

COMMUNITY PLAN

for

OUSBY

2023 to 2028



There's no place like here!

Community plan for Ousby

Contents

	Page
1. Acknowledgements	3
2. Introduction and aims	4
3. The process	5
4. Community consultation	6
5. SWOT and PESTLE analysis	7
6. 2023 village appraisal and key points on service provision and community needs	11
7. Community plan for Ousby	18

1. Acknowledgements

The community plan working group are thanked for their time, energy and enthusiasm, especially

Kate Arnold
Sue Castle-Clarke
Azareth Colon

Rod Davidson
Sara Dench
Caroline Ivinson

Janet Jones
John Hunter
Marianne Teasdale

together with all the residents of Ousby for their views, suggestions and comments that have formed the basis for this work.

We also thank our sponsors for their generous support.



OUSBY PARISH COUNCIL

2. Introduction, aims and objectives

It has been ten years since Ousby's local residents last undertook a village appraisal and devised a community plan.

During the last decade our rural community has had to find a path through some complicated and interesting issues. To name but a few, these have included a local parish governance review, 'Beast from the East' weather effects, 'Brexit' and changes to farm payments, construction of an estate of new dwellings within the village and the Coronavirus pandemic with its associated lockdown restrictions. More recently, there has been Russia's invasion of Ukraine that has provided a distressing backdrop affecting us all through rising inflation and the 'cost of living' crisis. To successfully come through all these challenges, indicates a considerable level of community resilience.

With a speedy resolution to the current national and global difficulties looking remote at the time of writing, everyday life for our fellside community is likely to remain as complex and unpredictable as it was a decade ago.

Looking forwards into the future in these circumstances is tricky and few are prepared to consider the wider picture. For many, the compulsion to firmly hang on to the belief that everything will eventually return to the pre-pandemic 'normal' remains all consuming. Yet wishful thinking is seldom based on substance.

Uncertainty prevails but not without opportunity – a persistent reminder that for the residents of Ousby, a long-term perspective with a consistent approach to community empowerment, activism and self-help can bring the greatest rewards over time.

The outlook for rural communities is mixed but it only takes a small change of approach through a thoughtful group of local residents to create a significant positive impact for everyone. It is not always easy to predict the trigger ahead of time but the village appraisal responses indicated that the people of Ousby want to be ready.

Through the 2023 village appraisal, local residents offered perspectives and informed contributions on the quality of rural life we all value and wish to continue enjoying. Based on previous positive experiences, most local residents anticipate that planning for the future will keep our community efficient and adaptable, help us manage change and enable us to deal better with tomorrow's unforeseeable circumstances. This community plan identifies that it is time to embrace the past and also strive to be different, better and bolder.

Rural communities like Ousby will continue to feel some bumps in the road ahead. The crowning of King Charles, with all the flag-waving and coronation quiche that entailed, provided local residents with some cheer after a tough period. It will also perhaps herald a more optimistic outlook where community confidence is released to unlock the benefits of working together for the greater good of our families, our friends and our wider neighbourhood – now that would be a cause for celebration.

Sue Castle-Clarke (Community Plan Project Facilitator)
May 2023

3. The process

Just as Ousby Parish Council considered the completed 2014/19 community plan and determined to devise a new one, the nation was hit by the Coronavirus pandemic and everything was put on hold.

It was 2022 before Covid-19 lockdown restrictions were fully relaxed, people felt confident to socialise freely again and open public meetings could be held. The community plan project was launched through a pub quiz night, where villagers were invited to participate in the initiative.

The community plan working group comprised a mix of volunteers who represented not only a diverse cross-section of residents' views but also the interests of various community groups and organisations.

As with any project of this nature, a significant part of the working group's time and effort was focussed on qualitative research and understanding which specific issues are relevant and meaningful to our specific fellside community.

The working group participated in a project schedule of regular meetings and milestones that included:

Date	Activity/milestone
August – Sept 2022	Liaison with EDC Communities and Wellbeing team, CCC Eden Area team and also local EDC and Shadow Westmorland and Furness councillors to outline Ousby's community plan project and secure their support.
September 2022	Research into historical and contemporary facts about Ousby in preparation for a pub quiz
October 2022	Pub quiz on 'all things Ousby' to launch the project and invite interested volunteers to participate in the working group
November 2022	Project report submitted to Ousby Parish Council
December 2023	Introductory meeting for working group members with an outline of the project schedule and budget
January - March 2023	Analysis, evaluation and assessment of the issues relevant to our fellside community to ensure resilience and sustainability.
February 2023	Painting and drawing workshop for village youngsters to explore what they like about living in Ousby
March 2023	Project progress report submitted to Ousby Parish Council
March 2023	Village appraisal questionnaire and cover letter finalised
April 2023	Village appraisal delivered, collected and household responses collated.
April 2023	Appraisal outputs considered and evaluated to identify service provision gaps and community needs. Action solutions generated, alongside potential partners.
May 2023	'Drop-in' event to inform residents of appraisal outputs and seek their assistance in determining action plan priorities through 'post-it' votes.
May 2023	Service gap actions matched to residents' priorities, targets proposed with achievable deadlines and community plan completed.

4. Community consultation

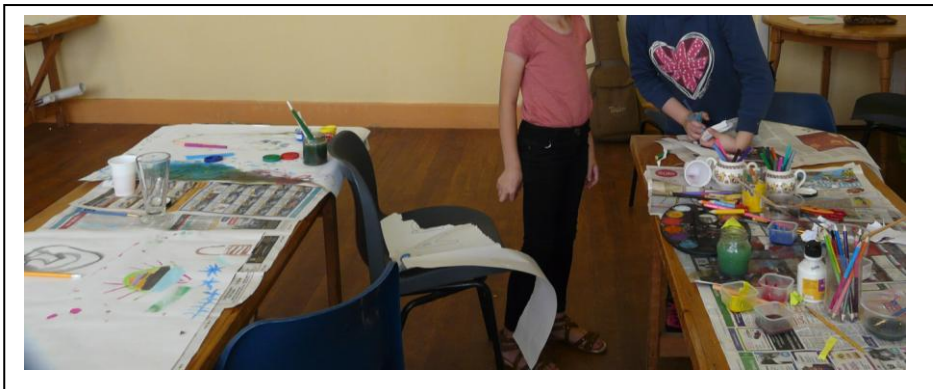
A variety of consultation methods were used as part of the community plan process to ensure that groups of people who sometimes find it difficult to make their voice heard or those who rarely engage in community projects could participate.

This community plan for Ousby is based on outputs from the following consultation events and activities:

- **Pub quiz** - launching the project and inviting interested residents to participate



- **Painting and drawing workshop for village youngsters** - assisted by local artists



- **Village appraisal questionnaire** - delivered to and collected from each household

OUSBY PARISH COUNCIL & EDEN DISTRICT COUNCIL sponsor

OUSBY COMMUNITY PLAN WORKING GROUP

VILLAGE APPRAISAL 2023



- **'Drop-in' event** - two-way discussion of the appraisal findings and community assistance with action plan priorities

5. SWOT and PESTLE analysis

One of our first steps towards the community plan involved an assessment of what assets and benefits our residents already enjoy, allowing us to identify those items that we can build on and those areas where further development will be required – an analysis of our community's strengths and weaknesses, alongside opportunities and threats.

