

You might have spotted... we have a new website!

Same address, updated content: www.cumbriaaction.org.uk

We've been working hard behind the scenes with our ace web designer [Andy Coldron](#) to give the ACT website a cleaner look and to sort out the bits that needed a refresh. Hopefully we've caught most of the glitches, but do [let us know](#) if you find something that doesn't look right. It'll take us all a while to get used to the new format, but we love it! And there's a helpful 'search' box, in case you can't immediately find what you're looking for. As with everything we do, we welcome your [feedback](#). Special thanks to Jozi, Carole and Hellen for cajoling, updating and generally doing the work on this.

ACT Blog



We all have dreams and ambitions... how do we make them work?

ACT works with many of you who have dreams and ambitions for the future of Cumbria, your community, or your project. Many of these dreams rely on the economy performing well to provide funds and make things happen. We are going to have a new Mayor in May 2027. Some of their powers could assist these aspirations, not just with funding (because there may not be much!) but with policies and approaches.

Read Lorraine's Blog [here](#), with links to big ideas on local and circular economies and how the 'common good' must find a place in the strategies of the Mayoral Combined Authority.

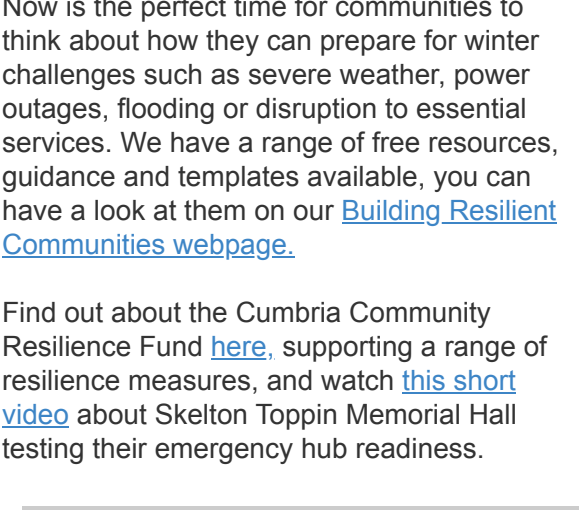
[Click here to read the ACT Blog](#)

ACT News

Book now for ACT AGM and Rural issues event, October 23rd 10am -2pm

Join us at [Beaumont Village Hall](#) on Friday **23rd October** for our AGM, celebrating ACT's work in the past year. We'll be hearing from village hall committees who have been working with our Community Buildings Service to unlock capital funding for energy saving and renovation. We'll also reflect on what we heard in our recent Rural Issues interviews and ask what a Cumbria Combined Authority - and Mayor - means for rural communities. Lunch will be available afterwards for anyone joining us at Beaumont. Please let us know [when you book](#) if you plan to be with us in person or on line.

[Book here for the AGM](#)



The ACT team are doing their 5 Miles with Smiles!

We've been taking part with our dogs, our friends, our work networks and our families, on bikes, on foot and on boats. And on holiday... (so this one isn't in Cumbria - whoops!)

Have you done your [5 Miles with Smiles](#) yet?

