



Summary of West Cumbria Catchment Partnership Meeting

30th October 2019

Attendees:

22 people attended the workshop

Andrew Harrison – Cumbria County Council
Becky Powell – National Trust
Caitlin Pearson - West Cumbria Rivers Trust
David Bechelli – Copeland Borough Council
David Kennedy – Environment Agency
Michael Robinson – Cumbria County Council
Louisa Simpson-Brown – United Utilities
Mel Fletcher – Natural England
Neville Elstone – Cumbria Woodlands
Paul Barnes – Community/Farming
representative
Robert Frewen – CLA
Dean Mason – Lake District National Park
Authority

Vikki Salas - West Cumbria Rivers Trust
Jan Darrell – Friends of the Lake District
Rachael Osborne – Highways England
Anna Hetterley – Environment Agency
Elysee Mather - Cumbria Catchment
Pioneer (EA)
Andy Gowans – Environment Agency
Dan Hunt – Bowfell Consulting
Jake Houghton – Environment Agency
Dean Mason – Lake District National Park
Authority
Rachel Gowdy – United Utilities

Meeting presentations are available on the attached Powerpoint slides. Any questions and discussions are summarised below.

Actions from previous meetings

Barriers to the delivery of natural flood management features have been discussed at the previous two Catchment Partnership meetings. Good progress on addressing these barriers has been made since then. At a meeting held in September between the Cumbrian Rivers Trusts, the Environment Agency and the Lake District National Park Authority it was agreed that only large scale features needed full planning permission and for smaller scale features the planning authority could just be informed that the work was being carried out under agricultural or Environment Agency permitted development. There is still some clarification needed with regard to other LDNP required consultation including access, archaeology and ecology to determine whether this is done as part of the HIA or separately to each individual officer responsible.

It was understood that a heritage impact assessment (HIA) checklist is still required if works are being done under permitted development. It was questioned whether this applies to farmers doing works under agricultural permitted development. Robert Frewen (CLA) said that farmers could just write a letter outlining plans and the planning authority then has 28 days to respond, in

which they could request a HIA. Therefore, NGOs seem to be required to go through more consenting processes than farmers are. Another meeting is planned for January to see how these processes are working.

There has also been good progress with agreement for installing NFM features on Forestry England land with verbal consent that Forestry England are willing to allow the proposed NFM work in Matterdale and Whinlatter through the DEFRA NFM fund to go ahead, subject to a formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between the Environment Agency and Forestry England. Dave Kennedy (EA) is now leading the legal process with the Environment Agency legal team using an MOU from another part of the country as guidance. Forest Research have done their own plan and ground truthing for NFM in Whinlatter forest which shows a number of opportunities.

The Countryside Stewardship priority maps often do not include areas above communities at risk of flooding as priority areas for flooding (e.g. Bootle and Flimby). NFM options will not score as highly in stewardship applications in non-priority areas. Dave Kennedy has spoken to senior Natural England staff about this. There are no plans for Natural England to update their Countryside Stewardship priority maps but a letter from the Environment Agency to say that the holding is above a community at risk of flooding could allow it to score as a high priority area.

Following discussion about the consenting process for NFM installation at the Catchment Partnership meeting in July 2019 it was suggested that a dedicated member of staff could be funded to streamline the process, potentially through "slow the flow" local levy funding. As there has been good progress in addressing the barriers to NFM works this may no longer be required. Further, any funding for this position could take money away from delivery of capital works. The partnership does, however, need to ensure that lessons learnt are reviewed and captured. Communities of best practice are being set-up through CaBA NFM practitioners group. Dave Kennedy has also tabled the need to capture information about consents/permissions with the DEFRA NFM project managers group and someone could create a map of permissions as part of the national project. Local differences need to be captured; there is a lot of consenting required in the West Cumbria area as it covers SSSIs, SACs, a National Park and a World Heritage Site. There are plans for a Cumbria-wide seminar early next year on lessons learnt and NFM monitoring and a conference at the end of the project. The outputs will be packaged into a useable format to share learning.