Strengths • Our community and its people with diverse skills, experience, knowledge and employment roles/ • Our strong sense of place and togetherness (eg. neighbourliness during lockdown restrictions) • Community pride (eg. 'doubly thankful' village heritage, sites of historical interest, litter picks etc) • Geographical location of Ousby (quiet rural place but accessible links via road/rail network to elsewhere in UK, abundance of natural resources) • Fox Inn (not only a pub with food but also a social hub and venue-for-hire for family events, also attracting customers from elsewhere) • Village green with play and conservation areas • Flora and fauna (variety of wild flowers and wide range of birds, mammals, moths, butterflies, amphibians, invertebrates across the parish) • Natural resources in abundance (Helm wind, becks that do not dry up, sunshine, animal waste – all potential sources of renewable green energy) • Ruh Head Close community garden (quiet space with seating, short walk destination) • Community centre (mainly a venue for hire) • Community post office (p/t opening hours) • Church with graveyard (regular services) • Small local businesses (job opportunities) • Fellrunner bus service (once 3-days/week) • Defibrillator (provided by parish council) • Recycling 'bring centre' (but no plastics bin) • Weekly refuse collections • Parish council (dedicated to the needs of Ousby since April 2019)	Weaknesses • Main route in/out Ousby rarely cleared or gritted during winter months (school bus risk) • Road gullies not regularly cleaned out (overflows result in thick ice in winter) • Unnecessary mowing of some road verges during summer months by Highways contractors (loss of flora/fauna/insects) • Inadequate road sweeping provision particularly during hedge cutting season • Lack of appropriate sewerage and surface water infrastructure exacerbated by on-going planning permissions for market-led housing • Lack of garden waste collections (green wheelie bins) in spite of numerous previous parish council requests/campaigns • Holiday homes/Airbnbs are depleting limited available housing stock and making homes unaffordable for local people • Lack of affordable housing <u>for rent</u> available to local people • Broadband – optic fibre accessible to most of village but not all households • Mobile 'phones & BT landlines offer poor connectivity quality in some village locations • Fellrunner bus service (inconvenient timetable so increasingly underused) • Littering of road verges esp. beer bottles, tin cans and takeaway packaging • Dog fouling (worse in certain village areas) • Sheep rustling and trespassing becoming increasing problems for Ousby's farmers • Lack of renewable green energy generation for the benefit of the community
Opportunities • New people from elsewhere moving into Ousby bring different talents, experiences, skills and ideas that can enhance our quality of village life	Threats • 'Cost of living' crisis makes it difficult for rural households to keep a vehicle on the road (a fuel insecurity aspect that coupled with lack of public transport could lead to rural

• Vesting of Westmorland & Furness Council on 1 April 2023 is an opportunity to review previous unsatisfactory EDC service provisions eg. lack of green waste wheelie bins, inadequate road sweeping etc • Renewable green energy technology and new legislation ('The Local Electricity Bill') could make it possible to harness natural local resources for community benefit • 'Levelling up' agenda - equality of service provision between rural/urban communities could provide economic opportunities for people living in the North eg. better transport network per dualling of A66, HS2 links to northern cities and the South East/Europe • Empty/unused/underused properties within Ousby that could be refurbished into affordable dwellings for rent by local people • Ousby church is an underused asset. A refurbishment to include toilet & kitchen facilities could lead to the building being used more and becoming more relevant to everyday community life. • Neighbourhood Plan for Ousby (costly but complies with National Planning Policy Framework and is officially recognised as the housing development wishes of the local community) • Regenerative farming practices (working with existing land assets, permanent pasture, rotation of crops, provision of natural shelter belts for livestock etc to maximise potential agricultural outputs) • Digital communication technology (hybrid copper/optic fibre network could make Broadband a possibility for all households) • C2C cycle route extension through Ousby (visitor spend, sustainable tourism) • Promotion of Ousby as a destination of historical interest (lime kiln and rail tracks are industrial heritage sites worthy of conservation for visitor spend) • Collaboration with neighbouring villages on issues that cross parish boundaries (eg. youth activities, transport, housing etc)	- isolation, particularly for an aging population) • Legislation banning the sale of fossil fuel private vehicles will heap more costs on rural residents, plus lack of charge point infrastructure in and around the locality • School transport costs for students of 16+years can deter young people from further education and life-time opportunities • Review of EDC's Local Plan 2014-2032 using a September 2022 'settlement study' (could be used to reclassify Ousby from current 'smaller village and hamlet' category) • North Pennines AONB further complicates legislative requirements for planning regs. • House prices pushed beyond the reach of local people trapped in a low wage economy by incomers investing in 'turnkey' properties for second homes/Airbnb (reduction in number of permanent residents threatens sustainability of public services) • Infrastructure improvements could open the village to unwanted/inappropriate housing developments • Lack of affordable housing on the fellside to rent or to buy fragments family networks and threatens social cohesion • Local government re-organisation (public services in rural areas at risk of 2-tier standards eg. green waste collections unavailable in Ousby) • Local government reorganisation could result in diminishing public services unless rural communities makes their voices heard • 'Levelling up' agenda could bring inappropriate investment (ie. Westminster's choices forced on local people as with Local Government Reorganisation initiative) • Parliamentary boundary review ('Penrith & the Border' to be subsumed into 'Penrith & Solway' where attention/funding is likely to be focused on West Coast issues) • Apathy can sometimes stop the community coming together to further potentially beneficial initiatives • Penrith town centre is in decline and increasingly dominated by charity shops forcing residents to travel further afield to Kendal/Carlisle/Newcastle for specific retail and financial services or go on-line. • NHS reforms are resulting in less accessible GPs, clinics, hospitals, dentists and longer travel distances with interconnected public transport lacking from our locality
---	--

No community exists in a vacuum and so we also considered the external drivers for change that impact on village life – political, technological, economic, legal, social and environmental issues.