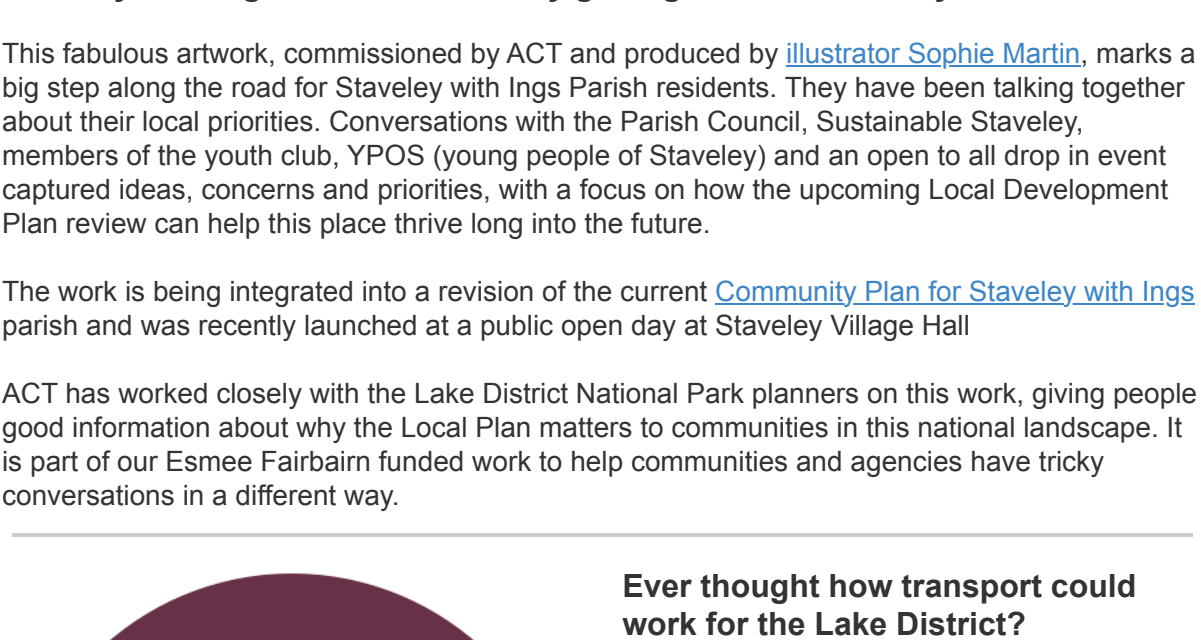
For more information about this celebration of fun and inventive alternatives to getting in the car, [click here](#) and join in.



Are you ready for an emergency in your community?

Now is the perfect time for communities to think about how they can prepare for winter challenges such as severe weather, power outages, flooding or disruption to essential services. We have a range of free resources, guidance and templates available, you can have a look at them on our [Building Resilient Communities webpage](#).

Find out about the Cumbria Community Resilience Fund [here](#), supporting a range of resilience measures, and watch [this short video](#) about Skelton Toppin Memorial Hall testing their emergency hub readiness.



Staveley with Ings Parish community getting 'Local Plan ready'

This fabulous artwork, commissioned by ACT and produced by [illustrator Sophie Martin](#), marks a big step along the road for Staveley with Ings Parish residents. They have been talking together about their local priorities. Conversations with the Parish Council, Sustainable Staveley, members of the youth club, YPOS (young people of Staveley) and an open to all drop in event captured ideas, concerns and priorities, with a focus on how the upcoming Local Development Plan review can help this place thrive long into the future.

The work is being integrated into a revision of the current [Community Plan for Staveley with Ings](#) parish and was recently launched at a public open day at Staveley Village Hall

ACT has worked closely with the Lake District National Park planners on this work, giving people good information about why the Local Plan matters to communities in this national landscape. It is part of our Esmée Fairbairn funded work to help communities and agencies have tricky conversations in a different way.



Ever thought how transport could work for the Lake District?

Transport for the Lake District www.tlfd.org.uk is a new initiative that aims to work out what world class access and transport could look like for the Lake District. This is launching now to develop and feed deliverable ideas into the emerging Cumbria Combined Authority who will have responsibility for transport strategy across Cumbria. It's set up so that as many people as possible can help design how transport might work. To find out more and see how you could get involved, visit www.tlfd.org.uk follow us on [Facebook](#) | [Instagram](#) | [LinkedIn](#) | [TikTok](#) or get in touch directly on hello@tlfd.org.uk

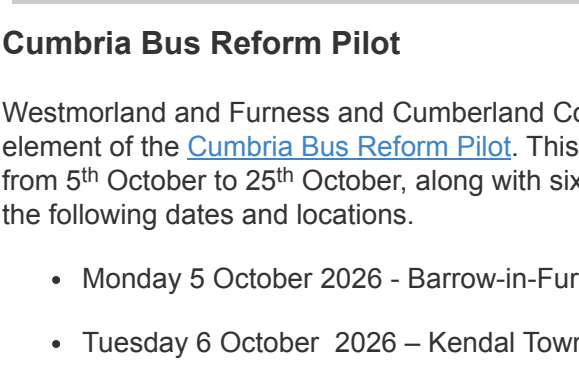
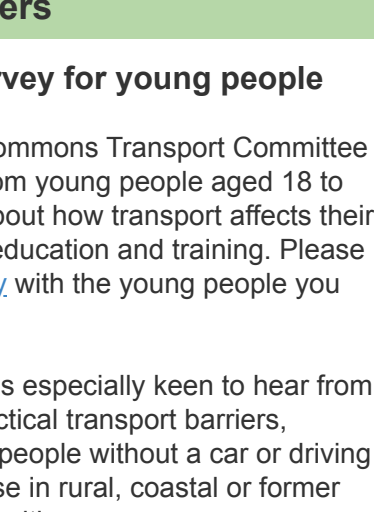
Community Buildings News