There was also an outstanding action from the last partnership meeting for Neville Elstone (Cumbria Woodlands) to set up a task group to summarise lessons learned from the large scale tree planting project on Coledale Commons and to start thinking about future aspirations for the area. There are now plans to set up a Cumbria-wide working group to look at issues and challenges around tree planting and it was felt it would be most effective if discussions about Coledale were undertaken by that group.

Action: Neville to keep the partnership informed about the tree planting working group

Catchment Partnership Updates - Vikki Salas

Consultations timeline

The River Basin Management Plan (RBMP) Challenges and Choices consultation is now open. The partnership meeting in January will cover this in detail. It is important that the Catchment partnership respond to both the RBMP and the Flood Risk Management Plan consultations,

including pointing out the obvious about what actions are needed. Individual organisations or community members can also respond directly.

Flood and Coastal Risk Management calculator changes – Vikki Salas with input from Dave Kennedy

The Flood and Coastal Risk Management calculator, which determines the amount of funding available for a given project based on the benefits it will bring, is changing. The proposed changes are currently out for consultation with Regional Flood and Coastal Committees to be fully introduced by 2021. The proposed changes are positive for delivery of environmental works and NFM.

Within any FCRM project, any negative environmental impacts need to be mitigated by putting back more than was taken away, as close to the site as possible. Now every scheme needs to include mitigation as part of the overall scheme costs. In addition, there is funding under Outcome Measure (OM) 4 for environmental improvements which is proposed to have a wider environmental remit and also an increased level of funding.

The changes to the flood calculator are an ongoing series of changes. One major change is that there is now a focus and scoring for mental health implications of flood events. Dave Bechelli (Copeland Borough Council) noted that this is a positive step but it may change where schemes can get delivered. Currently socially deprived areas score more highly but mental health funding may move funding away from these areas.

Project updates

The project pipeline is no longer directly reported to the CSFP but it is still hosted on their website and populates the Catchment Partnership mapping portal. It is a very useful resource to keep partners and the public up to date on what is happening and to coordinate work. The Google spreadsheet has not been updated for several months, Vikki asked for partners to update the spreadsheet by 15.12.2019 via the link below.

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/15SKBeMte6kpiH_v5XimW8QM3NWQfmT-wNIndMFsl4Qk/edit#gid=1172685711

A66/Braithwaite working group – Rachael Osborne – Highways England

The aim of this project is to protect Braithwaite village and the A66 from flooding using engineered flood defences. Highways England are contributing financially to the Environment Agency feasibility study and there should be a proposed scheme by November/December and a final option by January. There will then be a public meeting. If the final option is agreed, the Environment Agency will apply for additional funding from Highways England for the construction.

NFM working groups – Caitlin Pearson – West Cumbria Rivers Trust

The Cocker, Glenderamackin and Bootle NFM projects all have working groups that many partners attend. All three projects are progressing well and have benefitted from greater clarity about the permissions and consents required for different interventions. The attached presentation includes

a summary of progress on the Bootle project including photographs of leaky barriers recently installed above the village.

Flimby flood alleviation – Dave Kennedy – Environment Agency

The project is progressing well. Final options for engineered flood defence schemes should be available within the next couple of weeks. The business case will then be submitted with a plan to start work on the ground in late summer 2020. The Government recently announced some extra funding for Flimby which will allow for a higher standard of protection. As the Environment Agency are now in purdah until 13th December, consultation on the scheme may be delayed slightly. The NFM elements are continuing and there is evidence that the leaky dams are working. More leaky dams will be constructed over the next few months and detailed monitoring is ongoing.

Keekle restoration – Slides provided by Luke Bryant – West Cumbria Rivers Trust

Riverlands – Becky Powell – National Trust

The first on-the-ground delivery under the Riverlands project has started with installation of a boardwalk at Ings wood near Derwentwater. The footpath has always been wet and has acted as a bund restricting the stream from natural movement. A raised boardwalk made from recycled plastic has now been installed. The hydrology and geomorphology of the stream is much more varied and the footpath is now dry, so this project has been a good success.