Political • Local government re-organisation (LGR) – Westminster decided that from 1 April 2023 Cumbria will move from 6 x district councils + 1 x county council to two unitary councils with North/South geographical split and different political party emphasis and policies • Parliamentary boundary changes proposed replacing 'Penrith and the Border' with 'Penrith and Solway' ie. an East/West geographical split that contradicts LGR • Road network dependent on government funding (currently in poor condition with many potholes, blocked gullies, damaged signs) • NHS reforms pending – ever more difficult to access GPs, hospitals, consultants, clinics and particularly NHS dentists – exacerbated by nurses' and doctors' strike action. • Social care reforms – more care in the community needed to support independent living, alleviate hospital bed blocking and longer waits for routine surgery • War in Ukraine – threat of escalation/risk to peace elsewhere, cause of rising fuel costs, scarcity and increased prices for some food commodities (oil, wheat etc) • Green waste collection policy implemented by EDC means some rural communities are missing out on this public service provision • Plastic recycling facilities are not provided by EDC at Ousby's 'bring centre'	Technological • Digital/electronic communications replacing analogue TV/telephone landlines ie. mobile 'phones, Zoom/video conferencing (more opportunity for home working, living in a location of your choice not dictated by commuting distance but withdrawal of 'phone lines will result in isolation during long power cuts and possible inability to summon help) • Broadband/IT connectivity increasingly viewed a 'given', a commodity provision like electricity • Kneeling buses allowing greater accessibility for disabled passengers, parents with pushchairs • Vehicle technology eg. electric cars, tractors with GPS for effective ploughing, quad bikes enabling access to difficult terrains etc • Better heat insulation measures for dwellings • Sustainable methods of generating green renewable energy more widely available – solar panels, wind turbines, water/wave bore screws, anaerobic digesters, battery storage • Advances in health care extend independent living in later years eg hip/knee replacement • Health/pharmaceutical developments – quicker to market place eg. Covid-19 vaccines allowing swifter relaxation of lockdown restrictions • Vaccines for livestock and wildlife – vaccines for HN51 bird flu, bovine TB, Foot and Mouth, BSE are helpful to agriculture
Economic • 'Cost of living' crisis and households suffering daily financial stress resulting in less disposable income available for local businesses and other village groups • Westmorland and Furness 2023/24 council tax from April 2023 (uplift of 5.95% for band D up by £97.75 to £1,740/annum, plus police uplift of 3.67%, together with fire rescue percentage - but parish precept NIL% increase) • Vehicle fuel costs are an additional burden on rural communities without public transport • Access to health care has become time consuming and costly for individuals • Inflation/recession/austerity measures – more costly mortgages and loans, slower	Legal • Planning legislation for development of homes/farms/businesses – 'Planning for the Future' proposal from national government that is lacking in social infrastructure provision ie. schools/shops/health facilities/ green spaces etc • Environmental legislation that protects our landscape, flora and fauna etc • Rural proofing policies to check for any negative impacts on rural communities (eg. when magistrates courts/cottage hospitals are closed, will residents in catchment areas still have easy access to justice and health facilities) • School status – local authority establishment or 'academy' with private sector funding and

house sales, business failures and redundancies, diminishing local authority services (libraries, meals-on-wheels, home care etc) , less government investment in public services (more potholes), less grants available , less disposable income for village activities • Minimum wage restraints resulting in people trapped in a low wage economy – exacerbated by ‘cost of living’ crisis and high inflation • Welfare benefit reforms are compounding the ‘cost of living’ squeeze on household budgets, causing additional financial stress • Fuel tax escalator adding to private transport costs – flip-side is targeted ‘fuel tax rebate’ at filling stations in Alston, Hawes etc • £2 concessionary bus fares available nationwide to 31 October 2023 (permanent low fare arrangement for Manchester) • Agricultural payments reforms following Brexit	less legislative requirements such as nutritional standards (decisions usually taken for the benefit of students and the school) • Equality & diversity legislation - safeguarding rights of LGBTQ+, gypsy/ travellers etc positively reinforcing their place in society
Social • Perceived affluence of Cumbria as a ‘playground’ for leisure activities of others resulting in artificially inflated prices for properties, goods and services • Lifestyle choices following Covid-19 lockdown /furlough schemes are pushing up property prices as more people move to live in rural areas • Decline in work ethic following Covid-19 lockdown/furlough schemes – early retirement, increased leisure time and more interest in healthy living • Increased population diversity – asylum seekers/refugees/‘homes for Ukraine’ adding cultural richness • Hate crime/social unrest – increasing nationally and locally, people feeling disengaged with society, perceived lack of opportunity • Crime levels – Cumbria is 24th safest place to live in England/Wales/N. Ireland • Coronation of King Charles 6-8 May 2023 with ‘Big Coronation Lunch’ Sun 7.5.23 and extra public holiday Mon 8.5.23 generating community and national pride • Shortage of affordable housing for rent is forcing some local residents to seek accommodation elsewhere, leaving behind their network of family and friends.	Environmental • Initiatives to specifically protect the environment eg. bird conservation activities, tree planting schemes, preservation of peat bogs (UK bee & bird populations in trouble) • Carbon targets incl. ‘net zero by 2030’ (but hard to contain greenhouse gas emissions from private cars locally due to lack of public transport and prohibitive costs for electric vehicles plus lack of charging points) • Recycling of paper, glass, tin cans, metal foil, batteries and plastics – village ‘bring centres’ encourage householders’ to comply but green-bag doorstep collections deprive village ‘bring centres’ of valued income • Heightened awareness of need to care for the environment following appreciation of the outdoors and nature during Covid-19 lockdown • Sustainable living/lifestyles resulting in more demand for allotments to ‘grow your own’, community gardens, green waste/Christmas tree collections for large-scale composting • Loss of valued green spaces - due to changes in planning regulations with a focus on more homes

6. 2023 village appraisal and key points on service provision and community needs

A community plan is an opportunity for residents to take action and improve the area where they live, based on an understanding of local needs and aspirations.

Residents of Ousby saw the appraisal and subsequent community plan as an opportunity to determine their own future. Perhaps this accounts for the high rates of village appraisal returns.

% returns 1991	% returns 2001	% returns 2013	% returns 2023
79	74	79	60

The findings of the 2023 appraisal, coupled with additional national data sources (eg. 2021 Census) enabled the working group to identify key points about service provision and community needs, which were then used as a basis for mapping future activities within our community plan.

NB: Appraisal statistics quoted refer to number and percentage of responding households

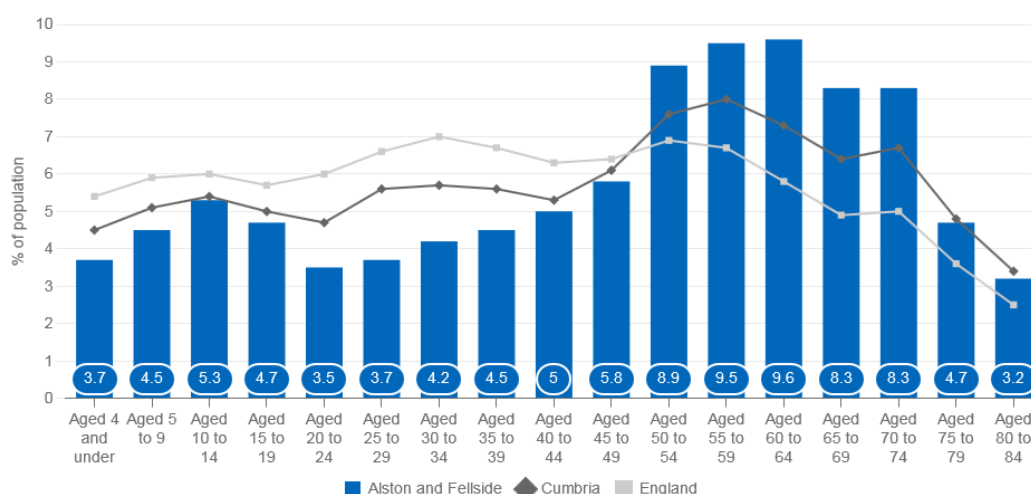
A. People and place

The Office for National Statistics (ONS) has analysed data from the 2021 Census and categorised it down to electoral ward level, rather than by individual parish.

