

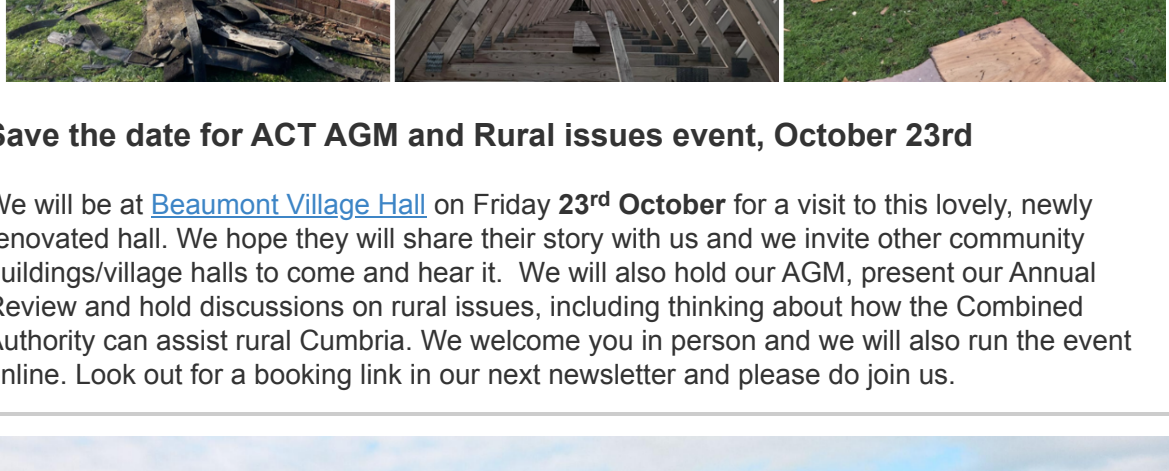
ACT Blog



Farming has long been at the heart of Cumbrian life, shaping not only the landscape but also the sustainability of rural communities and local economies. The way land is managed across the county plays a vital role in making Cumbria the distinctive place it is to live, work and visit. Farmers remain central to that story. [Read our Guest Blog](#) by Adam Day, Managing Director of the Farmer Network, on why farming matters.