Two river restoration projects are in the final design phase. The Seathwaite restoration involves putting a 1.7 km length of river into a more appropriate course and is linked into a whole valley 'masterplan' looking at transport, parking, farming and access. Delivery will be in summer 2021 as the WEG funding has now been extended to September 2021. In the Stonethwaite valley the restoration project is looking at options for a more natural channel with increased gravel storage. The land is up for a new tenancy. The same farmers will stay there but it is an opportunity to add new features into the tenancy agreement.

Cumbria Wildlife Trust are designing peat restoration options for Armboth fell with Fix the Fells looking at options for the footpath. Natural Flood Management opportunity mapping has been undertaken at Dunthwaite Estate near Isel and over 100 options have been identified. There is WEG funding secured to remove the embankment along the River Derwent but modelling has shown this won't be beneficial so a variation will be submitted to use this funding on the NFM interventions.

An engagement strategy is being developed looking at four key locations; Workington, Cockermouth, Keswick and Dunthwaite. Meaningful work will be done in each locality rather than taking people to areas away from where they live. A de-pave project in Workington and a flooding and arts project in Cockermouth are in development. In Keswick the focus will be on tourist events including the regatta and mountain festival. Dunthwaite farm will become a co-created community space. An 18-month 'water environment worker' apprenticeship is being advertised. There are opportunities for the apprentice to work with other organisations. Organisations should contact Becky Powell if they have opportunities. The apprentice will be given a whole project to manage, which is likely to be Rannerdale or Liza beck.

Cumbria County Council projects – Andrew Harrison – Cumbria County Council

Andrew Harrison manages Cumbria County Council's smaller scale flood defence schemes up to £150k. A completed, ongoing and upcoming scheme were outlined.

Santon way in Seascale was completed last month in partnership with West Cumbria Rivers Trust. The project put the watercourse into a new pipe alignment to bypass a compromised culvert. The pipe now emerges into a two-stage reed bed to improve water quality in Seascale bathing water. The landowner has taken on the maintenance of the reed bed. There was no payment to the landowner for allowing the project on his land, he was motivated by reducing flood risk to neighbouring properties.

Moresby parks is an ongoing partnership project with United Utilities. The project involves reconnecting culverts. This is a difficult location with a complex network of deep culverts and investigation work is ongoing.

Works in Tallentire will start in November 2019. A culvert will be upsized to allow water to drain from agricultural land and not overflow through the village. The project will also heighten a raised track so that it acts as a bund to store water and prevents runoff through the village. The stored water will drain through the newly upgraded culvert system.

Update on United Utilities pipeline environmental management – Dan Hunt, Bowfell Consulting and Jake Houghton, Environment Agency

The United Utilities pipeline will take water from Thirlmere reservoir to West Cumbria. It is a very large scale project over four years and 90 % of the works are within a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) system, either the Derwent or the Ehen. There are therefore catchment scale environmental risks and direct risks to freshwater pearl mussels.

Several organisations are responsible for different elements of the permissions, consents and regulation. A steering group was established from the beginning of the project with the planning authorities, lead local flood authority and environmental bodies; Environment Agency, Natural England, Allerdale Borough Council, Copeland Borough Council, Lake District National Park and Cumbria County Council, to have a central environmental voice. Issues are resolved between the steering group before actions are recommended to United Utilities.

There are a range of standard environmental risks common to all construction sites (e.g. chemical spills) that have standard mitigation procedures. The biggest potential issue for this project is the cumulative impact of silt in the SAC, especially from the 120 watercourse crossings. It is very challenging to manage moving sites as the pipeline is being laid. There are several different methods of silt mitigation being used on the project. The most basic is silt netting; there is 200 km in use across the project and three teams to keep this in place. However, in some areas silt netting has been overtopped in large rainfall events. Settlement lagoons are in place for larger volumes of silt but it is very difficult to get fine clay particles to settle out. The last resort is using flocculants. It is difficult to keep the working area free of water and pump water out without causing issues downstream. Well points are used for dewatering and the water then goes through a silt buster to reduce siltation. In total, £9 million has been spent on environmental mitigation.