Village Halls Week is set for a grand return in 2027

The week-long celebration of the country's 10,000 village halls will once again take place next year, with the festivities set to kick off on **Friday 12 March 2027**.

Earlier this year, hundreds of villages across England took part in Village Halls Week celebrations of health and wellbeing, with events ranging from balloon volleyball to chocolate bingo.

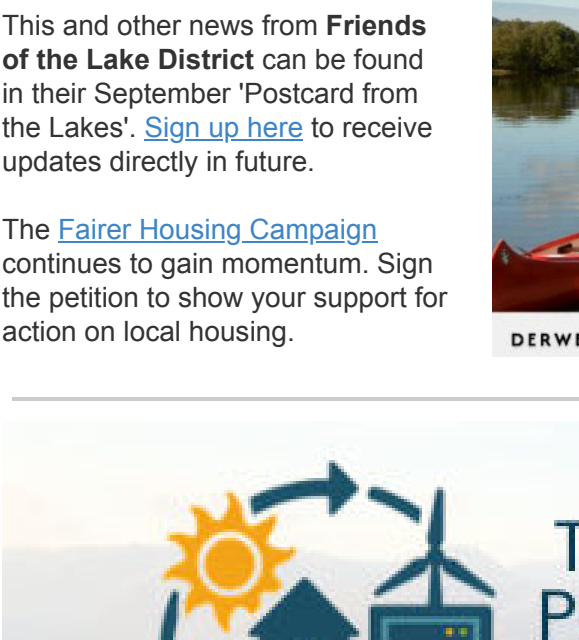
More details about [Village Halls Week 2027](#) will be shared in due course. For now, though, save the dates and start thinking about how best to celebrate!



easyfundraising summer donations

This summer, £2m in unrestricted funding has been donated to third sector organisations through the easyfundraising platform. Through this free to use and trusted website, 8,000+ online retailers will donate money when your volunteers and supporters shop with them. Every three months, this is paid out as unrestricted funding to spend on what you need. easyfundraising is already trusted by many village halls and other organisations in Cumbria. Visit [ACT's website](#) for details.

News from Friends and Partners



Transport survey for young people

The House of Commons Transport Committee wants to hear from young people aged 18 to 25 in England about how transport affects their access to jobs, education and training. Please share [this survey](#) with the young people you work with.

The Committee is especially keen to hear from those facing practical transport barriers, including young people without a car or driving licence, and those in rural, coastal or former industrial communities.

The survey takes a few minutes, doesn't ask for personal details, and any responses used will be anonymised. The survey closes on 16 October 2026.

Cumbria Bus Reform Pilot

Westmorland and Furness and Cumberland Council have now launched the public consultation element of the [Cumbria Bus Reform Pilot](#). This stage includes an online survey which will be live from 5th October to 25th October, along with six community drop-in sessions across Cumbria at the following dates and locations.