Guest Blog

ACT News

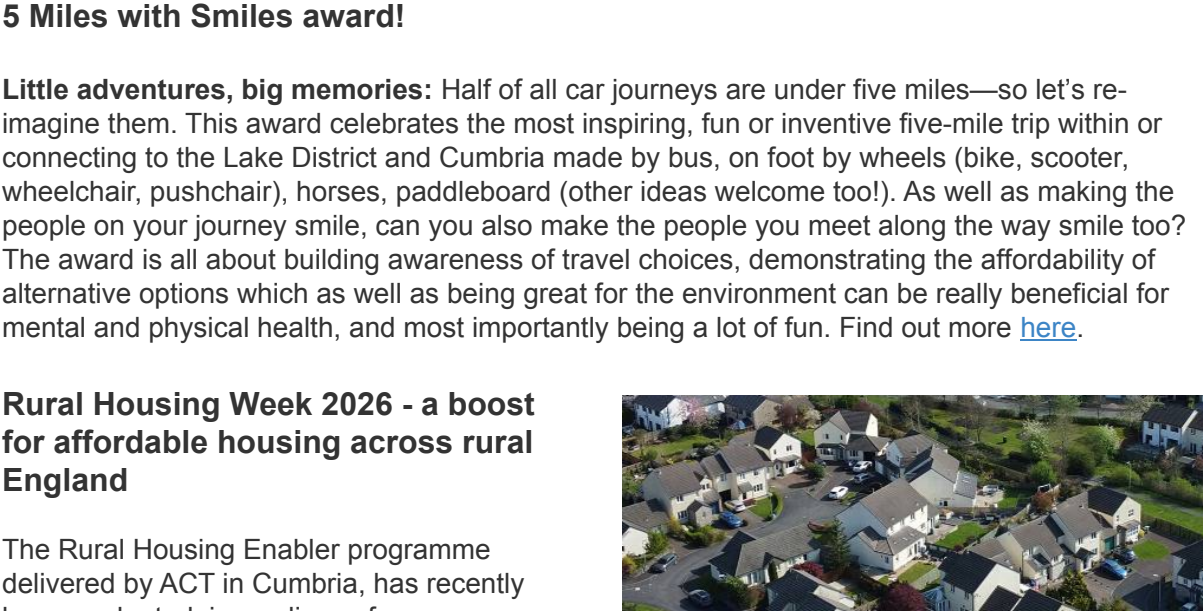


Save the date for ACT AGM and Rural issues event, October 23rd

We will be at [Beaumont Village Hall](#) on Friday 23rd October for a visit to this lovely, newly renovated hall. We hope they will share their story with us and we invite other community buildings/village halls to come and hear it. We will also hold our AGM, present our Annual Review and hold discussions on rural issues, including thinking about how the Combined Authority can assist rural Cumbria. We welcome you in person and we will also run the event online. Look out for a booking link in our next newsletter and please do join us.

Miles with Smiles Cumbria

15 July to 22 November 2026

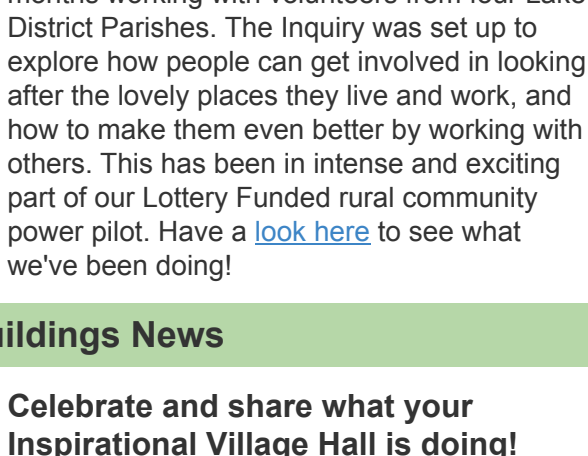


5 Miles with Smiles award!

Little adventures, big memories: Half of all car journeys are under five miles—so let's re-imagine them. This award celebrates the most inspiring, fun or inventive five-mile trip within or connecting to the Lake District and Cumbria made by bus, on foot by wheels (bike, scooter, wheelchair, pushchair), horses, paddleboard (other ideas welcome too!). As well as making the people on your journey smile, can you also make the people you meet along the way smile too? The award is all about building awareness of travel choices, demonstrating the affordability of alternative options which as well as being great for the environment can be really beneficial for mental and physical health, and most importantly being a lot of fun. Find out more [here](#).

Rural Housing Week 2026 - a boost for affordable housing across rural England

The Rural Housing Enabler programme delivered by ACT in Cumbria, has recently been evaluated, in readiness for a new national delivery programme. Findings include that housing enablers have supported a pipeline of over 400 rural housing schemes. This Rural Housing week (6-11 July) we are pleased to share that the RHE programme has recently been extended to 2029. [Read the ACRE press release here](#).



Find out about ACT's Community Inquiry work

Members of the ACT team have spent three months working with volunteers from four Lake District Parishes. The Inquiry was set up to explore how people can get involved in looking after the lovely places they live and work, and how to make them even better by working with others. This has been in intense and exciting part of our Lottery Funded rural community power pilot. Have a [look here](#) to see what we've been doing!

Community Buildings News



Celebrate and share what your Inspirational Village Hall is doing!

The Inspiration Awards are organised by The Village Halls Podcast and proudly sponsored by Allied Westminster. They were created to recognise and celebrate the outstanding work taking place in village halls across the UK — from innovation, resilience and community impact to volunteer dedication, inclusion, fundraising, governance, sustainability and the many ways halls continue to sit at the heart of rural life.

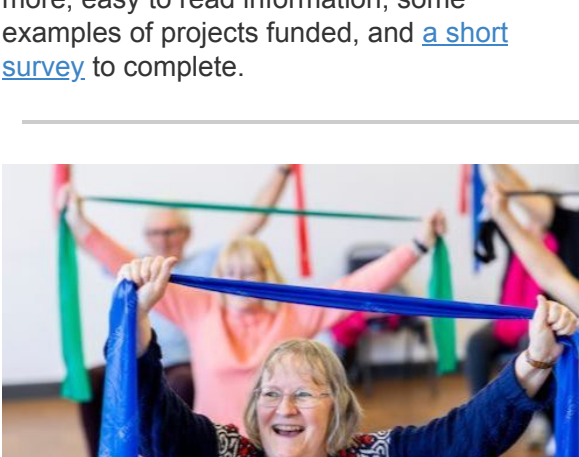
The 2025 Awards were a great success and we would love to see even more halls come forward, in 2026 to share their achievements and inspire others.