Dan and Jake have undertaken over 100 visits in the last 12 months and real time turbidity measures are being taken at several sites. Despite the large level of mitigation, some incidents are inevitable and everyone is encouraged to report them if they see them on 0800 807060. 150

incidents have been reported throughout the project but the majority have been category 4 (low impact) incidents and most are due to wet weather. 80 % of the incidents have been self-reported. There have been a few category 3 incidents and there is one ongoing active investigation into an incident that occurred in August/September 2019. The investigation will take into consideration everything that has happened over the 3 years of the project due to the potential cumulative impact. The regulators need to decide if it is in the public interest to prosecute. Decisions are taken by the whole steering group acting as a combined regulatory authority. Across their whole business, United Utilities perform very well on self-reporting and this has previously led to prosecutions.

The project is moving into the remediation and restoration stage following laying of most of the pipeline. There is mitigation and compensatory biodiversity gains built into the project including restoration at Shoulthwaite moss where the pipe has been laid below it. United Utilities don't own all the land and there are still negotiations with the other landowner, but work will go ahead on at least part of the site. A tree fund of £450k is being managed by Cumbria Woodlands.

There have been lots of lessons learned through the project, particularly the level of management needed when there are so many subcontractors involved. There is a concern about drainage from the sites where the pipeline has been laid and whether the volume and rates of runoff from the sites will be increased.

Becky Powell who was involved in the consenting in a previous position said that there was potential for a project of this scale to be catastrophic and the team should be pleased with how it has gone and that there have been relatively few and only low impact incidents for the size of the pipeline.

Derwent salmon tracking project – Andy Gowans – Environment Agency

Salmon are declining rapidly both internationally and within the Derwent system. There are still reasonable juvenile populations but we don't know what happens to smolts on their journey out to sea. The number of smolts leaving the system is directly related to the number of returning adult fish.

The Derwent salmon tracking project will tag smolts in St. John's beck, where there is a large population, and will use acoustic receivers to monitor movement and survival rates as they travel downstream. Behaviour in Bassenthwaite Lake and around Yearl weir are of particular interest and this scientific data will be used to guide management decisions. This study will tie into a similar study in the north channel of the Irish sea so we can see where the Derwent fish go to in the ocean. The freshwater study will be for one season, but has the potential to be extended, and the sea monitoring is being done for three years.

Currently only part funding for the project has been secured. A PhD student is starting work on the project in early 2020 but this is currently only funded for the first two years. Additional funding is also needed for other aspects of the project including equipment. WCRT will submit a bid to the Robin Rigg fund to support the project. Any help or funding would be appreciated, if anyone can help or would like to be involved, contact Andy Gowan or Phil Ramsden.

Funding updates and New Projects – Vikki Salas

The Lake District Foundation have submitted an expression of interest to the Heritage Lottery Fund (Heritage Horizons), on behalf of the Lake District National Park Authority, for a £14 million nature recovery project. This is just the initial screening stage and there is very high competition.

West Cumbria Rivers Trust have secured £235,000 from Sellafield for a three-year project 'People on the Keekle' covering the Lower Keekle and Longlands Lake. The project combines delivery of interventions to improve river habitat and water quality with engagement, education and volunteering opportunities.

Several submissions were made to the Environment Agency's medium term plan for projects starting March 2021 onwards for the Water Environment Improvement Fund (WEIF) and river restoration funding.

Discussions

CaBA data package – Caitlin Pearson – West Cumbria Rivers Trust

The Catchment Based Approach national team host a data package with over 150 datasets. The data package has recently been updated. The majority of datasets are available online at data.catchmentbasedapproach.org with a user guide. Some larger datasets are held on a desktop by West Cumbria Rivers Trust.

Datasets can be viewed online but for ease these are hosted on the West Cumbria Catchment Partnership data portal at: www.westcumbriacatchmentpartnership.org/resources.

Caitlin is reviewing all the datasets to further analyse the issues in each waterbody and create a list of projects to address these issues. This is a long term piece of work to improve the action plan for the whole of West Cumbria and requires additional input from the national CaBA team to help in interpreting some of the datasets. This will be shared with the partnership for comments once a draft is completed.