In 2021, there were 6,437 people living within the ward of Alston and Fellside, of which 3,240 are male and 3,197 are female. Our 2023 village appraisal indicates that Ousby has a lower proportion of younger residents and higher proportion of older residents when compared to the national average, as mirrored in the 2021 Census data. Of the one-person households within the area, the 2021 Census identifies that 15% are single pensioner households (previously 11.1%). Population patterns are important to note as they underpin local planning policy.

The ONS' projections suggest that if recent demographic trends were to continue, our total population would decline slightly, with large decreases in the number of 0-15 year olds and 16-64 year olds offset by a considerable increase in the number of over 65s. However, scenarios incorporating a range of alternative assumptions about the future can produce very different results to these ONS projections and it is important to also consider these when forecasting future service needs.

Population by five-year age groups (2021)



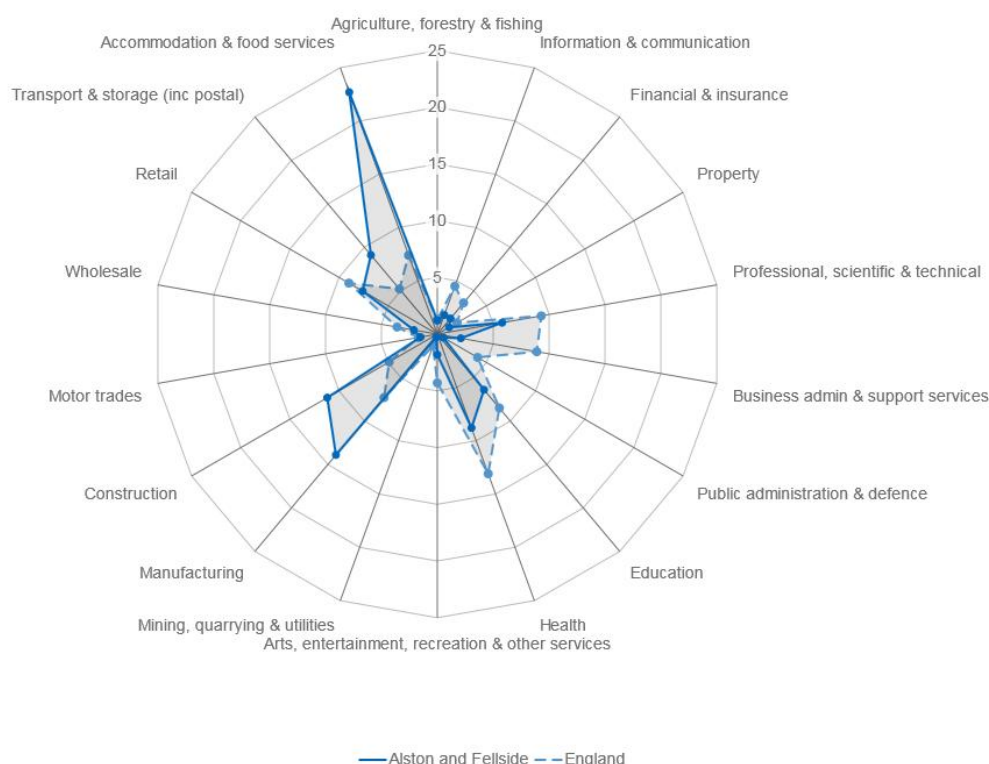
Source: ONS, Census 2021



The 2023 appraisal revealed that 77% of responding households have lived in the parish for 6 years or more, indicating that people feel this part of the fellside is an attractive and desirable area in which to live.

The jobs that residents hold reflect the employment opportunities within our local area. The 2023 village appraisal data indicates that farming remains a significant but less important source of local employment than previously - a consequence of the diminishing number of local family farms and the amount of land that has been sold. The other two locally important employment sectors are education/teaching and cafe/pubs (8% of responding households for both categories). This trend reflects 2021 local industry and employment trends as assessed by the Inter Departmental Business Register.

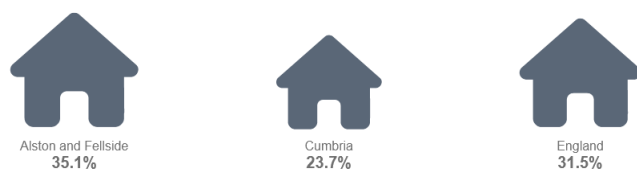
Employment rate by industry for Alston and Fellside (2021)



Source: IDBR

The 2023 appraisal identified that 65% of responding local adults are employed. The 2021 Census indicates that 36% of those within the area who are employed, work part-time hours (Cumbria and England average 32% and 30% respectively), with 64% of working people in full-time employment. As a consequence of Covid-19 restrictions, it was also identified that 35% of those employed were working from home – a trend that continues to grow in line with increasing access to Broadband.

Population working mainly from home (2021)

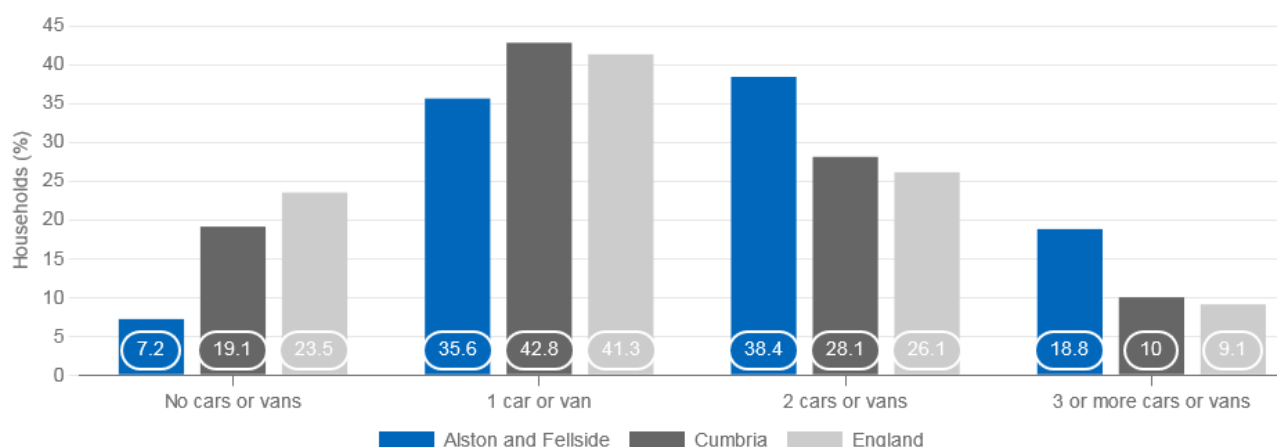


B. Transport and access

During the ‘cost of living’ crisis, difficult choices have been necessary to balance household budgets. Access to employment, education, health care, retail services and social amenities is a major factor determining quality of life for residents living in communities with no public transport options. However the expense of running a car adds to the financial stress.