Entries are free and close on **31st October 2026**. Full details and entry information can be found at [The Village Halls Podcast](#).

Access to Banking Review - community groups and village halls

The Access to Banking Review, chaired by former Which? magazine Director Richard Lloyd is [taking evidence until 20th July](#) and will be reporting in the Autumn, with possible legislation to follow. This is the opportunity for groups and halls which have experienced problems with High Street banks over the last 8 years to write in.

Responses can be sent by email AccessToBankingServices@hmtreasury.gov.uk or there's an [online survey](#) form which can be completed.



A Fundraising boost for your Hall?

This month, easyfundraising are offering 250 online fundraising packs to community organisations in our area. To get one, simply follow these steps:

1. Register your organisation for free funding with easyfundraising [here](#).
2. Choose the option to schedule a call with a member of the team, who will send you your free pack and explain how we can help your organisation with funding.

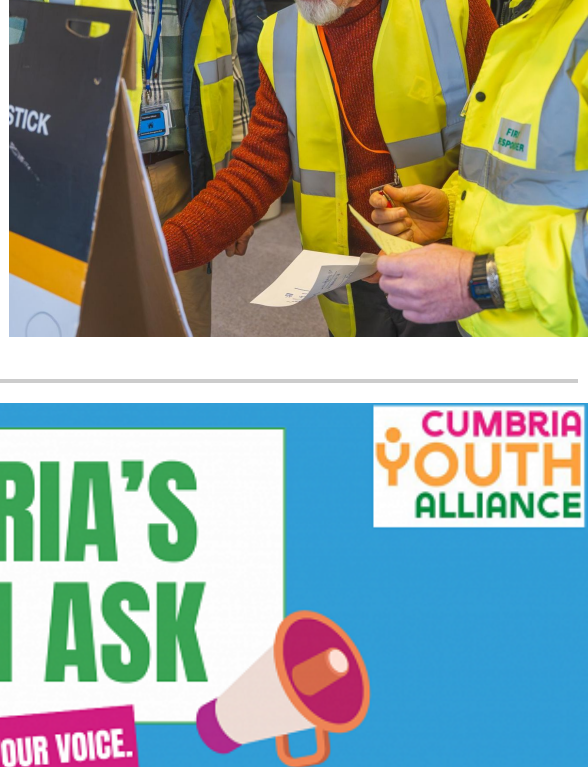
But be quick – once the packs are gone, they're gone!

News from Friends and Partners

National Lottery Good Causes: what do you think?

The government is launching this call for evidence on [National Lottery Good Causes: Fund what matters to you](#). This isn't just a review; it's about fundamentally re-evaluating how good cause funding is distributed and ensuring that the voice of the whole country is heard.

Please do respond to this request as the more rural responses they receive the more our voices will be heard. [This link](#) will take you to more, easy to read information, some examples of projects funded, and a [short survey](#) to complete.



Age Friendly Buildings

The Centre for Ageing Better has produced a quick guide offering a simple and comprehensive overview of the key design considerations for ensuring age-friendliness in public and community buildings. The guide covers everything from lighting to toilets to wayfinding and includes a helpful checklist. This is one of seven guides around age friendly design in the built environment. Download them here: [Age-friendly Built Environment Quick Guides | Centre for Ageing Better](#)



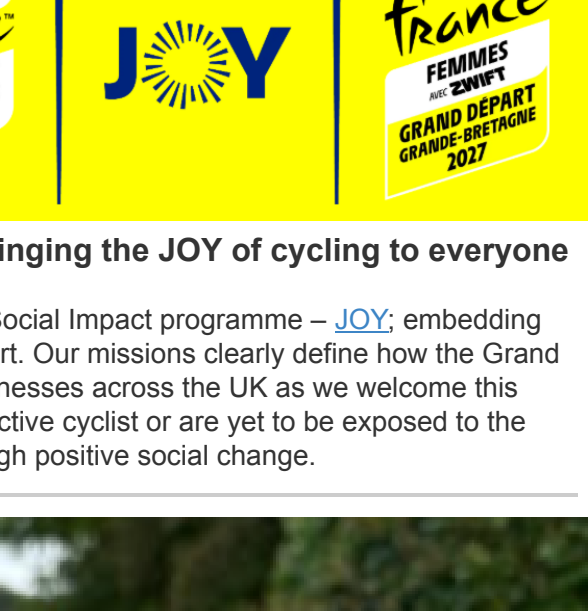
Read the latest from Connecting Cumbria

As we move through the warmer months, progress continues at pace across broadband and mobile infrastructure, alongside new opportunities for communities, businesses and organisations to benefit from improved connectivity across Cumbria. Read the July edition of the Connecting Cumbria newsletter [here](#).