DEFRA Environmental Land Management Test & Trails – Cumbria Pioneer Test and Trail Phase 2 – Elysee Mather – Catchment Pioneer, Environment Agency

Phase 1 of the Upper Derwent and Waver-Wampool test and trials ran from December 2018 to April 2019. A phase 1 report has been published and is attached with these minutes.

Some stakeholders (environmental NGOs) had been involved in the interview process in phase one and felt the questions were exclusive as they were specifically aimed at farmers and landowners. As the scheme is focussed on public money for public goods it needs to consider many wider issues and what the general public want not just those who own and manage the land.

DEFRA have been slow to confirm funding for phase 2 but this is now in place. Phase 2 will run from November 2019 to November 2020 and will focus on creating area plans and land management plans and assessing the value that these deliver. A project manager and two project officers (Upper Derwent and Waver-Wampool) will be employed.

There will be opportunities for the Catchment Partnership to help co-design area priority plans. The area plans should show what public goods should look like in these areas. Catchment Pioneer have looked into including public opinion but this is the scope of a different DEFRA trial so this trial will focus on organisational stakeholders. Paul Barnes stressed that landowners need to be on-

board with the project, they are not the only stakeholders but they are the ones with potential to put blockers on things.

Neville Elstone stressed that DEFRA are in 'listening mode'. Nationally there has been lots of engagement with farming organisations but not much engagement focussed on the water environment. The current basic payment scheme is likely to be replaced by a tier 1 payment which will be a broad and shallow scheme. The next few months will be key to shaping this. Neville offered to invite a member of the national ELMs team to the next partnership meeting.

Paul Barnes said that the Cumbrian River Authority Governance Group (CRAGG) have had the DEFRA northern lead on ELMs come to speak to them. ELMs is unlikely to be rolled out until 2025.

Drainage and Wastewater – Long term planning in West Cumbria – Rachel Gowdy – United Utilities

United Utilities are creating a drainage and wastewater management long term strategic plan for drainage and wastewater systems from 2025-2050. There are consistent 25 year plans for clean water but this has not been the case for wastewater. There has always been a plan but it has not been consistent, statutory or linked to work on the ground. DEFRA consulted on drainage and wastewater plans becoming a statutory piece of work for each water company across the country, the response for this was very favourable and as of August 2019 this became a statutory requirement. The first draft isn't statutory but it will be going forward.

The plan will be at three spatial levels:

Level 1: The whole United Utilities area, outlining the big challenges and the resource needed to combat them. The main challenges are population growth and climate change.

2: Strategic plans for each management catchment. This will be aligned with the River Basin Management Plans and Flood Risk Management Plans.

3: Tactical delivery plans for each waste water treatment works catchment.

There is a big focus on collaborative planning. United Utilities held stakeholder workshops over the last few months. The priority emerging for Cumbria was natural capital. The results of these workshops are being written up and will be shared. United Utilities want to ensure that the plan supports work that partners are doing and creates multi-benefit projects. The drainage and wastewater management team can be contacted at dwmp@uuplc.co.uk

The partnership agreed that they would like updates and the opportunity to feed into the consultation. Doing this at existing Catchment Partnership meetings was agreed as the best mechanism. Rachel and Louisa will continue to liaise with the partnership about this process.

Catchment Partnership evaluation exercise

A requirement of the CaBA hosting funding for 2019/20 is for the partnership hosts to undertake a self-evaluation and stakeholder analysis. There are a number of suggested self-evaluation questions available to CaBA hosts to undertake this exercise. It is important to gain feedback from members of the partnership directly as part of the process, so the attendees were asked to vote anonymously on seven questions which the CaBA hosts felt would be most useful to gain partnership feedback on. These related to the membership, meetings and success of the partnership. The 'partnership' refers to the full structure including both the quarterly meetings for

all stakeholders and the project working groups which feed into the partnership, upon which are further stakeholders including local community. A full breakdown of the results is included at the end of this document.

Generally, it was felt that the right people attended the partnership meetings but this could be improved, particularly by more involvement from specific interest groups such as swimmers or flood action groups. The main partnership meetings however, are unlikely to offer enough interest to a specific interest group but the representation of specific interests and members of the public could be expanded through specific meetings for example through a 'water users' or 'wider public' type specific meetings.