Residents in rural communities rely more on their own vehicles and spend more on transport than their urban counterparts. According to data from the 2021 Census, 38.4% of households within the Alston and Fellside area keep two cars on the road (England average 26.1%) – a detail reinforced through the 2023 appraisal where it was identified that 83% of responding households keep 2 or more cars on the road. The appraisal also identified that 61% of responding households rely on their own transport for travel to and from work. This reliance on personal transport is perhaps explained when it is understood that 60% of households responding to the 2023 appraisal state that the existing public transport provision does not meet their needs.

Number of cars or vans in the household (2021)



Source: ONS, Census 2021

Public transport provision through Ousby is minimal. There is a daily school bus service. There is also the ‘Fellrunner’ village bus operated by volunteer drivers, for which local residents are genuinely grateful but it only visits Ousby mid-morning on three days per week. Lack of reliable public transport is a real barrier to accessing public services such as post-16 education, health, sport and leisure facilities, employment, financial services and training. Data from the Department for Transport reveals that the average travel time from our parish to the nearest hospital by public transport is 120 minutes (county average 38 minutes).

All responding households across the parish feel it is important to enforce the 30mph speed restrictions.

All responding households feel it is important to have the main routes in and out of Ousby gritted in winter weather conditions and equally important to have gulleys regularly cleared, plus thorns removed from parish roads after hedge cutting.

Protection of the environment is also important to local residents, with 94% of responding households preferring to delay seasonal cutting of grass road verges.

C. Education and life-long learning

Ousby's village school closed in 1974. The 2023 appraisal responses indicate that the majority of village youngsters are of primary school age and attend Langwathby School, using the school bus. Across the parish, 100% of responding parents indicated it is important to retain the escort service on the primary school bus.

There are numerous suggestions for courses and classes that people would like to see delivered locally - predominantly fitness and arts and crafts.

D. Community cohesion and involvement

The appraisal revealed that 24% of responding households rely on 'word of mouth' for local information, with 'The Memo' (church newsletter) a close second, followed by the Herald newspaper at 16%. Social media (Facebook, Twitter etc) was one of the least used methods of communication.

Responding householders indicated the importance of village assets and facilities, with particularly high levels of support expressed for the Fox Inn (90%), St Luke's church (84%), post boxes (89%), recycling 'bring centre' (91%), defibrillator (98%), grit bins on verges (96%) and for various items of local interest (90%).

E. Culture and leisure

Around three quarters of responding households attend leisure and social events within the village, predominantly at the Fox Inn.

Over half of responding households stated that more activities should be made available for the over 60s and for youngsters aged 5-12 years.

F. Economic wellbeing

According to data from the Department for Work and Pensions and HM Revenue and Customs, the 2022 average weekly household income within the former Eden district was £675 (England average £769).

People living on low incomes are among the most deprived groups in society. It can mean they experience difficulty in paying for even basic household expenses such as food and heating or taking up employment and training opportunities due to additional travel and childcare costs. Although many of those living on low incomes are out-of-work, an increasing number of people below the poverty line are in low-paid or part-time employment or are in single pensioner households.

Data from the 2021 Census shows that 64 households in Alston and Fellside responded that they have no form of central heating (equivalent to 2.3% of local households compared to 1.5% in England). Local households that do have central heating rely predominantly on oil, solid fuel or wood for warmth, all of which have recently presented spiralling costs driven by the war in Ukraine.

The 2023 appraisal data records that 91% responding households have IT devices giving them access to the internet (49% in 2001). However broadband speed varies across the parish in spite of 78% of respondees confirming they have optic fibre directly to their property, with 8% of responding households indicating that it is inadequate.

Being out-of-work can make people feel excluded from the local community which is why it is important to provide support for new businesses and have access to broadband that is good enough for job hunting.

Community opinion indicates people would like to see more sustainable tourism that includes heritage trails, guided walks, cycle tracks and bridleways. There is minimal support for more caravan

sites or holiday homes/Airbnb properties. Interestingly when asked about the annual Appleby Horse Fair, only 53% of responding Ousby households state that visitors in bow-top caravans with horses should continue to be allowed to stay on local road verges, even though this is a form of sustainable tourism.

G. Health and wellbeing

Health has a direct impact on an individual's ability to live a fulfilling and enjoyable life and indirectly impacts on their ability to maintain standards of living through income. It is therefore a fundamental factor in wellbeing and quality of life. Poor health may also have a severe effect on other people either directly through forcing family members into informal unpaid care or indirectly through changes to household income. Local residents stated they would like to see more health services provided in the Penrith area. This includes NHS dental treatment, which 65% of responding households find difficult to access.

The measures used to shape public health policies are multiple but they often start from the population demographics. Understanding the structure of a local population and how fast this population is ageing, is important to determine how to plan health care of the future.

Few people report needing or using support services such as home care, meals on wheels, air ambulance, Samaritans, Citizens Advice Bureau or Farmers Network, which may indicate we are a resilient, self-sufficient community.

H. Environment

Our fellside environment is the product of centuries of local human activity overlaid on the natural landscape. Attachment to the countryside is therefore strong within this community.

Ousby's roads are currently swept twice per year. Much dissatisfaction was expressed with the present standard of road sweeping with numerous residents commenting that farmers should clear up the mud, agricultural waste and hedge clippings that they leave on our village roads.

All responding households are satisfied with the current weekly refuse collections and 56% of households (previously 44%) now prefer the green bag/box doorstep collection service for recyclable waste, rather than visiting the village hall recycling 'bring' centre.

Westmorland and Furness Council (and previously Eden District Council) provides green wheelie bins for the disposal of garden waste to most local communities but not in Ousby. This situation accounts for 68% of respondents urging the parish council to continue to campaign to have this service provided.

Ousby residents still have no mains sewerage system and this remains an issue of growing concern given the marked increase in new dwellings built latterly and those with approved planning permission waiting to be built. In summary, 89% of responding Ousby households feel it is important for Ousby to have one, even though this may make Ousby an appropriate location for more housing.

A small scale community-owned renewable energy scheme based on a combination of harnessed natural resources that generates either an income for community projects or cheaper and greener power/heating in Ousby would be supported by 92% of responding households.

The 2023 appraisal highlights that litter can be a problem in parts of the village, likewise dog fouling.

I. Housing

Information on housing and households allows policy makers to identify areas where people may be at risk of social exclusion, due to the type and condition of their housing or their household structure.

The last housing survey was undertaken in 2010 with assistance from Cumbria Rural Housing Trust. There is a pressing need for another housing survey to enable the community to clearly identify its accommodation needs and make plans for the future. The 2023 appraisal clarified strong community support for affordable homes for local people to both rent and buy (89% and 91% of respondents respectively), alongside a distinct lack of support for luxury 'executive style' housing and second homes for holiday rental, including Airbnb properties.

