

# Cumbria-wide Catchment Partnership meeting

1<sup>st</sup> March 2023

## Notes from workshop on 'The Catchment Based Approach in Cumbria'

Attendees were split into seven groups to discuss what was working well about Catchment Partnerships in Cumbria and what could be improved to integrate with their own work streams and result in more delivery. The Catchment Hosts valued the feedback provided. The following were identified as the main actions arising from this session:

### **Resources & communications:**

*Suggestion 1:* Create a better introduction to CaBA for new members/organisations, including information on the CaBA data package.

*Response:* This resource is in development, with support from the Natural Course project. This will be a 'pack' including background to the Catchment Based Approach, links to the CaBA data package and information specific to each partnership. This is expected to be ready by late 2023. It will be circulated to all partner organisations and sent out when new staff members or organisations join the partnership.

*Suggestion 2:* Project pipelines needs to be developed into a resource that helps to identify future projects or how to add value to existing projects. It should also help to integrate different work programmes into a clear delivery plan and identify funding opportunities.

*Response:* This was agreed by Catchment Hosts but requires organisations to share their work programmes and priorities. Catchment Hosts will continue to collate information on projects, plans and work programmes in order to create project pipelines and identify opportunities.

*Suggestion 3:* Catchment Partnerships could lead on wider communications campaigns such as myth-busting about dredging or showcasing successful projects, aimed at local communities.

*Response:* Agreed that this would be valuable but Catchment Partnerships have very limited resources.

### **Meetings:**

*Suggestion 1:* There was overwhelming support to continue holding meetings at the Cumbria scale.

*Response:* A Cumbria-wide meeting will be held annually with the next one provisionally on Wednesday 7<sup>th</sup> February 2024.

*Suggestion 2:* Meetings need to have a clear agenda, sent out in advance, so organisations can send the right representative. Separate meetings about specific topics would also help the right representative attend.

*Response:* Catchment Hosts will endeavour to send out meeting dates and agendas further in advance of meetings. Joint workshops on specific topics will be held at the Cumbria-scale to avoid duplication. Provisional dates are:

- Biodiversity Net Gain workshop – Tuesday 4<sup>th</sup> July 2023
- Nutrient Neutrality – Thursday 5<sup>th</sup> October 2023
- Local Nature Recovery Strategy – TBC between July and October 2023.

*Suggestion 3:* Actions can often seem slow to progress and it's not clear who owns actions from meetings.

*Response:* Catchment Hosts will track actions from future meetings and follow up on these but do not have the resource available to lead on all the actions.

## **Governance:**

*Suggestion 1:* The Catchment Partnerships agenda needs to be driven collectively. A cross-organisation strategic group could be formed to formulate agendas.

*Suggestion 2:* CaBA is the link between strategy and delivery but could be better at playing this role.

*Suggestion 3:* Catchment Partnerships could update their terms of reference and have “statements of intent” about how they work with other partnerships.

*Suggestion 4:* Catchment Partnerships could act as a central hub that other partnerships feed into.

*Response:* The new water governance structure for Cumbria, with a new Local Water Partnership, will help to address the identified issues. Multiple organisations will sit on the Local Water Partnership, which will work alongside the existing Local Nature Partnership to coordinate strategy and integrate existing plans and workstreams. Catchment Partnerships and other local partnerships can escalate blockers to delivery to the Local Water Partnership. This structure should result in more integrated delivery. Recruitment of a dedicated member of staff to co-ordinate the Local Water Partnership is underway.

## **Summary of main points raised:**

### **1. What’s working well and what do you value most about CaBA**

- The networking opportunities from Catchment Partnership meetings were valued and people felt the Partnerships helped organisations build and maintain relationships.
- Catchment Partnerships provide a space for knowledge exchange, raising issues and getting updates on what is happening on the ground.
- Catchment Partnerships are holistic, covering multiple issues & benefits. They play key role in sign-posting and integrating different work-streams and providing a voice to smaller organisations/communities.
- Partnership working is attractive to funders.
- CaBA is the link between strategy and delivery but could be better at playing this role.
- Actions can often seem slow to progress and it’s not clear who owns actions from meetings.
- The CaBA dataset was seen as very valuable to facilitate delivery but not all partners were aware of it.
- There were differences of opinion about the project pipeline. Generally, it was considered to be useful, but difficult to maintain. The list of projects/ideas needs to develop into a ‘what’s next’ list for project development, or help to identify where partners can add value to existing projects.

### **2. How can we better integrate CABA into your work?**

Individual organisations highlighted their work programmes that are, or could be, integrated with Catchment Partnerships. Other organisations felt they did not need to integrate their work but that there was still value from participation in the partnership.

Different people within an organisation would be best placed to attend different meetings depending on the topics being discussed. There needs to be a better introduction of CABA for new staff members and organisations, including non-experts. Having a clear agenda, sent out in advance would help organisations send the right representative. Separate meetings about specific topics would also help.

The role of Catchment Hosts should be in integrating different work-streams and plans into one simple delivery plan and helping to fund new projects. There is a need for better discussions where work programmes overlap. Organisations often working in the same place do not speak to each other. There is a role for the Catchment Hosts in bringing these organisations together at a local scale, but it was acknowledged that Catchment Partnerships are under resourced for doing this, and funding is uneven between different partnerships.

It was suggested that Catchment Partnerships could lead on wider communications campaigns such as myth-busting about dredging or showcasing successful projects.

### **3. Who's missing from the Catchment Partnerships? What could they bring?**

Several organisations who do not currently sit on Catchment Partnerships were identified. It was recognised, however, that the people who need to be engaged depend on the specific aims of the partnership and that some partners only need to sit on local/topic-based working groups rather than attending full partnership meetings. There were also some specific comments about partners that already sit on the partnership but don't necessarily send all the right people or disseminate within their organisation.

Farmers/landowners were identified by most groups. Most people felt they did not need to be (or couldn't be) at the meetings but keeping them in mind and engaging them in different ways is crucial.

Most people felt that there was a good range of representation on the Catchment Partnerships but that they did not act as true 'partnerships' because they were not driven collectively. Partners need to feed into meeting agendas. A cross-organisation strategic group could be formed to formulate agendas. It would also be good to update the Terms of Reference for the partnerships; most were written at the formation of the partnerships and not reviewed since.

### **4. How do you see CABA integrating with other partnerships?**

The key partnerships delivering within Cumbria were identified as:

- Cumbria Local Nature Partnership and Northern Upland chain Local Nature Partnership
- Lake District National Park Partnership
- Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Morcambe Bay Partnership
- Local Enterprise Partnership
- Coastal Partnerships
- AONBs.

It was acknowledged, that partnership to partnership working is complicated and can sometimes detract from delivery rather than adding to it. Catchment Partnerships need to be clear about their own agenda and identify the key partnerships to work with, with the main aim being to reduce duplication of work.

Individuals who sit on different partnerships can draw the links between them where relevant. There needs to be two-way communication between partnerships. It was suggested that Catchment Partnerships could act as a central hub that other partnerships feed into. Having the right Governance structure is key to integrating with other partnerships. An overarching umbrella water group could be valuable but must add value and not just be a talking shop. Catchment Partnerships could also produce "statements of intent" about how different partnerships would work together.