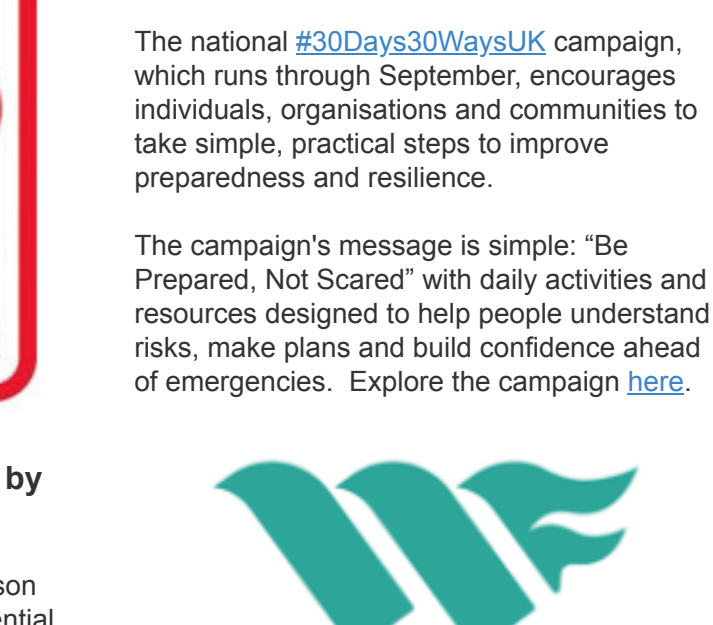
- Monday 5 October 2026 - Barrow-in-Furness Town Hall between 2pm and 6pm
- Tuesday 6 October 2026 - Kendal Town Hall between 3.30pm and 7.30pm
- Friday 16 October 2026 - Penrith Library between 12.30pm and 4.30pm
- Saturday 17 October 2026 - Carlisle Library between 10.30am and 2.30pm
- Tuesday 20 October 2026 - Keswick Library between 1.30pm and 4.45pm
- Wednesday 21 October 2026 - Workington Library & Community Hub between 2pm and 6pm

More information is available at [this link](#).

Pop up Campsites and a new Chief Executive...

This and other news from **Friends of the Lake District** can be found in their September 'Postcard from the Lakes'. [Sign up here](#) to receive updates directly in future.

The [Fairer Housing Campaign](#) continues to gain momentum. Sign the petition to show your support for action on local housing.



What if local energy could do more for your community?

The [Village HeatShare](#) project is an exciting feasibility initiative, exploring how small, quiet data centres powered by local renewable energy can recycle heat into nearby shared spaces and home, resulting in lower energy bills, reduced carbon emissions and keeping value within the community.

The project is looking for **100 communities** to explore whether Village HeatShare could work locally — co-designing solutions with communities and building a pipeline of potential projects that could deliver lasting local benefits.

Want to explore whether Village HeatShare could work for your community? Suggest your site [here](#)



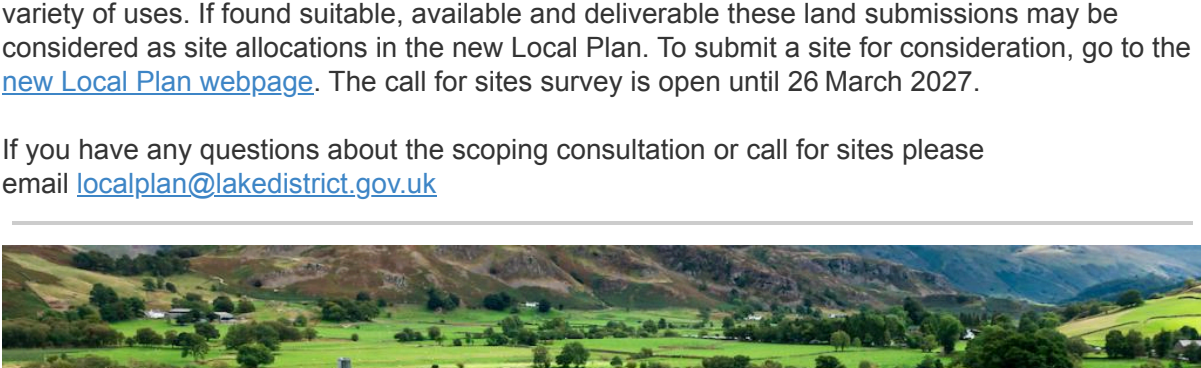
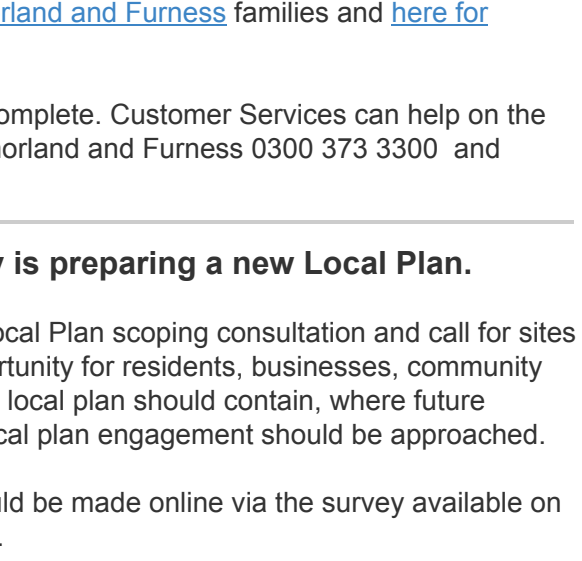
"Be Prepared, Not Scared"