£300,000 Community Resilience Fund Launched to Support Local Communities Across Cumbria

Community groups across Cumbria are being invited to bid for their share of a new £300,000 community resilience grant programme. The funding will provide small grants to community organisations that have a community resilience plan in place, helping them to prepare for, respond to and recover from emergencies and local challenges.

Eligible applicants include community and voluntary groups, parish and town councils, and community resilience groups with an existing community resilience plan. [Find out more here](#).

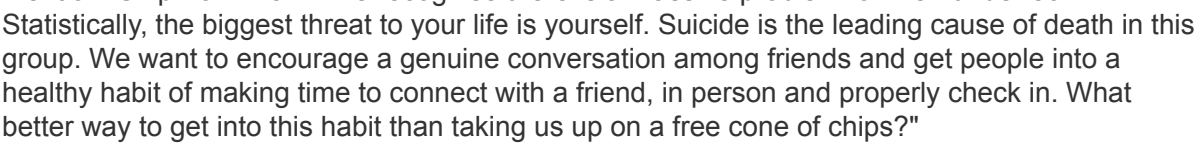


Cumbria's Youth Ask

YOUR CUMBRIA. YOUR VOICE. **SCAN TO COMPLETE THE SURVEY!**

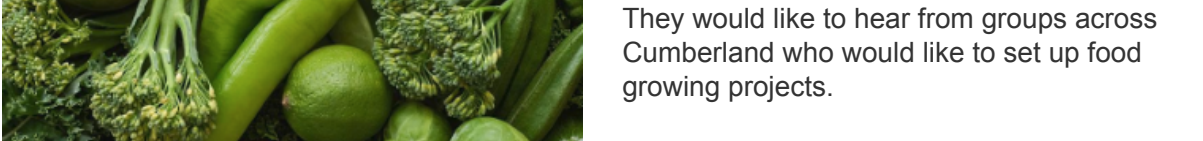
Are you a young person aged 14-35 years old and living in Cumbria? Have your say by completing the Youth Ask!

The [Youth Ask](#) is an important consultation which aligns with our own campaign to ensure the incoming Mayor understands the challenges of living in a rural area, particularly for young people in the county. If you are the parent/employer of a young person aged 14-35 years who lives in Cumbria, please share and encourage young people to take part.



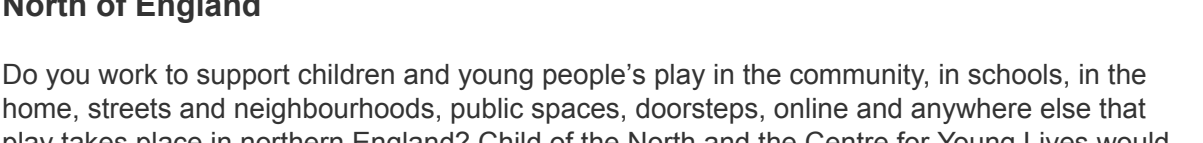
Tour de France heads to Westmorland and Furness and Cumberland

One of the world's greatest sporting spectacles is coming to Cumbria in 2027. Stage One of the men's 2027 Tour de France will finish in Carlisle and Stage Two will start in Keswick, and finish in Liverpool. [Read more here](#) about the route, what to expect as the race comes through Westmorland and Furness, and how you can help or volunteer. Cumberland Council is counting down to the start [here](#), with opportunities to get involved during or before the event.