Increases in house prices which have recently outstripped average increases in earnings, mean that local people are becoming priced out of the housing market. This explains why 85% of responding households expressed support for self-build projects for local people

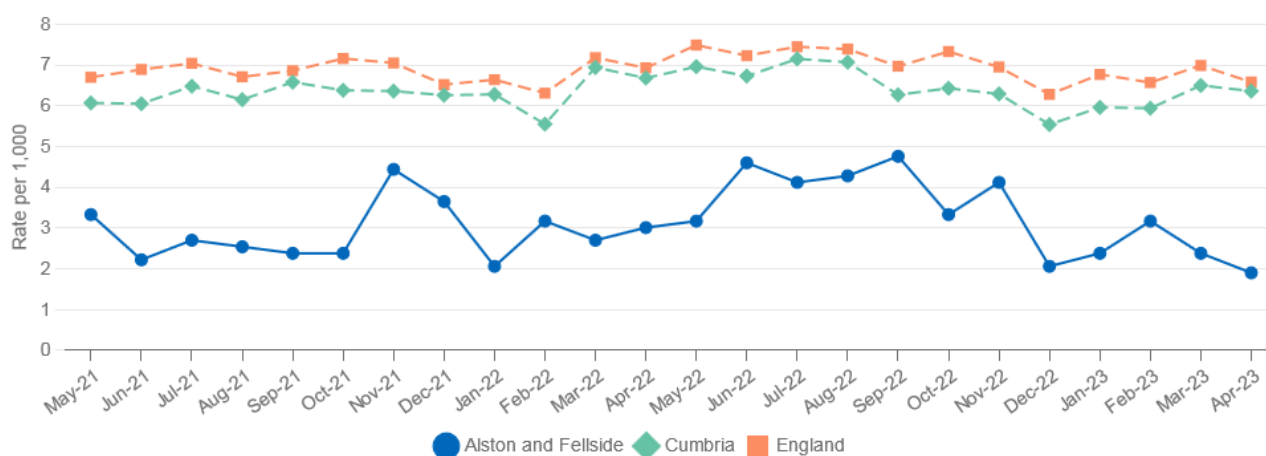
However housing development can strain local services and infrastructure, as well as affect the character of the area. This is why 91% of responding Ousby households feel that Ousby's classification as a 'smaller village or hamlet' should be retained in the Local Plan.

J. Community safety

Crime is an important feature of deprivation that has major effects on individuals and communities. The absence of a safe and secure place in which to live can have an extremely negative impact on physical and emotional health and wellbeing.

Crime, fear of crime and anti-social behaviour regularly feature in priorities for rural areas. However reflecting the latest figures showing that the Alston and Fellside crime level is consistently below that of both Cumbria and England, 88% of responding households indicated that they are satisfied with the performance of the police in our area.

All crime - monthly rates



The 2023 appraisal responses indicated there is strong support for a Neighbourhood Watch scheme.

K. Parish council

Further to a community governance review, in April 2019 Ousby Parish was reconstituted to comprise one ward dedicated to serving the residents of Ousby. Four years after the reform, the appraisal records that 86% of responding households are satisfied with the workings and accountability of this newly constituted Ousby Parish Council, indicating a positive vote of confidence.

When decisions are made about the community, local people need to be included in the process.

Almost three quarters of responding household acknowledge that they are sufficiently consulted, noting that questionnaires are their preferred method for this.

Consultation method	Yes %	Rating
Door-to-door survey	48	5
Public meeting	73	2
Drop-in event at village hall	57	4
Questionnaire	83	1
Questions on-line	58	3

However residents have indicated in the 2023 appraisal that in future they would like to have access to details on the annual precept and budget and the annual report from the Chairman on parish council activities.

7. Community plan for Ousby 2023 to 2028

No	Issue	Actions	Priority H/M/L	Lead(s)	Partner(s)	Deadline
TRANSPORT & ACCESS						
1	Transport costs <i>83% respondees own and maintain more than one vehicle, with 61% dependent on their own vehicle for travel to work</i>	- Consider installing a public EV charge point at a central village site - Consider car share schemes - Consider 'Rural Wheels' schemes - Assess potential for improving bus-to-rail links	Medium	Ousby PC	'Charge my street' for EV charge point advice - W&F Council transport department ref. car share and 'rural wheels' schemes - W&F Local Councillors - Fellrunner Village Bus Ltd for bus-to-rail links	Duration of plan
2	Transport improvements <i>60% respondees said that existing transport does not meet their household needs</i>	- Work with Fellrunner Village Bus Ltd to assess villagers' needs, review timetable etc. within capacity of their volunteer drivers and financial resources - Explore options to assist Fellrunner with fundraising to extend/modify current provision	Medium	Ousby PC (who already subsidise Fellrunner bus services to/from Ousby)	- Fellrunner Village Bus Ltd - W&F Council Transport department ref. available grant funding for local transport improvements - W&F Local Councillors	Duration of plan
3	30mph speed limit <i>100% respondees said it is important to enforce this road safety measure</i>	- Work with police to enforce 30mph speed limits within Ousby - Review traffic calming measures (eg signage)	Low	Ousby PC (who established current 30mph speed limit area)	- Village volunteers for speed monitoring work - Cumbria police (esp. Community Support Officer for Alston & East Fellside) - W&F Highways - Local residents	Duration of plan
4	Gritting of routes in/out of village during winter weather <i>100% respondees said it is important to have the main routes in/out of Ousby gritted</i>	- Liaise with W&F Highways on gritting priorities - Maintain parish grit bins - Ensure parish grit bins are refilled prior to the start of each winter - Encourage residents to spread grit from bins on roads as required - Explore potential for a village-based grit spreading provision	Medium	Ousby PC	- W&F Highways - W&F Local Councillors - Other local parish councils (perhaps per Cumbria Association of Local Councils) - Local residents to use grit bins more - Local residents for grit spreading provision	Duration of plan
5	Maintenance of village highways and footpaths <i>Respondees highlighted numerous blocked gulleys, poor quality pothole repairs,</i>	Promote W&F Highways hotline number (0300 303 2992) and HIAMS link on OPC website enabling residents to report specific road and footpath problems as they occur and track the repairs	High	Ousby PC	- W&F Highways team - W&F Local Councillors - Local land owners responsible for specific hedges, field entrances, roadside buildings etc - Local residents	Duration of plan