Unanimously, it was felt that the partnership was not currently providing enough public engagement. The majority of people felt that the partnership could perform better at informing the public about the partnership work and successes and about specific issues such as natural flood management and invasive species. The voting also highlighted the need to provide the wider public with opportunities to contribute to Catchment Action planning, projects planning and the River Basin Management plan. It was felt this could be achieved by having more public representation on project working groups and by holding separate workshops for the public to contribute. Involvement of young people could be particularly beneficial and the University of Cumbria was suggested as a good place to start.

Largely, the format of the meetings and agenda items was considered to be right but a third of voters wanted more time for collaborative planning and discussions. Agenda items at upcoming meetings, including River Basin Management planning and ELMs area plans, should lend themselves to more discussions. 85 % of people felt they were able to contribute to discussions that led to joint decisions and actions. Everyone was aware of the catchment data portal and action plans and 60 % of people had made use of it.

Everyone felt that the partnership had added value to existing work with 75 % thinking that it led to more efficient delivery of projects. 25 % voting that the only value of the partnership was through greater information sharing. It was also noted that people who did not feel the partnership had added any value were unlikely to continue attending meetings so the group was self-selecting.

Suggested agenda items for January and AOB

The next meeting is on 29th January. This will focus on River Basin Management Planning Challenges and Choices consultation. DEFRA's Environmental land management trials and United Utilities drainage and wastewater management plans will also be discussed at future meetings.

Results of voting:

1. Does the partnership have the right balance of partners?

Option	Voted	Percentage
1/ Yes	12	75.00%
2/ Generally yes but could be improved	4	25.00%
3/ No	0	0.00%

2. Which groups, if any, would you like to see more involvement from?

Option	Voted	Percentage
1/ None, current membership is just right	3	20.00%
2/ Government Agencies and/or United Utilities	3	20.00%
3/ Environmental NGOs	2	13.33%
4/ Specific interest groups (e.g. recreation groups, flood action groups, farmers)	11	73.33%
5/ Businesses	6	40.00%
6/ General public	5	33.33%

3. Should the partnership provide more opportunities for public engagement?

Option	Voted	Percentage
1/ No, the public don't need to be involved	0	0.00%
2/ No, community reps on partnership & working groups already represent the wider public	0	0.00%
3/ Yes, members of the public should be invited to partnership meetings	2	14.29%
4/ Yes, separate workshops to provide the public the opportunity to feed into Catchment Plans	12	85.71%
5/ Yes, there should be more representatives on project working groups	7	50.00%
6/ Yes, the partnership should work on joint engagement campaigns on specific issues	11	78.57%

4. Do partnership meetings have the right balance of agenda items?

Option	Voted	Percentage
1/A. Yes	11	68.75%
2/B. No, I would like more time for collaborative planning and discussions	5	31.25%
3/C. No, I would like more time spent on updates	0	0.00%
4/D. No, other	0	0.00%

5. Do Catchment Partnership meetings provide sufficient opportunity for discussion and joint decision making?

Option	Voted	Percentage
1/A. No, partnership meetings just provide an update about what's already happening	0	0.00%
2/B. Partnership meetings provide opportunities for discussion but this doesn't appear to influence anything	2	14.29%
3/C. I feel able to contribute to discussions that are used to take forward joint actions & projects	12	85.71%

6. Have you made use of the Catchment data portal & action plans?

Option	Voted	Percentage
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1/A. No, I wasn't aware these existed	0	0.00%
2/B. No, I don't know where to find them	0	0.00%
3/C. No, I know where they are but haven't made use of them	6	40.00%
4/D. Yes, I have made use of these	9	60.00%

7. Do you think the partnership facilitates delivery and adds value to existing work?

Option	Voted	Percentage
1/ No, the partnership has not led to anything more being achieved	0	0.00%
2/ Yes, but only by better sharing of information	3	25.00%
3/ Yes, to some extent there is better coordination in project delivery and more efficient use of resources	4	33.33%
4/ Yes, the partnership has led to more efficient delivery of more ambitious projects	5	41.67%

Vikki Salas/Caitlin Pearson, West Cumbria Rivers Trust, Nov 2019