorland and Furness have recently been boosted with additional funding. Some parts of the district are better served by buses than others.

Barrow has a thriving port which is an important service centre for the offshore energy industry and handles wood pulp, stone, nuclear material and liquid natural gas.

Question 12: How easy is it for you to move around and get to where you want to go?

Infrastructure Provision

New development generates infrastructure including:

- Schools
- Roads, footpaths and cycle ways
- Health Care
- Parks and open space
- Water and energy supply
- Community facilities.

Infrastructure providers play a key role in enabling the delivery of the Local Plan. We must identify in the plan the infrastructure needs it generates and how these will be delivered.

The Local Plan can support travel and infrastructure by:

- Ensuring new development is well served by a range of travel options
- Deciding what infrastructure is needed so that development can happen
- Making sure development helps to fund infrastructure
- Safeguarding land for infrastructure

Question 13: What infrastructure improvements do you think the area needs?

DID YOU
KNOW?



Schools

Our area has:

122 primary schools

20 secondary schools

3 special schools





Health and Communities

Healthy Places and People

An important element of improving health involves creating and supporting healthy environments and healthy places. We have many health challenges, both those associated with an ageing population and those associated with poverty, deprivation and inequality.

The Local Plan can support health and communities by delivering and promoting opportunities for recreation and active travel, improved air and water quality, good quality housing, and housing which is adaptable and meets people's needs as they get older. It may also include looking at controls over hot food takeaways, the provision of green space and good design which encourages interaction and counteracts loneliness.

The Local Plan can support the health of people by:

- Creating healthier environments and places
- Delivering opportunities for recreation and active travel
- Improving air and water quality

Question 14: How can we make our places healthier?

Question 15: How well do facilities and services in your place meet your needs?

Question 16: How easy is it to meet and spend time with other people?

Population and Demographics

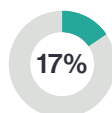
Westmorland and Furness has an ageing population and a shrinking workforce. By 2043, if current trends continue, there will be over 13,000 fewer people of working age. So, the economy needs to grow to generate the wealth to sustain the services we all need. It needs to provide housing and job opportunities to encourage the young to stay and to attract young families, skilled people and wealth creators to locate in the district.

At the same time there will be around an additional 17,000 people aged 65 or older. There are health inequalities in some areas, particularly in parts of Barrow where the health of people is generally worse than the national average. We need to encourage people to stay active and healthy for as long as possible and promote housing and care options which promote active lifestyles.

**DID YOU
KNOW?**



Health



17% of the council area is in the worst 10% for health deprivation in England.

13,000 fewer people of working age by 2043.

17,000 people aged 65 or over by 2043.



The Local Plan can help to manage population change by:

- Delivering affordable housing which enables young people to stay in Westmorland and Furness
- Promoting sustainable economic growth which provides job opportunities
- Planning for housing suitable for older people and the health and wellbeing of everyone by ensuring that new homes are accessible and adaptable so that people can stay in their homes for longer.

Question 17: Do you see yourself living and working in Westmorland and Furness in 20 years time? If not, what would encourage you to stay?

Question 18: How can we help young people and families to stay here, and encourage those who want to live and work in the area to move here?

Communities and Community Power

The Council is committed to engaging with communities in developing our plans and strategies, as well as encouraging neighbourhood and community-led plans. We want people to engage with community representatives including their Town and Parish Councils to express views and opinions about what the Local Plan can do for their communities.

We may not be able to address very local issues in your community but can help local communities prepare their own neighbourhood and community plans for their own areas.

Question 19: Would you like to be involved in planning the future of your local area and how can we make our consultation processes easier for you to get involved?

We welcome your comments.