The national [#30Days30WaysUK](#) campaign, which runs through September, encourages individuals, organisations and communities to take simple, practical steps to improve preparedness and resilience.

The campaign's message is simple: "Be Prepared. Not Scared" with daily activities and resources designed to help people understand risks, make plans and build confidence ahead of emergencies. Explore the campaign [here](#).

Westmorland and Furness Handyperson scheme launched by Housing Standards Team

We are keen to promote our Handyperson Service which provides simple but essential works to disabled or vulnerable households, with labour provided free of charge and the cost of any materials/items covered by the householder. The service aims to keep people safe and independent in their homes. For more information phone: 0300 373 3300 or email: housingstandards@westmorlandandfurness.gov.uk



Flexible, bookable bus service for rural communities expands to Penrith area

Westmorland and Furness Council is going The Extra Mile for rural communities around Penrith with the launch of a new flexible, bookable bus service. The Extra Mile is designed to improve access to public transport in areas where there is not access to a bus service. It is a Digital Demand Responsive Transport (DDRT) service that allows passengers to book journeys when they need them, rather than relying on a fixed bus timetable or route. After a successful launch in and around Ulverston in July, the service will now launch in the Penrith area on Monday 14 September, with bookings open from 7 September. Find out more [here](#).



Free School Meal eligibility has changed - more people are now eligible

We are urging families to check whether they are eligible for Free School Meals. From September 2026 all households receiving Universal Credit can apply, regardless of income. Applications can be made online [here for Westmorland and Furness](#) families and [here for Cumberland](#) families.

Applications typically take only a few minutes to complete. Customer Services can help on the phone if you need to speak with someone. Westmorland and Furness 0300 373 3300 and Cumberland: 0300 373 3730

The Lake District National Park Authority is preparing a new Local Plan.

On **Wednesday 9 September** the Lake District Local Plan scoping consultation and call for sites commenced. The scoping consultation is an opportunity for residents, businesses, community groups and partners to have their say on what the local plan should contain, where future development should be located and how future local plan engagement should be approached.

Representations on the scoping consultation should be made online via the survey available on our [new Local Plan webpage](#) by 21 October 2026.

The call for sites launches alongside the scoping consultation, inviting land submissions for a variety of uses. If found suitable, available and deliverable these land submissions may be considered as site allocations in the new Local Plan. To submit a site for consideration, go to the [new Local Plan webpage](#). The call for sites survey is open until 26 March 2027.

If you have any questions about the scoping consultation or call for sites please email localplan@lakedistrict.gov.uk

Fibrus Community Fund boost community benefit of Cumbrian Tour de France

The [Fibrus Community Fund Cumbria](#), delivered in partnership with Cumbria Community Foundation, is now open for applications, closing October 16th. The fund will support organisations tackling digital poverty and exclusion. Up to £2,000 is available per application. The Fund has a particular focus on older adults (aged 60+ years) and young people aged 18 and under, alongside older people.

Fibrus are particularly keen to hear from village halls along the Tour de France route that may wish to improve their broadband in order to support activities relating to the Tour de France. This can include (but is not limited to) applying for fibre broadband to be installed at your hall or applying for funding to operate a 'mesh network' which would enable people in the local vicinity to access Wi-Fi in order to engage with the Tour de France. Full details of the fund and application process are available [here](#).

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](#)

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