	<i>hazardous highway obstructions (hedges/trees overhanging roads, thorns and mud regularly left on roads), a dangerous roadside building, soft verges destroyed by delivery wagons and tractors, certain footpaths blocked and stiles in need of repair</i>	- Request local W&F Councillors to reinforce certain highways and footpath issues - Consider holding a Q&A workshop on local highways and footpath issues with W&F local councillors and highways area engineer			- National Farmers Union (promotion of legal requirement to clear away thorns/mud from highways) - Other local parish councils	
6	Road verges & 'nature recovery' <i>94% respondents agree that W&F highways should defer early cutting of Ousby's grass verges in favour of spending more budget on winter gritting</i>	Reinforce to W&F Council that residents prefer highways budget to be allocated to winter gritting in preference to early cutting of grass verges, as this would also protect the natural environment	Medium	Ousby PC	- W&F Highways team - W&F Local Councillors - Cumbria Local Nature Partnership ('Bee-Ilne' scheme, 'Get Cumbria Buzzing' etc) - W&F Project Officer for Nature Recovery Strategy	
EDUCATION & LIFELONG LEARNING						
7	Retain primary school bus escort <i>55% respondents with children said they used the school bus and 100% said it is important to retain the primary school bus escort service</i>	- Lobby W&F Children's Services/ Integrated Transport team as required if escort service is under threat through local authority budget cuts - Request local W&F Councillor to reinforce support for primary school bus escort service as required	Low	Ousby PC	- W&F Children's Services/Integrated Transport team - W&F Local Councillors	Duration of plan
8	Youth club needed <i>44% respondents with children indicated interest in a youth club</i>	- Support development of youth club and other activities for young people esp. teenagers - Liaise with neighbouring parish councils to promote local clubs already operating, extend capacity of limited funding etc	Low	Ousby PC	- Young Cumbria - Village hall committees - Culgaith PC - Hunsonby PC - Langwathby PC	Duration of plan
9	Education and exercise classes for adults <i>Respondees highlighted various topics of interest</i>	Provide appraisal feedback on preferred activities and suggestions to Ousby Community Centre committee	Medium	Ousby Community Centre committee	- Various local instructors - Local residents - W&F Community Development Centres	2023

COMMUNITY COHESION & INVOLVEMENT						
10	Support for local assets and facilities <i>49% respondents said they relied on 'word of mouth' to gain local information and 41% said they used 'The Memo' (church newsletter)</i>	- Encourage village business managers and voluntary groups to maintain, promote and encourage greater use of local assets and facilities through notices, and adverts in 'The Memo' and through conversations with customers, friends and neighbours. - Share 2023 appraisal data to support grant applications in order to secure funding for village amenities	Medium	Ousby PC	- Village businesses and voluntary groups - North Pennines AONB - Penrith Tourist Information	Duration of plan
11	Mobile shop <i>41% respondents said the mobile shop is important to their household yet only 1 Ousby household regularly uses it</i>	Contact the mobile shop owner and explore ways to promote the facility and grow its level of business in Ousby	Medium	Ousby PC	- Mobile shop owner 'The Memo' - Local residents	2023
12	Items of local interest <i>90% respondents said items of local interest (eg. carved wooden knight, lime kiln, boundary stones etc) are important to their household</i>	Form a group of villagers interested in historical assets, who could collate information on these items and possibly produce a pamphlet to promote them (eg devising a guided walk around Ousby for village visitors)	High	Ousby PC	- Local residents - Fox Inn (sale of pamphlets and promotion of guided walk to village visitors) - St Luke's parochial church council	Duration of plan
CULTURE & LEISURE						
13	More leisure and social provision Respondees highlighted provision is most needed for teenagers (79%), parents with toddlers (62%), disabled (62%) and men 57%)	- Encourage community centre committee & other local groups (including those in neighbouring villages) to organise/extend activities for teenagers and parents with toddlers - Encourage community centre and pub to make more provision for the disabled - Explore 'men in sheds' activities already established elsewhere and see if they can be promoted to Ousby's residents	High	Ousby PC	- Ousby Community Centre - Village groups - Fox Inn - Local groups in neighbouring villages	Duration of plan

ECONOMIC WELLBEING						
14	Broadband access 91% respondents use IT devices and 92% said their broadband speed is adequate (it was noted that these residents also indicated they had optic fibre directly to their property)	Support outlying residents trying to access broadband but finding the additional costs prohibitive	Medium	Ousby PC	'Connecting Cumbria' - Northern Powerhouse (vouchers to subsidise instalment costs) - B4RN (installers of broadband in rural communities)	2023/24
15	Mobile 'phone signals 66% respondents said future planning applications for more aerial masts should be supported	Ousby PC to consider carefully applications for additional 'phone masts and support as appropriate	Low	Ousby PC	- Mobile 'phone companies - W&F Council planning depts - W&F Local Councillors	Duration of plan
16	Sustainable tourist attractions and facilities <i>80+% respondents do not wish to see additional holiday homes, Airbnb, camping/caravan sites or bed and breakfast houses</i> <i>68% respondents would like to see information boards at strategic locations</i>	- Support proposals for sustainable tourist attractions within Ousby - Link with Penrith Tourist Information Centre to promote tourism within the village - Ousby PC to note majority preferences of respondents when considering future planning applications - Ousby PC to install information boards at strategic locations (eg. village green) to highlight wildlife or items of local interest	High	Ousby PC	- SUSTRANS - Friends of the Lake District - W&F council planning dept - Penrith Tourist Information Centre	Duration of plan
17	Employment within Ousby <i>22% respondents work within Ousby (mostly in farming) with majority of employed residents working elsewhere in Cumbria and also further afield (Scotland, Yorkshire, Lancashire and Cheshire)</i>	- Ousby PC cannot create jobs but can be supportive to businesses that contribute to the Fellside economy - Work with local business hubs and W&F Community Development Centres	Low	Ousby PC	- Ousby's individual businesses - W&F business hubs and Community Development Centres	Duration of plan

18	Appleby Horse Fair visitors <i>Respondees were split evenly on allowing Appleby Horse Fair visitors to stay on village road verges</i>	Co-operate with W&F Environmental Health team to contain but be supportive of the tradition of Appleby Horse Fair visitors stopping on Ousby's road verges	Low	Ousby PC	- W&F Environmental Health team (provision of refuse bags and clearance of soiled camping sites) - Multi-agency group incl. police, W&F Council etc	Duration of plan
HEALTH & WELLBEING						
19	Health services in the Penrith area <i>88% respondents want more health service provisions in the Penrith area</i>	- Press for the provision of more health services in the Penrith area - Support any proposals for more local health services	Medium	Ousby PC	- NHS Cumbria Partnership - Penrith hospital - Local GPs	Duration of plan
20	Access to NHS dental treatment <i>65% respondents said it was difficult to obtain NHS dental treatment</i>	Support moves for more NHS dentists in the Penrith area	Medium	Ousby PC	NHS Cumbria Partnership	Duration of plan
21	Appointments with GPs <i>74% respondents said it difficult to make an appointment with a GP</i>	- Support moves to recruit more GPs locally - Support review and development of a more patient-friendly GP appointment system	Medium	Ousby PC	- NHS Cumbria Partnership - Various local GP practices	Duration of plan
22	Support services <i>Respondees indicated use of a variety of support services over the previous 12 months</i>	- Promote & encourage use of support services - Call for maintenance of Citizens Advice Bureau, AgeUK, homecare, Samaritans, Farmers Network etc in the face of funding cuts	Low	Ousby PC	- Support service providers incl. Citizens Advice Bureau, AgeUK, WF Council, Farmers Network, Samaritans etc - W&F Local Councillors	Duration of plan
ENVIRONMENT						
23	Road sweeping <i>Numerous requests for hedge thorns to be removed from village roads – mud/slurry also</i>	- Liaise with W&F Council for more frequent road sweeping in Ousby and contractor adherence to approved route - Promote the legal need for farmers to clear away hedge clippings, mud and agricultural waste - Promote police 101 number for residents to report hedge clippings, mud etc left on the road	High	Ousby PC	- W&F Council - W&F Local Councillors - Local farmers - National Farmers Union - Local residents - Cumbria police	Duration of plan
24	Blue bag refuse collection <i>83% respondents want weekly refuse collections to be maintained</i>	Liaise with W&F Council to ensure weekly blue bag collections are maintained should the service be reviewed for cost efficiencies	High	Ousby PC	- W&F Local Councillors - Local residents - Other local parish councils - Cumbria Association of Local Councils	