Grand Depart Grande-Bretagne 2027: Bringing the JOY of cycling to everyone

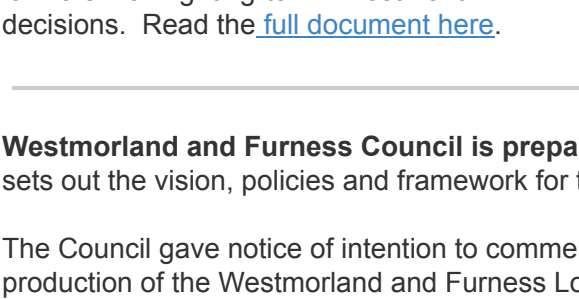
We are delighted to announce the launch of our Social Impact programme – [JOY](#): embedding community impact at the heart of the Grand Départ. Our missions clearly define how the Grand Départ will positively impact households and businesses across the UK as we welcome this landmark event for cycling. Whether you are an active cyclist or are yet to be exposed to the sport, we will bring the [Joy of cycling](#) to you through positive social change.



You look like a man who likes FREE CHIPS?

Celebrating Staveley Chippy and their fantastic men's mental health 'Chip Fork Walk' offer: "Throughout July, we are offering a free cone of chips to every single adult man that comes to the shop and says they're out for a walk with a friend. And it's seriously as simple as that.... Just mention 'Chip Fork Walk'. We recognise there is a massive problem for men under 50. Statistically, the biggest threat to your life is yourself. Suicide is the leading cause of death in this group. We want to encourage a genuine conversation among friends and get people into a healthy habit of making time to connect with a friend, in person and properly check in. What better way to get into this habit than taking us up on a free cone of chips?"

For more information about the offer call them on 01539 821457 or find them on facebook [@staveleychippy](#). Could you do something similar where you are?



Right to Grow - do you want a Community Growing Licence?

Cumberland Council is supporting the national Right to Grow campaign by developing a community growing licence which allows communities to use pieces of Council-owned land for food growing.

They would like to hear from groups across Cumberland who would like to set up food growing projects.

Contact: Foodpartnership@cumberland.gov.uk

Equitable Access to Play – Opportunities for Children and Young People in the North of England

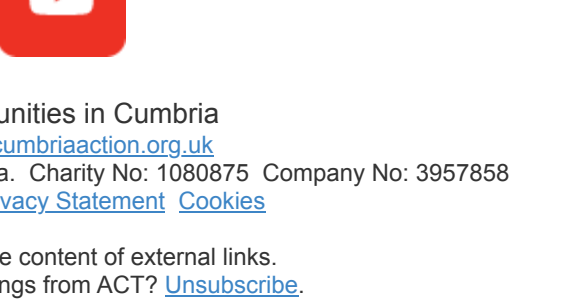
Do you work to support childhoods and young people's play in the community, in schools, in the home, streets and neighbourhoods, public spaces, doorsteps, online and anywhere else that play takes place in northern England? Child of the North and the Centre for Young Lives would like to hear from academics, teachers, local authorities, play workers, community organisations, adventure playgrounds, and anyone else with a story to tell. Please follow the link to share your case study in up to 400 words. Submissions portal closes 31st August 2026. Information and submissions portal is [here](#)

25 year Farming Roadmap

The Government has published a new [25-year Farming Roadmap](#), setting out its long-term vision for English agriculture. The roadmap is built around three core priorities:

1. Creating profitable and productive farm businesses.
2. Supporting sustainable farming, and improving resilience to climate change.
3. Market volatility and other future challenges.

It also aims to provide greater certainty for farmers making long-term investment decisions. Read the [full document here](#).



Westmorland and Furness Council is preparing a new Local Plan, a statutory document that sets out the vision, policies and framework for the future development and use of land.

The Council gave notice of intention to commence plan making and set out a timetable for the production of the Westmorland and Furness Local Plan on 30 June 2026. View the [notice of intention and Local Plan timetable](#)

Scoping Consultation 1st July to 11th August 2026

We are launching our Scoping Consultation to seek views on what the Local Plan could address, what it should aim to achieve and how people would like to be involved and kept informed of progress. It builds on the feedback given in our Early Conversation in 2024.

We will be asking for views on 6 themes based on the feedback we've already gathered:

- Health and Communities
- Place
- Economy
- Climate and Nature
- Travel and Infrastructure
- Housing

We would like your views on whether you agree with these themes, and whether there are any areas we may have missed.

And finally...

If you find this information useful, please do share it with others. We'd love you to forward this email to friends and colleagues. You can also follow us on Facebook to keep up with our very latest news and views.

If you are not already an ACT supporter, why not join us? It's free and it means that we can keep in touch with you directly from time to time. You can [unsubscribe](#) at any time from all ACT mailings.

Become a Supporter