25	Recycling <i>56% residents prefer the green bag /box doorstep collection to using the village bring centre</i>	• Encourage community centre committee to promote to local residents the community cash benefits of using Ousby's 'bring centre' • Encourage the provision of plastic recycling facilities within Ousby • Advise residents of facilities elsewhere	Medium	Ousby PC	• Ousby community centre committee • W&F Council/Cumbria Waste Management • W&F Local Councillors • Langwathby village hall (nearest plastic recycling facility)	2023/24
26	Garden waste collection <i>69% respondents agree that Ousby PC should continue to campaign to have green wheelie bins provided for garden waste</i>	• Press for provision of green garden waste wheelie bin collections in Ousby • Renew request to W&F Council for provision of a garden waste skip at a central village location, should wheelie bins not be possible	High	Ousby PC	• W&F Local Councillors • W&F Council commercial services • Other local parish councils • Cumbria Association of Local Councils • Local MP Neil Hudson (lists this issue as one his campaigns)	2023/24
27	Sewerage treatment system for Ousby <i>89% respondents said it is important for Ousby to have a mains sewerage system</i>	• Lobby relevant authorities/agencies to have Ousby prioritised in their work programmes • Highlight lack of a sewerage infrastructure as a material consideration to W&F planning dept. in response to all future housing development applications in Ousby	High	Ousby PC	• United Utilities • Environment Agency • W&F Public Health • W&F planning dept • W&F Local Councillors	Duration of plan
28	Appearance of our village <i>Numerous requests to cut back overgrown hedges(esp. at Row to Castle Slack), pick up litter from verges coming into Ousby from A686, plant trees and wild flowers, conserve wild area around Ousby village green .</i>	• Use key suggestions as ways to improve the appearance of our villages ie. cut back overgrown hedges in specific locations, litter pick, plant trees/wild flowers on road verges and conserve wild areas on Ousby village green • Plant a specimen coronation tree (eg. copper beech on wide circular verge at Hole Bank)	High	Ousby PC	• W&F Highways team • Local land owners responsible for specific hedges • W&F Local Councillors • Cumbria Local Nature Partnership ('Bee-Ilne' scheme, 'Get Cumbria Buzzing' etc) • W&F Project Officer for Nature Recovery Strategy	Duration of plan
29	Renewable energy scheme <i>92% respondents support the provision of a small scale community owned</i>	• Secure grant funding for feasibility study • Establish a renewable energy group of local residents to own and drive forward the project	High	Ousby PC	• Cumbria Action for Sustainability (CAFS) • Environment Agency • Eden Rivers Trust (bore screws in becks) • National Farmers	2023/24

	renewable energy scheme	- Investigate renewable energy schemes for community benefits - Consider carefully suitable renewable energy options - Register Ousby PC's support for 'The Local Electricity Bill' alongside numerous other parish councils per 'Power for People' website (no cost or commitment involved)			Union (anaerobic digesters) - W&F Local Councillors - Cumbria Association of Local Councils 'Heat the Street' scheme in Cornwall, 'Eigg Electric' and similar projects	
30	Litter, fly tipping and agricultural waste <i>50% respondents said litter is a problem</i>	- Continue with annual litter picking in Ousby - Promote W&F collection service for larger items of household rubbish	High	Ousby PC	- Local residents - Local farmers - W&F Environmental health (loan of equipment and litter collection arrangements) - National Farmers Union (legislative requirements for disposal of agricultural waste)	Duration of plan
31	Dog fouling <i>Respondees were split evenly on dog fouling being a problem – perhaps indicating it is a problem in specific locations</i>	- Link with W&F Council community warden ref. dog fouling - Increase awareness of W&F Dog Control Order per friendly reminders in 'The Memo', as necessary	Low	Ousby PC	- W&F Community Dog warden - Village and caravan park dog owners 'The Memo' church newsletter	Duration of plan
	HOUSING					
32	Development preferences <i>90+% respondents do <u>not</u> support 'executive style' luxury housing or second homes/Airbnb properties in Ousby but are in favour of affordable homes to rent or buy</i>	- Ousby PC to remain mindful of residents' development preferences when considering planning applications & policy consultations - Link with Community Land Trust for advice and information on housing provision by and for the local community in perpetuity	High	Ousby PC	- W&F planning dept - Housing Associations - Community Land Trust Network	Duration of plan
33	'Smaller village and hamlet' classification for Ousby <i>91% respondents agree Ousby PC should campaign to retain this classification</i>	Campaign as necessary to retain the 'smaller village and hamlet' classification attributed to Ousby by W&F Council, citing lack of services and standard infrastructure	High	Ousby PC	- W&F council planning dept - W&F Local Councillors	Duration of plan

COMMUNITY SAFETY						
34	Neighbourhood Watch scheme <i>69% respondents want Ousby to have a Neighbourhood Watch scheme</i>	- Support and promote the Neighbourhood Watch scheme - Identify local village contacts willing to engage in the scheme	Low	Ousby PC	- Cumbria police - Local village contacts to form Neighbourhood Watch group - Cumbria Neighbourhood watch - Crimestoppers (charity tel: 0800 555111) - ACTion with communities in Cumbria	Duration of plan
35	Farm Watch scheme <i>86% respondents agree that Ousby should continue to participate in this scheme</i>	- Continue to support and promote the Farm Watch scheme - Identify local village contacts willing to engage in the scheme	Low	Ousby PC	- Cumbria police - Local farmers to form group - Crimestoppers (charity tel: 0800 555111)	Duration of plan
PARISH COUNCIL						
36	Communication with residents <i>72% respondents said Ousby PC consults sufficiently with residents</i>	- Consider trialling parish councillor surgeries - Ousby PC to remain mindful of residents' preferred methods of consultation (1st = questionnaires through letterboxes, 2nd = public meeting)	Medium	Ousby PC	- Ousby Community Centre 'The Memo' distribution network of volunteers	Duration of plan
37	Ousby parish council website <i>90+% respondents would like to see annual precept and expenditure budget and the annual report from Ousby PC chairman displayed on the website. 78% also wish to see links to other websites (eg. W&F for planning applications)</i>	- Review and revamp parish website to include annual precept and expenditure budget and the annual report from Ousby PC chairman - Arrange for monthly website review and update of parish council information and local details	Medium	Ousby PC	For links to other websites: - W&F Council - W&F Local Councillors - Cumbria Association of Local Councils - Cumbria police - Cumbria Action for Sustainability - ACTion with Communities in Cumbria 'The Memo' - National Farmers Union - Cumbria Local Nature Partnership - North Pennines AONB	Duration of plan

Community Plan Working Group
May 2023